

BOOK REVIEW

Les Composées phenoliques des Vegetaux. P. RIBEREAU-GAYON. Dunod, Paris, 1968. 254 pp., 56 Fr.

THE PHENOLIC constituents of plants have been increasingly studied during the last 20 years, rather because of their importance in consumer goods of various kinds than on account of any particular importance they might have in the plants themselves. Recently, however, as a result of the work of Thimann, Tomaszewsky, Galston and others, it is beginning to be realized that they may be very much concerned in the regulation of the processes of growth, differentiation and movement. A book which deals comprehensively yet concisely with the chemistry, biochemistry and distribution of these substances is therefore exceptionally timely. The author has himself for many years been concerned with their contribution to the enjoyment of one of the particularly good things of life, wine, and he has been careful to make the book as readable as possible to those not too well equipped with chemical knowledge, yet accurate and detailed enough to satisfy the requirements of those engaged in research either in academic or in technological laboratories.

It is a very well constructed book. It carries the reader through the choppy seas of flavonoid and ellagitannin chemistry with the minimum of discomfort into the more placid reaches of biochemical and physiological function. The bibliography is comprehensive, and this alone makes it a book which is invaluable for the phytochemist to have within arm's reach—if not indeed in his jacket pocket.

The book is well printed, sturdy and of convenient size, and it has the rather unexpected advantage (in a French publication) of an adequate index. An English edition of it should receive a warm welcome.

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