

sions to structure-activity relationships. While the reader may miss detailed discussion of his or her favorite hormone, the resulting volume includes a wealth of information from the smaller polypeptides through the large glycoprotein molecules. The foreword by A. Nizet and H. Van Cauwenberge and the introduction by S. A. Berson outline what appears to be an increased concentration of effort toward producing a quantitative understanding at the molecular level, rather than a collection of unrelated descriptive accounts of phenomena, without however losing sight of the fact that these hormones act within a complete physiological system.

This concern is evidenced by a number of highly competent papers, grouped in their own separate section, dealing with the conformation of these proteins and its relation to their activity. Unfortunately, the discussions concentrate almost entirely on the small polypeptides, with little new information concerning the larger protein hormones. One of the fundamental difficulties of hormone research, which is well pointed out in this work, is the lack of specific information concerning the structures and inner workings of cellular receptors. This is not to say that efforts in this direction are faltering. Significant advances are evidenced by the experimental work of Rodbell *et al.*, Roth *et al.*, and Goodfriend *et al.* The more theoretical approaches of Rasmussen and of Hechter and Braun also provide food for thought. It seems to this reviewer, however, that the large number of reports dealing with the various factors that affect immunologic activity clearly shows a widespread interest in "getting on with it," in the sense that the antigen-antibody interaction may be a useful *pro tem* model for hormone-receptor interaction. While understanding of the immunochemistry of these hormones is progressing at an encouraging rate, one wonders how much of this information will ultimately be transferable to the cellular receptor. Potential difficulties arising from impatience in attempts to explain interactions with receptors are clearly pointed out by Birnbaum. Here again, the critical evaluation of quantitative data seems to be the most important lesson.

Both the original reports and the discussions of them will be of great value to anyone who proposes to develop an understanding of hormonal action. The organization of the book itself and the excellent editorial con-

tributions throughout will aid him in this quest. The inclusion of a stop-press section and the overall pleasing appearance of the book make it a valuable addition to any library.

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