

the observed effects of temperature and X-rays on the frequency of mutations. So far the argument seems solidly grounded and the conclusion is a very important one.

In Chapters VI and VII the author attempts to proceed by similar methods to a physical explanation of life, i.e. of the unity of an organism; he seeks to answer the great question, Are living organisms subject to the laws of physics only? But the answer seems quite unsatisfactory, because it presupposes that an organism is fundamentally similar to (say) a crystal, and this ignores the fact that the order in an organism (manifested in the co-operation of its parts for the preservation of the whole) is specifically different from the order in a crystal or any other non-living system. This second part of the book seems to reduce to an attempt to make one science do the legitimate work of two. In the Epilogue, "On determinism and free will", the author contrasts the dependence of our bodies on physical laws with our consciousness of responsible action, and draws pantheistic conclusions. This third part of the book exhibits the usual depressing divorce of philosophy and science.

The great significance of this book, then, is that in the main it outlines an important synthesis of biological and physical lines of thought, and does so in a style that is both readable and free from facile short cuts. It deals only superficially with the question posed in the title. A book to buy, study and criticise.

E. F. CALDIN.

NOTICES

EVERYBODY'S GUIDE TO PARLIAMENT. By W. J. Brown, M.P. (Allen & Unwin, 7s. 6d.).

This is a breezily written account of that venerable paradox, the British Parliament. Informative chapters on such subjects as parliamentary procedure, the Party system, Mr. Speaker and members' pay, reveal in Mr. Brown a mixture of veneration for tradition and a desire for reform which must be the despair of the political theorist. He writes from an independent angle, and indeed his plea for the member free from the tyranny of the part Whip is one of the best chapters of an always interesting book. M.P.

THE FAMILY FACES FORWARD. (National Catholic Welfare Conference, Washington, D.C. n.p.).

A volume of addresses given at the Family Life Conference in February, comprehensive in their scope and notable for clarity and soundness on the application of moral principles. It is good to see so many Catholic mothers listed among the speakers. English Catholics have plenty to learn from America.

PERSONALITY AND SUCCESSFUL LIVING. By James A. Magner. (Bruce, Milwaukee; \$2.75).

This is the sort of thing that the Americans do supremely well. It is Christian psychology, firmly rooted in both revelation and

metaphysics, but presented vigorously and simply to convince any reasonable man of its truth and persuade him to discipline mind and heart to live in accordance with his conviction. For the author knows the stress and strain of modern life and the ferocity of its temptations, but he will allow of no compromise and his tone commands respect.

E.Q.

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