
Book review

Mendel, G.: Versuche über Pflanzen-Hybriden. Faksimile.
Göttingen: Arkana 1984. 47 pp. Soft bound DM 27,-.



Horst Janssen – Gregor-Mendel-Porträt

The rock-bottom of genetics in reprint! On the occasion of the anniversary of Mendel's death on January 6th, 1884, a small German publisher has produced 1,000 offprints of his most famous article which forms the basis of modern genetics. This publisher was able to trace an eighth original reprint of the in total 40 which were produced. This copy is corrected by hand by Mendel himself in a few places. Thus, the final version, just as the author wanted it to be.

This is not the first time that Mendel's epoch-making article, which first was published in an obscure, provincial series, volume 4 of the Verhandlungen des Naturforschenden Vereines Brünn, in what is now the town of Brno, in 1866, has been reprinted. This edition, however, is special. It is printed finely on a slightly yellowed paper and is a precious commemoration of the beginning of modern genetics. Every modern geneticist should read this fundamental paper.

The experiments were carried out in the cloister's garden by a monk in his spare time. Nowadays we can still admire the concept of his experiments, the ingenious choice of the experimental plant, the careful observations, the mathematical treatment of the data, as well as the interpretation of a man of true genius, who died without recognition.

The reprint has on its cover a nice, new pencil – coloured crayon portrait of Mendel (by H. Janssen), which gives the booklet an attractive appearance and makes the reading a real pleasure.

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