

plishments by well-known Japanese scientists that are cited in the truly international reference lists in these volumes), I think the editors have produced a review with a different flavor. The two volumes give an amazingly diversified picture of both facts and experimental techniques, and they do give an excellent survey of the many contributions of Japanese workers in the chemical modification and structural and conformational analysis of proteins and glycoproteins and in the isolation and characterization of new proteins. Each chapter is clearly written and well organized, and each author has done a thorough job, even to the extent of compiling in tables a good deal of background information which to the best of my knowledge is not available in any other single source. The literature has been reviewed through 1971 and some heretofore unpublished data are included. The reviews are therefore as current as one can expect in this rapidly developing field.

The emphasis on the authors' own work gives the reader a sense of the immediacy of ongoing research, at the expense of abbreviating the complete picture only slightly. It also effectively calls his attention to the many fundamental problems that are still unsolved. The discussions of the toxicity of ricin, the role of acetylated amino-terminals in protein, the role of the carbohydrate components and the protein sites in the many different recognition processes in living systems, to mention just a few, make this review more than just a look back at where we have been; it also conveys the excitement of the new directions in which this field is headed.

Some reservations about these volumes still remain. The subjects are probably too specialized, the discussions too detailed, and the price too high for them to be suitable as textbooks. Any person who wishes to observe the progress of research in a given area could learn a good deal from these books, but he would have to be an advanced student in protein chemistry fully to appreciate these particular cases. The specialist's need for this information has been reduced by the large volume of other reviews in the field. It thus appears that these books may have only a limited audience at this time; the solid and attractive work presented deserves better.

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