Hypolipidemic Agents

Edited by D. Kritchevsky
Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, 1975
xvi + 490 pages. Cloth DM 178., $ 73.00

This volume represents an effort to elucidate the origins and metabolic behavior of lipoproteins and their components, to describe aspects of the morphology, biochemistry and experimental induction of atherosclerotic heart disease and to describe modalities of treatment. Partitioned into 10 chapters written by specialists, an up-to-date account of the state of knowledge in the fields of cholesterol (M. E. Dempsey and H. S. Sohdi) and bile acid (T. A. Miettinen) metabolism as well as of mechanisms of hyperlipidemia (J. M. Felts and L. L. Rudel) and lipoprotein metabolism (S. Eisenberg and R. I. Levy) is presented. Most important for future perspectives in atherosclerosis research, a short presentation of animal models (D. Kritchevsky) and a synopsis of ultrastructural and functional aspects with emphasis on liver (W. Stäubli and R. Hess) and on vascular tissue (T. Zemplenyi) are also given. The book is concluded with a chapter on hypolipidemic agents (W. L. Bencze) and one regarding the application, the rationale for hypolipidemic therapy (I. D. Frantz).

One has the impression (and hope) that the book reflects a 'critical mass' of knowledge and concepts in basic research that will launch further efforts for an understanding of the action of hypolipidemic agents and, ultimately, of the causes and effects connected with the hyperlipidemic state. This is supported by the freshness of approach indicated, for example, by the incorporation of new basic knowledge from cell biology so far not considered in direct relationship with the metabolism of lipoproteins.

The book, appearing as Vol. 41 in the Heffter-Heubner New Series Handbook of Experimental Pharmacology, will undoubtedly find its place as a useful source for experts. While the articles have been amply referenced, it is somewhat unfortunate that the Subject Index (6 pages) is overwhelmingly outweighed by the Author Index (66 pages). Further, it appears in some places that long passages of text could have been replaced by a readily intelligible and less time-consuming graphical scheme, allowing better access to the material by readers not so familiar with the subject. However, such considerations are secondary regarding this useful treatise and authors and editor should be congratulated on this overview incorporating surprisingly recent information.

H. Sies

Concepts of Membranes in Regulation and Excitation

Edited by Rocha e Silva and G. Suarez-Kurtz
Raven Press, Publishers, New York 1975
xi + 226 pages. Dfl. 45.00, $ 18.75

The book represents proceedings of a symposium held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1974. Of the 18 articles, on widely diversified topics centered around the problem of excitation–contraction coupling, 15 are