

planting. But it was largely due to the eighteenth and nineteenth century landowners that an English landscape was created by large-scale planning and planting of broad-leaf-trees for aesthetic and material reasons. With the industrial revolution came blocks of conifers and the rise of pressure groups which tried, without any unity, to adjust a balance between the utilitarian and the aesthetic. The next phase was dominated by war and the Forestry Commission and its modifications in policy and by lethargy and then enthusiasm in non-State forestry. Now we have arrived at the stage where multiple land-use is accepted, certainly in theory, but not yet sufficiently in practice.

Roger Miles uses his experience on Exmoor as "a contribution to the study of techniques for expanding the forest industry so that harmony between use and beauty can be assured". He shows how his system of survey, analysis and deduction can be applied to make positive recommendations and his sketches amply demonstrate his text. This book will attract the attention of those interested in the countryside whether they be professionals or amateurs. It is factual (except for a confusion between the Universities of Aberdeen and Edinburgh on page 129), well presented and bears the stamp of the unbiased expert.

C. J. TAYLOR

## DO NOT EAT

### Deadly Harvest

A Guide to Common Poisonous Plants. By John M. Kingsbury. Pp. 128. (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1967.) 21s. net

THIS small book, intended primarily as a guide to common poisonous plants of the United States for the non-specialist, is written in clear, intelligible language. The subject matter is concerned chiefly with the higher plants but there are brief accounts of a few toxic plants belonging to other groups such as the fungi and algae.

The author defines a poisonous plant as one which contains a specific substance, often still unidentified, which produces a deleterious reaction in the body of man or animals when taken in a small or moderate amount. Plants which provoke allergic reactions such as "hay fever" and dermatitis are therefore excluded from consideration, with the exception of the very useful account of the allergic reaction caused by poison ivy (*Toxicodendron*) and a few other well known plants which are commonly, if mistakenly, regarded as poisonous by the public.

The historical background to our knowledge of poisonous plants of the United States in relation to both man and animals is well covered and interesting as is the discussion of such plants grouped according to the poisonous principles involved (for example alkaloids, glycosides, saponins and oxalates). A particularly useful part of the book is that devoted to plants which everyone should recognize as dangerous, with emphasis on common garden plants and weeds. This is followed by advice on treatment of cases of poisoning which may be summed up as "Send for the doctor, quick!"

Although primarily written for the American public there is a considerable amount of data relating to European plants commonly planted in the New World. Transatlantic visitors to the United States will undoubtedly find this book helpful especially families with young children. The majority of the plants encountered are illustrated by small sketches, but while these give a rough idea of what the species look like, I doubt if they are always sufficient to enable anyone totally unfamiliar with the flora of North America to recognize them.

Although useful as a book of reference this can also be enjoyed by being read at random. In this way one may read an account of the death of Socrates after drinking his cup of hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), learn of the gruesome symptoms of poisoning by water

hemlock or cowbane (*Cicuta virosa*) which led to the death of one poor unfortunate Jacob Maeder in 1670, or find that such familiar plants as lily-of-the-valley (*Convallaria majalis*) and wisteria are toxic. It may also come as a surprise to those who, like me, consume apples down to and including the core and pips, that the latter are decidedly poisonous. A case is cited of a man who considered apple pips such a delicacy that he saved them until he had a cup full and then ate them with fatal results. One can but hope the poison is not cumulative!

British readers should be warned that while the author refers to the plants by their popular non-scientific names, these do not always refer to the same plant so-called in this country. For example the term cowslip in the United States is used as an alternative popular name for the marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*). An index is provided however, in which latin generic names are indicated against each popular name. One further criticism is that because this work is published in Britain it is a great pity the text was not suitably modified to include accounts of some of our more common toxic plants such as deadly nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*), henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*), and laburnum, to name but a few.

This attractively produced little book, however, succeeds well as a guide to the common poisonous plants of the United States and the author is to be congratulated for presenting his data in both readily understandable language and an interesting manner.

DEREK A. REID

## CANCER RESEARCH GOES ON

### Methods in Cancer Research

Vol. 1. Edited by Harris Busch. Pp. xvi+612. (New York: Academic Press, Inc.; London: Academic Press, Inc. (London), Ltd., 1967.) 224s.

THE first volume of this series is divided into three sections, "Morphology", "Transplantation and Metastasis", and "Carcinogenesis". The ten chapters have been written by different authors. The first three chapters on electron microscopic cytology, autoradiographic methods, and karyological methods have no specific bearing on oncology and deal with methods for the analysis of normal as well as cancer cells. These chapters offer concise practical information for applying the techniques and are sufficiently detailed for the beginner. Some of the individual sections possibly are too brief, but in general adequate reference to more detailed accounts is given.

The chapter on tumour transplantation contains sections on inherited susceptibility to transplanted cancer, histocompatibility genes, actively acquired immunity and exceptions to the laws of transplantation. The section on transplantation techniques is well written and illustrated by helpful diagrams. The remainder of the chapter describes tumour-host relationships, tumour progression, metastasis, and factors affecting tumour growth.

The chapter on tumour metastasis has sufficient scope and practical detail to be of interest to a wide range of readers. The section on carcinogenesis contains chapters on epidemiology, tests for chemical carcinogens, aminoazo carcinogenesis, viral oncogenesis and the identification of viruses by electron microscopy.

Adequate testing of compounds for carcinogenic activity, for co-carcinogenic activity or for other synergistic effects has become more important as it has become more obvious that many human cancers are produced by environmental carcinogens. This comprehensive critical account is therefore timely. There are one or two statements, however, concerning the carcinogens themselves which are unjustifiably presumptive, in particular "that compounds which cause tumours at the point of application are the actual (carcinogenic) agents", because there is now considerable