

REVIEWS

THE WEALTH OF INDIA. A dictionary of Indian raw materials & industrial products. Raw materials, Volume 2: B (revised). CSIR Publ. & Inform. Directorate, New Delhi, 1988, xlii + 350 + 90 (indices) pp. Price US\$ 80.00. ISBN 81-85038-03-1.

"The Wealth of India" is a series continuing the tradition set by Watt's Dictionary a century ago. It is probably the most complete and most useful treatise on plant products that has ever been written for any major country.

Since the first edition (1949–1979) information has increased tremendously and therefore a second revised edition is now being prepared. Letter A was already published in 1985 and the present volume covers letter B: 350 pages of text in two columns on large pages (against 111 in the corresponding part of the original volume 1).

The average entry gives under the genus and/or species name a short but adequate botanical description, and a description of the product(s) and its/their properties, documented by literature references. The treatment is concise but well readable. English names and Indian names are given, some types of information are given in tables, and the volume is cross-referenced from English names to scientific names.

The major products and species have of course a more extensive treatment. *Beta vulgaris*, e.g., has 20 pages, covering the 5 cultivar groups with for Sugar-beet and Garden beet paragraphs on diseases and pests, harvesting and storage, chemical composition, utilization.

Illustration is quite good and of much better quality than in the first edition. It consists of pen drawings and photographs (some in colour) of plants or plant parts.

There are indices by botanical names, chemical compounds, and Indian and trade names, and one scientific name index sorted by category of use.

The series is not confined to plants and plant products; it also covers animal and mineral resources. The present volume, however, is predominantly botanical. There are references to some animal resources in other volumes, a long entry on Bees (Birds will be treated in a separate supplement) and there are entries on mineral resources like Beryl and Building stones.

The usefulness of this and the other volumes does not end at the Indian frontiers. Neighbouring countries have partly the same useful plants and a large amount of the information given is of general value. The Directorate that has composed and produced this cyclopaedia can certainly be congratulated with the outcome of their work.

C. KALKMAN

D.E. SOLTIS & P.S. SOLTIS (Eds.): Isozymes in Plant Biology. Chapman & Hall, London, 1990, 268 pp. Bound. Price £ 35.00. ISBN 0-412-36500-6.

An extensive review by many authors of a rather new promising field of study. For plant taxonomists especially the chapters 7 (Enzyme Electrophoresis and Plant Systematics by D.J. CRAWFORD), 8 (Isozymic Evidence and the Evolution of Crop Plants by J. DOEBLEY), and 9 (Isozyme Analysis of Tree Fruits by A.M. TORRES) are of interest.

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