

Book Reviews

Progress in Biochemical Pharmacology. Volume 4. Recent Advances in Atherosclerosis. Edited by C. J. MIRAS, A. N. HOWARD, and R. PAOLETTI. S. Karger A. G., Basel, Switzerland. 1968. viii + 636 pp. 17.5 × 25.4 cm. \$36.50.

The publication being reviewed is a compilation of the papers presented at the International Symposium on Atherosclerosis, Athens, 1966, organized by the European Society for Biochemical Pharmacology. Volume 4 of "Progress in Biochemical Pharmacology" is divided into the following sections: Epidemiology, Intact Organisms, Lipoproteins, Plasma Lipids, Whole Artery, Tissue Cultures, Hormones, Primates, Non Primates, Platelets, and Clinical; the discussions which followed each session are reported and references accompany most of the papers which were updated by the authors at the end of 1967.

Several of the sections listed above are introduced by papers dealing with recent advances (advances, at least, as recent as the end of 1967) in the subject under discussion. This is a satisfactory approach and, considering the briefness of the papers, the subjects are covered extremely well.

Within the various sections, the following papers are outstanding for their clarity and instructiveness: Epidemiological Studies on Atherosclerotic Coronary Heart Disease: Causative Factors and Consequent Preventive Approaches, J. Stamler, *et al.*; Recent Advances in Metabolism of Plasma Lipoproteins: Chemical Aspects, P. Alaupovic; Lipid-Fatty Acid Relationships in Electrochromatographic Lipoprotein Fractions, H. Peeters and V. Blaton; Recent Advances in the Metabolism of Cholesterol, Lipoproteins, and Acid Mucopolysaccharides in Normal and Atherosclerotic Vessels, W. Holland, *et al.*; Cholesterol Ester Metabolism in Tissue Culture Cells, D. Kritchevsky, *et al.*; Estrogens and Atherosclerosis, R. Pick, *et al.*; The Cause of Cerebral Artery Thrombosis in Man, P. Constantinides; and Role of Endocrine System in the Regulation of Plasma Lipids and Fibrinogen, with Particular Reference to the Effects of Atromid-S, J. M. Thorp, *et al.* Although the only paper dealing with drug effects was given by Thorp, *et al.*, the medicinal chemist in antilipemic agent research will find much of interest in this collection of biochemical and pharmacological papers.

It is expensive, but, if the reader is interested in this field and there is room on the science library shelf, it should be squeezed in.

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Biogenesis and Action of Steroid Hormones. Edited by RALPH I. DORFMAN, KAZUMI YAMASAKI, and MARGARET DORFMAN. Geron-X, Inc., Los Altos, Calif. 1968. v + 426 pp. 17 × 22 cm. \$8.50.

This volume represents a report of a symposium held at Kaike Spa, Yonago, Japan, in August 1967, which was sponsored by the Institute of Steroid Research, Tottori University School of Medicine, and hosted by Professor Kazumi Yamasaki, Founder of the Institute.

It presents authoritative views in steroid biochemistry, particularly in the areas of steroid hydroxylations, side-chain cleavage, and sulfo-conjugations. Because of the broad coverage represented by the numerous recitations, the contents is a conglomerate of both new work and review articles. The volume, which covers some 426 pages, could have been considerably shortened if many of the graphs and charts were condensed and presented in a less generous fashion. The editors, however, have obviously taken pains to minimize errors particularly inherent in this type of offset press presentation. The use of the type-offset press facilitates more rapid and less expensive publication, but, as usual, because of the variations in typing formats, there is complete lack of uniformity, most importantly in the presentation of references. The discussions which follow

some of the papers are minimal, as is the contribution of this type of highly edited communication.

All in all, the book makes for easy reading, but, as usual, much of the work had already been published or has found its way into the literature by the time of publication. However, because of the relatively low cost of this volume and the contributory nature of the review articles, it is a welcome addition to the library of those interested in the broad subject of the biogenesis and action of steroid hormones in various tissues, both *in vivo* and *in vitro*.

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Annual Review of Pharmacology. Volume 9. Edited by H. W. ELLIOTT, W. C. CUTTING, and R. H. DREISBACH. Annual Reviews, Inc., Palo Alto, Calif. 1969. 591 pp. 16.3 × 23 cm. \$8.50

In every volume of this series, Professor Chauncey D. Leake writes a brief but searching section entitled Review of Reviews. This year's article points up the widening gulf between molecular and clinical pharmacology which has already led to such tragic consequences as the abandonment of autonomous pharmacology departments in some American medical schools. Both the molecular and clinical pharmacologists are to blame for this condition: they have shown disregard either for the applications of pharmacology to the health professions and services beyond medicine, or to the need for more basic knowledge of drug action. It is for these reasons, if for no other more specific ones, that the Annual Review volumes should be read and studied by *all* those concerned with the biochemistry, physiological manifestations, and the clinical and toxic behavior of drugs.

The present volume features a personal and scientific autobiography by J. H. Burn. He became a pharmacologist because "compared with those who taught physiology and physics [at Cambridge], the chemists were an unattractive lot . . . , they seemed very undistinguished, had cheerless faces and wore rather shabby clothes." Little credit is given the chemists for providing Burn throughout his life with the compounds he worked with, or with developing scientifically acceptable explanations of the molecular action of drugs since, after all, the most common way molecules react is to affect other molecules, not tissues.

The 26 remaining chapters run the gamut from the chemotherapy of leprosy to the toxicology of ethanol, with considerable emphasis on hormonal and pharmacodynamic problems under active investigation. Of interest to chemists are reviews on isolation techniques of animal hormones and on natural products from plants which increase nonspecific resistance. The whole volume is well presented, well edited, and as up-to-date as book production permits.

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Psychopharmacology. A Review of Progress, 1957-1967. Edited by DANIEL H. EFRON, JONATHAN O. COLE, JEROME LEVINE, and J. RICHARD WITTENBORN. Public Health Service Publication No. 1836. U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 1968. xvi + 1342 pp. 21.7 × 26.5 cm. \$11.25.

The tremendous growth of the theories and applications of psychopharmacology since the mid-1950's led the National Institute of Mental Health to support a summary symposium of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology which was