

Advances in Inflammation Research, Vol. 8

Edited by G. Weissman

Raven Press; New York, 1984

xi + 251 pages. \$61.50

The series 'Advances in Inflammation Research' publishes high-quality reviews of original research relevant to inflammation. In volume 8 the chapters are of the usual high standard, but the price of the volume works out at 24.5 pence per page of text. This seems a lot to me, and it will certainly discourage purchase of the book.

Volume 8 begins with a clear and readable account of the role of anti-phospholipase proteins in the mechanism of the anti-inflammatory action of steroids. The logical approach adopted in this chapter enables non-experts to grasp easily the current status of the field. Chapter 2 reports ultrastructural studies on the mechanism by which macrophages phagocytose, and is illustrated by some good-quality electron micrographs. In Chapter 3, Segal reviews the role of superoxide and a *b*-type cytochrome in the phagocyte respiratory burst; this is a good and clear review but somewhat distorted towards the author's own views.

Chapter 4 discusses the effects of NSAID drugs on arachidonic acid metabolism. This is a well-reviewed area, but this chapter is different in that

it concentrates on the various assay techniques available to measure the effect of these drugs, which is very useful in attempting to make some sense of the complex and massive literature in the field.

Chapter 5 I found especially interesting; it deals with the role of neutrophils in periodontal disease. Given that most adults over 30 suffer some degree of periodontal disease, this problem has been given relatively little attention in the review literature and it is nice to see this defect remedied here. The next three chapters deal with the relationship between the sex steroids and autoimmune disease, the role of methylation reactions in the mechanism of platelet activation and the lipid alterations that take place during platelet activation. The penultimate chapter reviews the biological role of interleukin 1, and the book ends with a discussion of the inflammatory mediators released from basophils and mast cells in the presence of IgE.

Overall, a readable and instructive book. It is a pity that it is so expensive.

B. Halliwell

Growth Factors and Stem Cells

by Antony Burgess and Nicos Nicola

Academic Press; Sydney, New York, London, 1983

xi + 355 pages. £22.50, \$31.00

Every now and again a biological field which has been grinding along slowly suddenly erupts. This has just happened with animal growth factors. Even those with special interests in this area have

been caught off balance by the great flurry of activity and an acute need has emerged for an introductory text book. This is what this book aims to provide and it succeeds well.