

BOOK REVIEWS

Topics in Flavonoid Chemistry and Biochemistry: edited by L. FARKAS, M. GABOR and F. KALLAY. Elsevier, Amsterdam, 1975. 286 pp. \$29.95.

This publication contains the proceedings of the fourth Hungarian Bioflavonoid Symposium held at Keszthely in 1973. There are 27 papers, mostly short accounts of recent research activities. All the major European schools of flavonoid chemistry are represented and the volume as a whole reflects current interests in the synthesis and organic reactions of these important plant compounds. Biochemistry of flavonoids is represented here mainly by

papers on the metabolism, absorption and antioxidant properties of flavonol glycosides.

Probably the most useful aspect of this volume is that it publishes the work of Hungarian flavonoid researchers, whose results may not otherwise be available in the English language. Most of the other papers have been published elsewhere since this Symposium took place. In summary, it represents a useful collection of papers on the chemistry and metabolism of flavonoids and it should be on the shelves of organic chemistry libraries.

University of Reading

JEFFREY B. HARBORNE

Progress in Botany, Vol. 37: edited by H. ELLENBERG, K. ESSER, H. MERXMULLER, F. SCHNEPF and H. ZIEGLER. Springer-Verlag, Berlin, 1975. 402 pp. \$49.20.

This volume continues the policy set in 1974 of publishing the majority of reviews in English instead of in German, so extending the value of this review series to a much wider scientific community. Less than a quarter of the pages of the present volume are still in German, as in the old *Fortschritte*. The policy of the editors is to cover particular topics every two or three years rather than annually so that the present volume mostly covers the literature of 1972–1974.

Topics of phytochemical interest covered in Vol. 37 are steroid biosynthesis (H. R. Schütte), carbohydrate

metabolism (E. Beck), photosynthesis (J. Ames) and mineral metabolism (H. Marschner). I would, however, like to single out the chapter by K. Kubitzki on *Systematics and Evolution of Seed Plants* for special mention. This is a wide ranging article, covering almost every possible aspect of the subject, including a sympathetic treatment of chemosystematics and a useful account of ecological aspects of secondary compounds. The author has succeeded in the difficult task of producing a critical, highly readable survey, while at the same time quoting all the major publications that have appeared in the field during the set period. This is highly recommended reading.

University of Reading

J. B. HARBORNE