

edge from them. It will, however, be read with considerable profit by the scientist working in other fields and by the intelligent layman. Drs Kretchmer and Van Robertson have done a very good job in providing

both a general and specific introduction to various parts of the book, and in selecting such good articles for this purpose.

A. Neuberger

*Trace Elements and Iron in Human Metabolism*

by A. S. Prasad

John Wiley and Sons; Brisbane, Chichester, New York, Toronto, 1978

xv + 392 pages. £17.50

In this book which is published as a part of the Topics in Hematology series Dr Prasad has compiled a vast amount of information on the biological roles and nutritional requirements for trace elements in humans as well as the clinical conditions associated with inadequate and excessive intake of these elements, and with disorders in their handling in the body. In addition chapters are included on the effects of three metal ions (Cd, Pb, Hg) with known high toxicity for humans and in all of which there is much current interest.

The author seems to have seen his role as a gatherer and compiler of information and I can find little evidence of critical evaluation or of creative thought. However this is not an area in which there is any conceptual linkage between the constituent chapters

other than that most of the elements considered must be provided in small amounts in the diet for maintenance of health. In some cases even that is not well established for humans since for some of the more recently discovered trace elements the requirement can only be shown in experimental animals under very carefully controlled conditions. The book then covers ground very similar to that treated by Underwood in his text of similar title. The book considered here is somewhat more up-to-date and shows differences of emphasis — for example the extended and rather interesting treatment of the clinical aspects of zinc deficiency. However except for those most vitally and directly interested in this field it would be hard to justify purchase of both texts.

M. C. Scrutton

*Receptors and Recognition, series A, volume 4*

Edited by P. Cuatrecasas and M. F. Greaves

Chapman and Hall; London, 1977

270 pages. £11.50 (hardback); £7.50 (softback)

This series comprises review articles over a very broad range of topics related to cell membrane receptors. The editors are to be congratulated on expediting discussion and understanding in this area of funda-

mental significance to a great many fields of modern biology. By proceeding through these volumes, one is reminded of the diverse and far-ranging functions in which receptors and cellular recognition play a major