Printing and proof-reading errors can, of course, always be found but they are rare in this volume. The illustrations are clear and to the point although it is in the karyotypes presented that one is most aware of the unfortunate fact that the book was at an advanced stage before chromosome banding became widely practised.

Despite these problems, until a similar volume incorporating the recent advances is published, Dr Ford's book can certainly be recommended as a fine introduction to the subject of human cytogenetics. It deserves to be widely read, particularly by undergraduates, and it is sad that the price will probably withhold the book from precisely this audience, at whom it is avowedly aimed.

MARTIN BOBROW

Humanbiologie. (In German.) Compiled by H. Aurtum and U. Wolf. (Pp. ix+202; figures and tables. DM.14.80.) Berlin, Heidelberg, and New York: Springer. 1973.

In this little book (volume 21 of the Heidelberger Taschenbücher) the editors aim to offer the cream of modern human biology in 14 short chapters. Their task is almost impossible, for the growth of knowledge in the postwar period has been phenomenal and the span of the modern study is vast. It deals with the ancestors of modern man, how they evolved to human status, his present diversity and what it owes to his heredity, his environment, and the interaction between the two sets of factors; it embraces and analyses at all levels from the molecular, the cellular, the individual, to the population. The book aims to illustrate this diversity of problems.

The first chapter (by Biegert) summarizes morphological and skeletal evidence of man's relationship to the other primates and his evolutionary past. The second, on genetic and biochemical aspects of man's evolution, is primarily restricted to the chromosomal progression and reference to the increasing amount of biochemical in-

formation is minimal. Vogel in the third chapter, using as illustrations retinoblastoma, colour blindness, and sickle-cell disease, points out that selection is a phenomenon of the present as well as the past, so that man with modern methods of birth control can influence his own future. Rohrborn seeks in man's evolution indications of mutation, primarily chromosomal, and Wolf discusses human chromosomes in health and disease. Ritter takes a genetic look at race, and Engel, discussing genetics and intelligence, points out that genetic possibilities for further evolution of intellectual capacities are still far from exhausted. Other chapters review the genetic basis of sex differentiation, the roles of inheritance and environment in the aetiology of congenital defect, the biochemical genetics of inborn errors of metabolism, the biological basis of human behaviour, the genetic aspects of organ transplantation, while the final chapter deals with the eugenic concept and the genetic future of man.

This marriage of evolutionary knowledge and modern genetics is not entirely successful, for there is little to link the different sections by 12 different authors. The book would be better entitled 'Evolution and genetics' for many topics, among the most fascinating in human biology, do not appear (eg, adaptation, ecology, nutrition, population structure). The curious inclusion of a chapter on the race ideology of national socialism, tracing its origins in the ideas of Gobineau, is hardly a recent advance. But here must be remembered the readership for whom the book is intended, many of whom grew up in that long time when, throughout Germany, human biology was brought into discredit through ideologies without scientific basis. This also perhaps accounts for the selection of the topics for inclusion, for it is in these that workers in Germany, freed from the political shackles, have made notable contributions. For German readers, the cream in this book will certainly whet the appetite for more.

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