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Book Review

G. W. Gray

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Book Review

LIQUID CRYSTALS. Edited by S. Chandrasekhar. Heyden, London, Philadelphia and Rheine, 1980. x + 605 pp. (\$35; \$79; DM163.50.)

This volume derives from the Proceedings of an International Conference on Liquid Crystals which took place at the Raman Research Institute, Bangalore, India from December 3-8, 1979. A glance through the contents reveals that the conference was attended by many of the most well-known scientists in the field of liquid crystals, and this collection of over eighty contributed papers is unquestionably of great value in defining those areas of the subject in which activity is currently most intense and in pointing out new growth areas, such as liquid crystal polymers. The interested reader will therefore find up-to-date and authoritative articles on subjects such as the columnar or canonic phases formed by disc-like molecules, investigations of smectic polymorphism by a range of physical methods including X-ray and neutron scattering, the re-entrant phenomenon, the mechanical properties of liquid crystals, theoretical models for the nematic-isotropic transition, the influence of electric, magnetic and surface effects on liquid crystals, the applications of liquid crystals, amphiphilic and non-amphiphilic systems, and novel liquid crystal materials.

A book of this kind dealing with the proceedings of a conference is clearly of greatest value in the one or two year period immediately following the meeting and before it is overtaken by the proceedings of the next international gathering. The editor and publishers are therefore to be congratulated on the rapid and efficient publication of this volume. This has been achieved in 6-7 months by printing directly from camera-ready copy supplied by the contributors. In this case, the result has been very successful. Despite the variety of sources, the book has an acceptably uniform standard of print presentation, and the quality of diagrams, formulae and photographic plates is quite excellent. The text also contains a useful author and subject index, and articles are generally well referenced.

Although the scientific quality of the articles may be somewhat variable, as is to be expected in a multi-authored proceedings, the great majority of the papers are of such a standard that this volume must represent an essential source of reading and reference to all research workers and groups conducting investigations at any level in the field of liquid crystals.

G. W. GRAY