

## Book review

Helen Purdy Beale: Bibliography of plant viruses and index to research. Columbia University Press, New York and London 1976: 1495 pp. Clothbound. Price US \$ 93.75.

Since the start of plant virology during the last decade of the last century, a tremendous amount of information has been published. From World War II the rate of increase has been nearly exponential. There is a rapidly growing tendency to store and classify the most recent information with computer systems ignoring the older publications.

However, there still is a mine of information, especially on biological aspects of viruses and virus diseases, in a multitude of publications produced during 85 years prior to 1970, and access to these is often difficult. Since 1934, when Atanasoff published his bibliography of virus diseases of plants (Houdojnik Printing Comp., Sofia, 219 pp.) (with supplements in 1937 and 1940), no one has endeavoured to cover the entire field again.

Plant virologists are now indebted to Helen Purdy Beale for spending part of her retirement to compile a rather complete bibliography of plant viruses. It covers the era from about 1892 to 1970. The over 29 000 entries, listed alphabetically by author, also include papers on those virus diseases now known to be caused by mycoplasmas and related pathogens. Half of the papers mentioned were published in English and all titles, except those in English and German, have been translated into English, with the original language in brackets, and information on summaries in other languages added.

There are two indexes, both to plant species, diseases and viruses, but they are not very detailed. The first one (Part I) of thirteen pages only refers to papers on electron microscopy, indicator plants, intracellular inclusion bodies, purified virus and serology, and specifically does so. The second index (Part II) of 29 pages refers to all papers on viruses, virus diseases and crops beginning with A through C and to some viruses under D, G and T, without further subdivision. Unfortunately this index is incomplete. However a complete one would use too much space, e.g. with more than 2 700 entries for tobacco mosaic virus alone, and would have been too ambitious for the time remaining to the compiler.

Dr Beale (Purdy-Beale) is widely known for her classical and pioneering work on the application of serology for the diagnosis of plant virus diseases. Upon completion of the book reviewed here, she was able to make a trip around the world and shortly thereafter passed away peacefully at the age of 83.

L. Bos