Introduction

H.	Heini	Murer
----	-------	-------

Institute of Physiology, Zürich

This issue completes a series of reviews on recent developments in the field of membrane transport. The last decade has brought us a wealth of new information on membrane transport: a functional description (mostly on the basis of well-defined arrows) has been complemented by a knowledge of the corresponding integral membrane proteins. Molecular identification of channels, pumps and carriers was made possible by the development of new techniques (molecular cloning). On this basis, future studies will now help us to understand structure/function relationships at a molecular level. The molecular knowledge is also a prerequisite for a further understanding of the physiological regulation of these transporters be it at the level of cell homeostasis (e.g. volume, pH) or hormonal control leading to a homeostasis of different body compartments. We have learned a significant amount about membrane transport. An even more exciting research period still lies ahead of us.