

containing such a wealth of material would have benefited from a more substantial index than is supplied.

In conclusion, this is a book that anyone actively working in the cellulose field must buy. The person who is not a cellulose specialist but wants an overview of the current state of the art regarding the properties, structure and applications of cellulose and its derivatives would find this a publication which is difficult to assimilate.

J. R. Mitchell

Cellulose Chemistry and its Applications. Edited by T. P. Nevell and S. H. Zevonian. Ellis Horwood, Chichester, 1985. 552 pp. Price: £55.00.

It is refreshing that there is a new interest in the science and technology of naturally derived polymers. One of the foremost in any consideration of the polysaccharide representatives must be cellulose and this volume by two experts with life-long experience in the field is a fitting tribute to the painstaking labours of many scientists who have worked either from an industrial or academic base on the problems of structure, function, modification and utilization of this ubiquitous polymer.

Immediately one begins to peruse the volume, one senses that this is not a jumble of disjointed chapters but a series of carefully prepared reviews by authorities of international repute synthesized together to give a coherent account (like pearls on a necklace), the linking theme being that of polymer science. It is a mine of information which ranges from physical aspects of structure, solution behaviour (in aqueous and non-aqueous solvents), through chapters on its chemical characterization, modification and decomposition, to reviews of specific cellulose derivatives, applications and production processes. Notwithstanding all this feast of good things, the role of cellulose in the plant is not forgotten, its biogenesis, and the use of enzymes for structural characterization and modification.

Here then is an example of a publication which admirably displays how richly some of the natural polymers have now been studied and the wealth of information that has been derived from a variety of scientific approaches. That is not to say that all of its secrets have been

disclosed or problems solved: rather that there is now a sound basis of understanding on which to develop further research investigations and industrial applications.

The book is well produced, compact and though not priced for the undergraduate should be recommended to such readers as well as to the research scientist and technologist.

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