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Figures at the end of the issue.

BOOK REVIEW

SWAIN, T., WALLER, G. R. (ed.): RECENT ADVANCES IN PHYTOCHEMISTRY. Vol. 13: TOPICS IN THE BIOCHEMISTRY OF NATURAL PRODUCTS. — Plenum Press, New York—London 1979. 253 pp. US \$ 29.50.

This 13th Volume of a known series represents Proceedings of the First Joint Meeting of the American Society of Pharmacognosy and the Phytochemical Society of North America held at Oklahoma State University, Aug. 1978, and presents eight main lectures in a photoprint edition.

The new stage of the investigation of natural products tries to tackle several new problems, e.g. how various biosynthetic pathways are regulated. Relations between steric courses of enzymatic reactions and their mechanisms or stereochemical studies on the metabolism of amino acids (i.e., two introductory chapters of this book) give evidence of the latest development in this field. Closely related are the two following chapters: Biosynthesis of the Cephalotaxus Alkaloids and Enzymology of Indole Alkaloid Biosynthesis; Chapter 6: Regulation of Terpenoid Biosynthesis in Higher Plants touches similar problems as well. Chapter 5, issuing from the known Ourisson's Strasbourg School, gives a very interesting sight into a problem of evolution, i.e., in which way a given class of physiologically and ecologically important compounds (triterpenes hopanoids) have been superseded by another group (steroids) in the course of evolution. In the last two chapters (7 and 8) another interesting problem is studied, namely the transfer and modification of components to food chains; both chapters deal with a very actual theme of marine natural products (compounds incl. toxins from algae and biosynthesis of halogenated organic compounds).

As a whole, this very quickly published review of contemporary progress in our knowledge of nature represents valuable information for scientists working in both chemical and biological sciences.

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