

I have one criticism and it is small; but, in the hope that many more editions of Colonel Dickson's book may be published and it may be more widely displayed to the market which it should have, I give it for what it is worth. There is a lack of system in the transliteration. I would instance p. 113, where there is a confusion—no doubt unintentional—with the words *ahl* and *'Aiyal*. The impression given is that both words are of the same root. They have, of course, different roots and meanings.

Colonel and Mrs. Dickson are to be very heartily thanked and congratulated.

BELHAVEN

BOTANICAL LATIN AND GREEK

Glossary of the British Flora

By H. Gilbert-Carter. Pp. xviii+79. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1950.) 8s. 6d. net.

THIS book provides further evidence of the increasing difficulty from which the teaching of biology suffers in an age when, as Prof. C. E. Raven says in the preface, "Knowledge of the Latin tongue . . . grows annually less". Mr. H. Gilbert-Carter here joins those of us who have sought a way in which to avoid some, at least, of the worst effects of this illiteracy. Concerning himself chiefly with the names of plants, he has prepared a glossary of all generic, trivial and varietal names found in the British floras, so that reference to his book enables the student to grasp the origin, meaning and pronunciation of all such words. None could wish to deny that he is to be encouraged in this, and that his book should receive a warm welcome and be subject to constant use.

It has been said that a dictionary provides fascinating reading, but that the subject changes too often. In this book, a specialized dictionary, the change of subject is much less intrusive, so that it is, in fact, possible to read it continuously and to do so with real interest. This is because it is more than a mere word-list. Mr. Gilbert-Carter has taken immense trouble in tracking his many words—my estimate is some 1,700—to their surprisingly diverse sources; and the proportion of those which he is forced to describe as "origin obscure" is very small. Hence, his book brightly illuminates a facet of the history of botany and equally a facet of philology.

For the reader who knows no Latin or Greek, there is a nine-page introduction which will set him on the right path. Thereafter he will get intriguing glimpses of classical mythology, of Roman natural history, and of medieval botanists, who both corrected mistakes and made them. He may miss such old friends as *Pelargonium* and *Nicotiana*; but instead he will learn that *capreolatus* has no connexion with *caprea*, a goat, nor *Vaccinium* with *vacca*, a cow.

The book is not to be overlooked by the zoologist, for many of his comparable difficulties are solved in it. Mr. Gilbert-Carter has included most of the commonly occurring prefixes and suffixes, brachy-, gamo-, -cola and the rest, as well as the adjectives of colour and the numerals, which are used in both the biological sciences. Here, too, are the zoologist's echinus, lepto-, and others.

Perhaps it is ungrateful to complain of the limited scope which Mr. Gilbert-Carter allows himself and to

ask why a selection, at least, of similar words applicable to non-flowering plants was not included. The cryptogams are surely just as important to a botanist, and it is just as desirable that ferns and fungi should be spoken of with intelligence and accuracy. But obviously this must have occurred to the author, and as obviously he has decided otherwise; one can only ask that before the second edition appears his decision shall at least be reconsidered.

T. H. SAVORY

AMERICAN REFERENCE-BOOK ON APPLES

Apples and Apple Products

By Prof. R. M. Smock and Dr. A. M. Neubert. (Economic Crops, Vol. 2.) Pp. xvi+486. (New York and London: Interscience Publishers, Inc., 1950.) 60s.

THE series of monographs, "Economic Crops", of which this volume is the second, is designed to provide critical appreciations of the relative importance of the factors affecting the biochemistry, physiology and technology of selected crops; it is intended to serve not only those more directly concerned with manufacture and utilization but also agricultural research workers and growers. However, the authors of this volume have avowedly not attempted to meet the direct interests of the latter class in detail. Partly in consequence, the introductory account of the development of the fruit and of the influence of environmental and cultural factors upon it does scant justice to the very considerable literature on the subject. The authors have drawn in the main upon American sources, and a comprehensive discussion of varieties or of the pests and diseases that affect the quality of the fruit in other countries has not been attempted. Stock effects are briefly dismissed, while references to the extensive investigations carried out in Great Britain upon the influence of mineral nutrition are but few in number and refer only to the early work in this field. Similarly, problems concerning the grading, packing, transport and marketing of high-quality fruit for the table receive less attention than might have been expected in a work of this nature.

The physiology, storage and processing of the harvested apple are, however, treated in considerably greater detail. The intriguing story of the investigations upon the respiration of apples during storage provides an introduction to an account of the great developments in storage technique that followed upon Kidd and West's pioneer work in this field. Here again, however, the account is based very largely upon American experience and practice. The preparation and manufacture of apple products, in particular apple juice and cider, is given considerable space, references to the literature on these subjects being more comprehensive than elsewhere.

The very numerous citations render this book of value for reference purposes. The text, however, is marred by repetition and, in places, by an uncritical approach which detracts from the reader's appreciation of the very considerable labour involved in the preparation of a volume of this nature. It is, perhaps, best regarded as a useful survey of the subject from the American point of view rather than as a comprehensive text-book.

F. R. TUBBS