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Ragnar Granit, M.D., Ph.D.

Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine—1967

On December 10th, 1967, King Gustaf VI Adolf of Sweden presented the 1967 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine to Dr. Ragnar Granit of the Karolinska Institutet, Dr. H. Keffer Hartline of Rockefeller University, and Dr. George Wald of Harvard University for their work on the physiology of vision.

One of the recipients of this Nobel Prize has also made major contributions to a field which is basic to the area covered by this journal. Dr. Ragnar Granit is equally well-known for his work on the fundamental physiology of motor control. Rare indeed is the scientist of such versatility that he can have a dominant influence on two major fields of research. Dr. Granit is such a man, as Dr. Eccles points out in the editorial which follows. Born in Finland in 1900, Dr. Granit received the M.D. degree from the University of Helsinki in 1927 and the equivalent of the Ph.D. degree from the same university in 1929. From 1929 to 1931 he worked at the Eldridge Reeves Johnson Foundation for Medical Physics of the University of Pennsylvania, and later he spent several years in the laboratory of Sir Charles Scott Sherrington at Oxford. In 1937 Dr. Granit was appointed Professor of Physiology at the University of Helsinki. In 1945 he became Director of the Nobel Institute for Neurophysiology, and in 1946 Professor of Neurophysiology at the Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, where he had been since 1940.

In the editorial which follows, Dr. John C. Eccles outlines the magnitude of the work on the physiology of motor control from Dr. Granit's laboratory. Dr. Eccles is presently a member of the AMA/ERF Institute for Medical Research in Chicago and was previously Professor of Physiology at the Australian National University, Canberra. He was himself the recipient of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1963.

In the second editorial which follows, Dr. Alfred J. Szumski relates his personal impressions of a year (1964 to 1965) which he spent in Dr. Granit's laboratory in Stockholm. Dr. Szumski received his Ph.D. in physiology from the Medical College of Virginia in 1963 and is presently Associate Professor of Physiology at that institution.

In presenting these editorials, the American Journal of Physical Medicine wants to honor Dr. Granit by highlighting the work of this versatile neurophysiologist in an area that is most fundamental to the field covered by this journal. The editor wants to express his sincere gratitude to Drs. Eccles and Szumski for their generous and speedy response to his request for the writing of these editorials.

H. D. Bouman, M.D.
Editor