they merely report workshop presentations rather than providing any indication that the methods or conclusions stimulated suggestions, criticism, pontification about their significance, or so on; in short, there is no evidence that there *were* any discussions.

I would not buy this book. For reviews, or for the primary literature, I would look elsewhere. The only merit of the book is that it serves to remind one of the diversity of work on RNA and of the need for meetings and editors to recognise this. The UCLA meeting itself was large, and attended by members from most laboratories with interests in RNA. Such meetings are excellent for lifting one out of a specialist's rut and for providing the comprehensive coverage lacking in this book. They are particularly valuable for newcomers to a field. Nonetheless, the outcome of this diversity and the dichotomy of attitude to which I referred earlier may mean that for meetings on RNA the future lies in smaller, more specialised and more intense meetings; books will move in the same direction or towards compilations of reviews. Perhaps this book, in missing the mark, has made a point after all: the field that Cech has done so much to revitalise has grown up already.

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Plant Breeding Methodology. By NEAL F. JENSEN. Chichester, West Sussex UK: John Wiley & Sons. 1989. 676 pages £39.30. ISBN 0 471 60190 X.

The author of this book is an experienced and successful plant breeder who spent a working lifetime breeding wheat and oats in upper New York State. The author's long experience comes through and the already well-informed reader will gather many points of interest, especially as Jensen was a pioneer in programmes aimed at exploiting enhanced recombination and population heterogeneity. (For example, he invented the now often-heard word 'multiline' in 1952.) Unfortunately, only the experienced reader will benefit; the innocent would get a very unbalanced view of plant breeding and the work is unlikely to do more for students than provide some references.

The book (a large one) consists of 38 chapters put together on no very clear basis and ranging in content from a few pages on genetic engineering in chapter 2 to '101 ways to enrich your breeding program' in chapter 38. The text itself (unadorned by biometrics, tables or figures) is mostly composed of a mass of summaries of published papers. The author has certainly read a lot and his reading has the (now rare) merit of going back to the 1940s and earlier. But his horizons are, alas, bounded by few crops and a limited geographical area: small grains in the north-eastern USA. A few other US crops (corn and soybeans) are mentioned and Europe just gets in; but clones, perennials and the big wide world outside hardly exist.

So I found the book interesting, enjoyed the author's evident horse-sense and got some useful references. But I can't recommend it except to those who already know enough to read critically and selectively.

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Chromosomal Variation in Man: a Catalogue of Chromosomal Variants and Anomalies. By DIGAMBER S. BORGOANKAR, 5th edition. New York. Alan R. Liss, 1989, 852 pages. $96.00. ISBN 0 8451 4275 5.

This is the definitive and authoritative reference book of chromosome variation in man. It first appeared in 1975 and has gradually achieved pre-eminent status in the cytogeneticist's library. Reading it is like dipping into a telephone directory, an exercise best avoided unless one wants a particular number.

The book is organized, as one would expect, in numerical order of chromosomes. Almost two-thirds is taken up by structural variations and anomalies, marching from 1 to 22 and then from X to Y. Numerical anomalies follow and there is a final section on chromosomal breakage syndromes. The subject index is a little thin, but the author index is quite splendid. It is interesting to note the extent to which human clinical cytogenetics has been dominated by the French School of Boué, de Grouchy, Dutrillaux, Gallano, and Lejeune.

One cannot really fault this superb collection of data. Just as no medical geneticist can work without a McKusick, no cytogeneticist can be without a Borgoankar.

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