BOOK REVIEWS

Catalogue of the plant collections of J. E. Stocks from Pakistan in the Roylean herbarium (LIV). Compiled by J. R. Edmondson. Liverpool Museum. 1995. National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside Occasional Papers: Liverpool Museum No. 10. 23pp. ISBN 0 906367 69 7. £6.50.

John Ellerton Stocks MD, FLS (1820–1854) was a Yorkshire man who, after gaining a degree at the University of London, spent all his life in medical or forestry positions in India. Between 1849 and 1851 he travelled in Baluchistan and Sind. His collections made during those travels are some of the first from that area of present-day Pakistan. They are of great importance both to taxonomists working on the Flora of Pakistan, Flora Iranica and Flora of Arabia projects, and to Ománo-Makranian phytogeographers who will be well aware of his name, commemorated in the genus *Stocksia* Benth., in numerous epithets and as an authority of many taxa.

His early death was lamentable: an obituary in the *Gardeners Chronicle* (1854: 580), after praising his energy, perseverance, tact and amiable disposition, added that he was 'as liberal with his collections as with his information'. This appears to be the case as in addition to major sets at Geneva sent directly to Edmond Boissier, Calcutta, Kew and at least nine other herbaria are known to house his material. One of these, the Liverpool Museum (LIV), holds 96 specimens acquired by John Forbes Royle. Dr Edmondson has done great service not only in compiling an annotated catalogue of these but also in highlighting the life of an undervalued botanist.

A summary of the history and status of the collections is followed by the catalogue, arranged alphabetically according to the scientific name on the original label. Field numbers are added and cross-referenced in a numerical index which appears as Appendix 3. Each entry continues with references to standard floras, type status, current name, selected synonymy and pertinent references including those to illustrations. Discussion is given where relevant and label data are added, with Stocks' place names being cross-referenced to modern equivalents in Appendix 4. With foresight and an awareness of prospective users, Dr Edmondson has also included appendices covering economic uses, vernacular names and a synopsis of the current names arranged in family order.

The catalogue is illustrated by reproductions of Stocks' labels and of five original drawings made from Stocks' material by Walter Abraham and held at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. They are competently drawn and characteristic. Who was Walter Abraham? Quick searches, both verbally and in the literature, have elicited no further details about this artist, which is presumably why no reference is made to him by the author: he remains elusive! Without studying the actual specimens, comments on the nomenclature are unwise but certainly members of at least the Molluginaceae should be checked: *Glinus lotoides* L. and *Corbichonia decumbens* (Forsk.) Exell are distinct species. An opportunity has perhaps been missed to pro-

duce a map of Stocks' territory but this is small criticism of a worthwhile and useful addition to the literature covering early travels and collections in SW Asia.

J. Lamond

Fungi of Australia: Vol. 1A Introduction – Classification; Vol. 1B Introduction – Fungi in the Environment. Executive Editor A. E. Orchard. Volume Editors K. Mallett & C. Grgurinovic. Australian Nature Conservation Agency. CSIRO. 1996. ISBN 0643 05802 8 & ISBN 0643 05935 0.

Although with enormous land area and an unbelievably wide spectrum of ecological niches, Australia has a dearth of fungal floristic works. However, these two volumes turn the corner in a monumental way, and promise a healthy future.

Vol. 1A, dedicated to Pat Talbot, contains contributions by Cheryl Grgurinovic, Tom May, Ian Pascoe, Warren Shipton, Elizabeth Truswell and John Walker. Topics covered are the classification of the fungi and keys to their orders with accompanying bibliography, history and biology of fungi, biogeography and the fossil record in Australia.

Vol. 1B, dedicated to John Walker, is by 18 authors, and contributions cover freshwater fungi, marine fungi, plant parasitic fungi (reflecting the long history of phytopathology in Australia), wood decay fungi, associations between arthropods and fungi, gut-inhabiting fungi, mycoses and macrofungal poisonings of animals, fungal toxins, fungi as a food resource, aboriginal knowledge (a most extraordinary chapter, probably the first time this topic has been addressed as a review), macrofungal poisonings of humans, fungi and mycotoxins in food, and human mycoses.

The volumes are well illustrated with line-drawings and lavishly supplied with an impressive assortment of very high quality colour photographs, covering all aspects of mycology, from macro- and microfungi to phytopathological items. Each volume is supported by a glossary and lists of abbreviations and contractions. The back covers give the contents in the forthcoming *Flora of Australia*, the orders arranged according to John Walker and an index to the volumes, 60 in all. I wish the scientists the best for the future.

These two books taken in combination could successfully be used as textbooks for fungal teaching in not only Australia but elsewhere. They are examples which should be followed, and make mycology exciting and interesting, covering all aspects of the study integrated with a systematic baseline. The references for each chapter are excellent and extremely extensive, a mine of information for students and professionals alike.

It would be folly to pick out any particular contributions as better than the rest, as they are all of high quality. Suffice it to say, I found Kalotas' contribution on aboriginal knowledge and uses of fungi and Truswell's account of the fungal fossil record both intriguing and instructive, and Walker's biogeography of fungi with