Book reviews


This book consists of papers presented by 22 experts in the field of abnormal haemoglobins and thalassaemia presented at the 1973 International Conference on Standardization of Laboratory Methods and Reagents. The papers are short, ranging from one to six pages, with a longer section on peptide mapping, and provide comments on current methods for specimen handling, electrophoresis, chromatography, peptide chain separation and mapping, sickling tests, staining for inclusion bodies, detection of unstable haemoglobins, determination of foetal haemoglobin and HbA, and diagnosis of thalassaemia.

There is a need for an authoritative textbook on methodology, standardization, and quality control in this field. Several of these conference papers reach this standard and will be of considerable value to laboratories which provide a haemoglobinopathy diagnostic service. Other papers, however, are extremely brief or state only personal preferences and recommendations without providing either a substantial review or significant new data. This considerably reduces the impact of the book.

Despite this imbalance, haematologists with a laboratory interest should consider this book as a working manual to supplement existing textbooks on haemoglobinopathies. The text is not sufficiently detailed for the trainee or for laboratory staff without experience in the field, but many of the practical hints given will be of value to the more experienced haematologist or biochemist.

JOHN STUART


This book discusses both the biochemistry of enzymes and the clinical application of enzyme assays. The first eight chapters cover almost every aspect of enzyme biochemistry, including principles of methodology and intracellular localization. The last two chapters outline some of the clinical uses of the subject. Both sections are well written and informative.

W. J. RYAN


This is a truly monumental effort by a single author who has spent many years of research in the field of atherosclerosis.

It begins with a survey of the evolution of knowledge on the subject of the natural disorder in man, of its experimental counterpart in animals, and of the macromolecular construction blocks of which the arterial wall is composed. The chapter which follows describes the involvement of the two most important structural components of the vessel (smooth muscle and endothelium) and suggests mechanisms by which intimal thickening may occur. The third chapter on structural macromolecules (elastin...