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Book Review

Neuromethods, Vol. 7, lipids and related compounds, edited by A. Boulton, G. Baker and L. Horrocks, Humana Press, Clifton, NJ, 1988, 360 pp., price US\$ 64.50 (U.S.A.), US\$ 74.50 (export).

Volume 7 of this successful series contains ten chapters dealing with

- (1) Lipid extraction;
- (2) Preparation and analysis of acyl and alkenyl groups of glycerophospholipids from brain subcellular membranes;
- (3) Quantitative analysis of acyl group composition of brain phospholipids, neutral lipids and free fatty acids;
- (4) Steroids and related isoprenoids;
- (5) Phospholipids;
- (6) Determination of phospholipases, lipases and lysophospholipases;
- (7) Isolation, separation and analysis of phosphoinositides from biological sources;
- (8) Analysis of prostaglandins, leukotrienes and related compounds in retina and brain;
- (9) HPLC analysis of neutral glycosphingolipids and sulfatides; and
- (10) Methods to study the biochemistry of gangliosides.

Each chapter was written by a different author (or group of authors). They all seem adequate as a first orientation for neurochemists. But none of them is exhaustive; for example, the chapter on phospholipids lists altogether 41 references and none later than 1986. So one can hardly call these chapters reviews nor can the tome be called a handbook.

In the chapter on "Steroids and related isoprenoids" the main topic is stated as "Cholesterol is quantitatively the major steroid synthesised within neural tissue and methodologies relating to the metabolism of cholesterol will consequently be a major focus of this review". So the reader will certainly not find a coverage of the literature of steroid chromatography. One has the impression that all chapters are interesting, well written and informative. It is, however, not quite clear whether the authors are addressing themselves to research workers or to students. For the first the literature coverage seems scanty, for the latter the topic is too specialised.

M. LEDERER