Book Notices

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In slightly more than 50 years, genetics has developed from an unnamed study based upon a handful of facts and a few principles to a mature science embracing countless facts and numerous generalizations, and touching actively almost all the other important branches of biology. To impart the full flavor of modern genetics to college students by means of a single textbook is a nearly impossible task. This book by Srb and Owen is a very close approach to the ideal. Students who use this book will become acquainted with the ideas of classical genetics (segregation of alleles, random assortment of non-alleles, linkage), with cytogenetics and chromosome mapping, with developmental, biochemical, and physiological genetics, with quantitative genetics and practical plant and animal breeding, and with population genetics and other aspects of statistical genetics. The examples and illustrations are excellent. The only notable shortcoming is the failure to develop a historical perspective. Mendel's work is briefly referred to but not discussed.

E. L. Green.

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In the concluding chapter of this small volume the author expresses the hope that the reader has gained a point of view from the material presented therein. That point of view is not generally acceptable to professional geographers in the United States at the present time since it is almost wholly concerned with adaptation of animal organisms to the natural surroundings of their immediate environment. After a brief introduction, Chapter II discusses "Man as an Animal," and this is followed by a chapter entitled "Direct Effects of his Environment on Man," which could have been abstracted in thought, if not word, from an American or English geography text of thirty-five years ago.

The chapters that follow include discussion of "Man, Rocks and Water," "Man and His Food," soil, soil conservation, and pests and diseases of plants, animals and man.

The volume is written in a vocabulary that is probably focused on the secondary level and unfortunately it is of the "Now children, let us explore the matter" approach. There is no doubt that a high school student totally unfamiliar with the simplest phases of biological geography would profit from a reading of the book but the information provided by the author would be spotty and highly unorganized. The reviewer senses a strong feeling that the author is opposed to unrestricted growth of human populations and is fearful of a future in which the human race will decline or disappear because of inadequate food supplies. Perhaps this is a reasonable view in underfed England but it certainly fails to reflect the conditions that prevail in many other parts of the world that are capable of producing more foodstuffs than they do at present.

H. F. Raup.