

complexes and with the metal complexes of anti-tumor antibiotics. Metal coordination can also be used in order to try to improve the effectiveness of known drugs and this is the subject of one chapter in the case of the alkylating agents. The last chapter deals with the interactions of enzymes with metallo-drugs, and of metalloenzymes or metal-activated enzymes with anticancer compounds.

Each chapter provides a critical review of the literature up to 1978 and in several cases 1979. This volume is a useful introduction to the field of metal complexes as anticancer agents. It delineates the main directions of the research efforts now undertaken and this shows that many areas are still unexplored.

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**Metal Ions in Biological Systems. Vol. 12: Properties of Copper**, Edited by H. Sigel, Marcel Dekker Inc., New York, 1981; pp. 353; SF 165.00.

The biochemistry of copper is a very advanced and fast moving area in biological sciences, which brings together researchers from different backgrounds and

therefore requires a continuous effort of mutual understanding. This volume provides a further valuable tool for a better interaction between chemists, physicists and biologists. In particular, chemical aspects find here one of the best surveys available, with a series of articles to be regarded as classical reviews of their own topic. A special mention should be made in this respect of chapters 2 – “Copper(II) as a probe in substituted metalloproteins” – and 3 – “Copper(III) complexes and their reaction”, which will be extremely useful to biochemists who often choose a rather empiric approach to these subjects. From this coherent section the transition to the biological properties of copper is to some extent abrupt. The last three chapters introduce biological themes traditionally associated to copper biochemistry but of unequal impact on future research. While the chapters on hemoglobin oxidation and copper transport are too much confined within the limits of the scientific contributions of the respective authors and lose in general scope as they gain in focus, the last chapter offers a stimulating and comprehensive overview of the most long-known and still the most attracting biological effect of copper: its antiinflammatory action.

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