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 Book reviews
 

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**Redei, G.P.: Genetics.** New York: Macmillan Publ. Co. Inc., London: Collier Macmillan Publ. 1982. 772 pp., 486 figs., 87 tabs. \$ 26.95.

George Redei is well known to geneticists for his interesting work on *Arabidopsis* and for his very efficient organization of the Stadler Genetics Symposia at Columbia, Mo., during more than a decade. He now presents a voluminous textbook of genetics. Numerous such books already exist in the English speaking countries. What are the arguments for this new one? After having studied the book I come to a very positive conclusion: in my opinion it is a particularly recommendable book for the following reasons:

(1) The greatest advantage of Redei's book is the balanced treatment of (almost) all genetic disciplines and their important findings. Many textbooks of today concentrate enthusiastically on the modern molecular fields and their exciting results, but discuss minimally what they consider to be 'classical genetics'. On the other hand, there are authors who deal with cyto- and population genetics, mutation induction and breeding genetics, but leave many molecular findings out – shoving them aside to biochemistry. In contrast, Redei's text develops in 20 chapters – which represent 36 main sections – the whole field of genetics in a logical and balanced manner. It deals with such different aspects as: splicing of introns, heavy chain switch in immunoglobulin gene formation, complex heterozygosity in *Oenothera* and biparental plastid inheritance, protoplast fusion and fate maps of *Drosophila*, defective DNA repair in human Xeroderma pigmentosum disease and overlapping genes in  $\Phi$ X174, retroviruses

and Ti-Plasmids, testicular feminization in man, and gene cloning, application of genetic results in medicine, plant breeding, eradication of pests and in microbiological industry, including recombinant DNA techniques. Regarding this balanced coverage of the whole field I see this text in a line with Baur's, Sinnott-Dunn-Dobzhansky's and Strickberger's books in the twenties, forties/fifties and seventies.

(2) Redei acknowledges the contributions of geneticists of many countries all over the world. The author index and references also reflect this open-minded recognition of non-English speaking research workers.

(3) The author has included many carefully chosen questions and problems (and their answers). In addition, a Teacher's Manual was published with 428 questions as well as multiple choice decisions, including the proposed credit points for correct answers. Certainly these questions are not light evening reading for students, but nevertheless very useful and stimulating.

The balanced text, a careful selection of many instructive figures and tables, more than 1,000 literature references, the questions and problems, in addition a glossary and 8 appendixes on statistics and molecular techniques and finally an author and a subject index show how carefully this book was prepared. This is certainly due to the fact that evolving mimeographed versions of this text have been used and improved during 6 teaching years. In summary: hard work – an impressive result – and hopefully a good and wide resonance.

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