

The Endocrine Function of the Human Ovary

Edited by V. H. T. James, M. Serio and C. Giusti
Academic Press; London, 1976
ix + 519 pages. £ 11.50

This substantial volume contains thirty-nine papers, proceedings of a course organized by the School of Postgraduate Endocrinology in Florence. As with two previous companion books on 'The Endocrine Functions of the Human Testis' there is a heavy emphasis on clinical disorders but, to be fair, there is a great deal on more basic mechanisms.

The outstanding feature of the book is the breadth of topics covered. All the essentials and many of the fashionable topics are here — steroidogenesis, control of gonadotrophin secretion, cyclic AMP, mechanisms of hormone action, receptors, prostaglandins — plus a number of less worked but highly interesting subjects, such as the role of blood flow in regulating ovarian function. Clinical contributions cover puberty, hypogonadism, the menopause, amenorrhoea, anorexia nervosa, polycystic ovaries, virilization and hirsutism. The overall standard of presentation is high, with clear writing, good illustrations and original data.

Most authors have supplied detailed reference lists and there is an excellent index. For a book of this size there are commendably few of those skeletal contributions, frequent in proceedings, which are only written to justify a claim for travel expenses.

Usefulness of the book would have been greatly enhanced if a few authors had been asked to review the broad areas of ovarian endocrine functions and to put recent advances and unsolved problems in some kind of perspective, or at least to have provided a summing-up of the proceedings. This is not a book from which the relative novice can easily obtain an overview. However, the book is of unquestionable interest and value to physiologists, biochemists and clinicians with an interest in reproductive biology and will provide a handy reference source for a wide range of aspects.

J. A. Edwardson

Properties of Purified Cholinergic and Adrenergic Receptors

Proc. 9th FEBS Meet. Budapest, 1974, Volume 37
Edited by M. Wollemann
North-Holland/American Elsevier; Amsterdam, 1975
viii + 148 pages. \$ 12.50, Dfl. 32.00

This is one of seven volumes containing the invited lectures at the Ninth FEBS Meeting in Budapest, August 1974. The first half of the volume contains two papers on the properties of purified nicotinic acetylcholine receptor protein (AChR) and one dealing with electronmicroscopy of AChR-containing membrane preparations. There are five papers largely

concerned with the relationship of β -adrenergic receptors (β -AdR) to adenylyl cyclase.

The contents of the Symposium successfully brought into contrast the relative progress made in research on the biochemistry of AChR and β -AdR. With some developments, the position remains broadly unchanged at the present. The lack of specific