the analysis of the developmental stages of germ-cells in mammals and spontaneous mutations, the problems related to radiation induced mutations are examined at the genetic, cytogenetic and population levels. General conclusions are then drawn on the consequences of radiation and mutation in the human species.

Eléments de Génétique Médicale
(*Elements of Medical Genetics*)

By J. M. Robert. Simep Editions - Lyon, 1968. Bound volume; 21×27 cm; 256 pages; 115 black-and-white illustrations and tables. Price not indicated.

Although the naive statement of the preface, that this book " brings the answer " to the questions arised some 30 years ago about " what relation would there exist between Drosophila and man ", might appear to someone a little bit exaggerated, here is, nevertheless, a very valuable book.

In the last few years, an interminable flow has overwhelmed the market with an incredible number of textbooks, in every field; and genetics has certainly not been spared. This apparently absurd trend shows no sign of being on its way to stop, thanks to the larger and larger number of students; to the generally felt cultural pressure, giving rise to ever increasing potential consumers, eager for any kind of organized and possibly summarized information; and, last but not least, to too many status seeking scientists, especially physicians.

The present textbook appears to be rather successful in assembling a large number of relevant and up-to-date information, in a generally clear and nice way, in a limited number of pages. And this is a very good reason to make it different from most other textbooks of the kind and be suggested to all students of the field.

Heredity and Disease

By Ian H. Porter. The Blakiston Division. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York-Toronto-Sydney-London, 1968. XXI+408 pages; numerous tables and black-and-white illustrations. Bound volume; 15×23 cm. Price not indicated.

The book is subdivided into six main chapters: (1) Organs of heredity; (2) Principles of heredity; (3) Units of heredity; (4) Genetic susceptibility; (5) Mutation, and (6) Evolution.

There is no clear-cut distinction between genetic principles and medical practice, both being largely intermingled within each chapter. Genetic methods and techniques are mostly ignored. The aim of providing the medical student with a presentation of genetics *as seen by a clinician* happens to find a hypothec, rather than in what is lacking, in what is apparently excessive, or unfit, as it appears, for instance, in the two chapters on mutation and evolution.

This apparently sharp criticism to a book which certainly has valuable aspects, may possibly be due to the fact that really too many such handbooks are being written in recent years.

Genealogisch-Demographische Untersuchungen über Mikrocephalie in Westfalen
(Genealogic and Demographic Research on Microcephaly in Westphalia)

By G. Koch. Series: Forschungsberichte des Landes Nordhein-Westfalen, No. 1963; Westdeutscherverlag - Köln and Opladen, 1968. Paperback 16 × 24 cm. 118 pages. 30 tables. 46 black-and-white illustrations. Price: DM 69.50 (approx. US $ 20.00).

As Professor Gerhard Koch stresses himself, microcephaly is a problem concerning medicine as a whole, normal and pathologic anatomy and, more specifically, neuroanatomy, as well as anthropology and human genetics. A distinction of the genetic and environmental factors involved is closely related to the knowledge of teratogenic and phenocopy processes, as well as to the data provided by biochemical and karyological genetics.

After introducing the problem both from a historical and etiological point of view, describing the different forms of environmental vs. genetic microcephaly, the results of a