

often unhappy and sometimes disastrous. The reader must also accustom himself to the curiosities of the phraseology employed; the present writer, nevertheless, was gratified to find the accession of Queen Victoria referred to as 'the ascension of the youthful princess Victoria'.

Yet, despite the foregoing criticisms, there is much of value in Dr Harrison Smith's two volumes, and in particular, every student of the history of Malta will be grateful to the author for the many references to the vast mass of material which he has collected.

GEOFFREY DE C. PARMITER

GENETICS IN THE ATOMIC AGE. By C. Auerbach. (Oliver and Boyd; 8s. 6d.)

This book presents genetics to the layman. In the preface the author indicates her intention of writing without using the symbols and technical terms peculiar to her subject. She has succeeded, and the result is a story in one hundred pages, delightfully illustrated, easy to assimilate and demanding no scientific background of the reader.

Some material in the early chapters is open to criticism. A statement on page six could leave the reader with the idea that X-ray sterilization of men is a common procedure. It is not. Another example on page seventeen is the belted Galloway cow, a polled breed, shown here with horns. These matters do not however affect the validity of Dr Auerbach's conclusions.

The essentials of nuclear division affecting both body and reproductive cells are adequately dealt with and the nature of chromosomes and their distribution in these different cells described. The concept of genes as responsible for the control of inherited characters is outlined and leads to a consideration of the occurrence of mutated genes and their effects. A convincing account of the distribution and inheritance of normal and mutated genes follows.

The ability of ionizing radiations to produce mutated genes is described fully and its significance for the future of the human race assessed. The reader is left with a clear appreciation of the extent of the ethical problem confronting man in the use both of nuclear weapons in war and of atomic energy in peace.

I liked this little book and wished many of the textbooks I suffered in my youth had its clarity of style.

R. W. KIND

SPECIES REVALUED. By Desmond Murray, O.P., F.R.E.S. (Blackfriars Publications; 13s. 6d.)

This book could have been important, because as the author tells us in his preface, a better title for it would be *The Making of Species*, but this name has already been used for a similar book. Unfortunately,