

ВВЕДЕНИЕ В МЕДИЦИНСКУЮ ГЕНЕТИКУ.
By V. P. Efroimson. (Pp. xvi + 490; 1 rouble, 53 kopeks). Moscow: State Publishing House of Medical Literature. 1964.

The title 'Introduction to Medical Genetics' does not do justice to Dr Efroimson's remarkable book. In fact, medical genetics, in its strictly limited sense, forms only a part of the subject matter studied, and many chapters, reflecting the author's own interests, contain material that can only be found with difficulty in other textbooks of medical or human genetics; for example, the genetics of disease resistance and immunity, of carcinogenesis, and of radiation disease. A lengthy introductory chapter effectively presents human genetics as occupying a unique and important place in the wider context of general genetics; and relevant discoveries and hypotheses ranging from those of Mendel to those of recent workers are fully discussed.

Apart from being a competent survey of the more usual aspects of medical genetics, including chromosomal aberrations, inborn errors of metabolism, blood and serum groups, the study of twins and genetic counselling, this book deals in a novel and refreshing way with such subjects as population genetics and balanced polymorphism: thus under the heading of 'geno-geography' the hypothesis of malarial selection in relation to polymorphisms affecting the red blood cells is extensively discussed in the wider context of the evolution of immunity.

After being in the forefront of medical genetics under the guidance of Professor S. G. Levit in the period 1932-7, the U.S.S.R. has, until recently, neglected this field (if the work of Davidenkov in Leningrad on neurological genetics is excepted). In consequence,

large sections of this book are based on an up-to-date appreciation of non-Russian literature. There is also a good account of the development of human genetics in the U.S.S.R.; the work of the golden years of Professor Levit's Maxim Gorki Institute of Medical Genetics in Moscow is discussed at length. It is unfortunate that the Proceedings of this Institute are extremely difficult to obtain in this country though happily some of the more outstanding papers, including several on human chromosomes, are available in translation. In view of the fact that 9,500 copies of this new book have been printed, it is clear that medical genetics is now being seriously studied once again in the U.S.S.R., and it is to be hoped that the results of these fresh beginnings will be more readily available to the outside world.

Some minor variations in Russian usage are apparent. Down's syndrome had been used to describe trisomy 21 in the U.S.S.R. for very many years before attempts were made to replace the term mongolism with this eponym elsewhere. Turner's syndrome is known as the syndrome of Shereshevski-Turner. Shereshevski's original paper of 1925 is unobtainable in this country but a translation exists (*Rev. Franç. Endocr.*, 1926, 4, 181). There can be little doubt that the girl reported in this paper in fact does correspond to the cases more fully described in 1938 by Turner. No documentation for the claim of the Russian partner in the 'syndrome of Wilson-Konovalov' is provided.

This book eschews the heterodox approach of Russian genetics of recent years and is virtually free of polemic. Its publication, and that of the handbook *Humangenetik* and other recent textbooks from Germany, suggest that, after a period of uncertainty, the basis and methodology of human genetics is now again critical in spirit and international in scope.

G. R. FRASER

Corrigenda

to the issue of December 1964 (Vol. 1, No. 2)

Article by Joseph *et al.*

p. 100. Table A. To be replaced by the following:

TABLE A
BLOOD GROUPS OF J.A., MOTHER, AND FATHER

Name	ABO	MNSs	P ₁	Rh	Lu ^a	K	Le ^a	Fy ^a	Xg ^a
J.A.	B	Ms/Ns	+	rr	+	-	-	-	+
Mrs. A.	A ₁	Ns/Ns	+	R ₂ r	+	-	-	+	+
Mr. A.	B	MS/Ms	+	R ₂ r	-	-	-	+	+

p. 101. Figs. A and B were transposed.

Review article by G. R. Fraser.

p. 145. Table. The first two percentages were accidentally transposed. They were 3.0 and 7.5, respectively.

Index.

p. 153. Entry under Clarke *et al.* The page reference should read 151 (not 153).