

NEW BOOKS

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AROMATIC AND HETEROAROMATIC CHEMISTRY

A SPECIALIST PERIODICAL REPORT. VOLUME 1.*

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Commencing in 1967, the British Chemical Society began the publication for specialists of annual reviews of the current literature dealing with the principal branches of chemistry (A Specialist Periodical Report). At present approximately 34 such thematic yearbooks have been published. The first volume of a yearbook that correlates research in the chemistry of aromatic and heteroaromatic compounds, no less than 55% of the text of which is devoted to the latter, was recently published.

The book consists of 15 chapters written by British authors. In most of the chapters, the problems of the chemistry of aromatic and heteroaromatic compounds are examined together, but there is adequate division of these classes of compounds within the chapters. Individual sections are devoted to heterocyclic compounds with unusual heteroatoms, heteroannulenes, the formation of heterorings by means of intramolecular cyclizations, condensation and cycloaddition reactions, interconversion of heterorings, electrophilic (separately with respect to carbonatoms and heteroatoms), nucleophilic, and radical substitution reactions, reactions involving ring cleavage, addition reactions, reactions of substituents, and natural heteroaromatic compounds (mainly porphyrins and six-membered oxygen-containing systems). The literature is correlated from the middle of 1971 to the middle of 1972. Abstracts from Chemical Abstracts served as the chief source of the reviews. This, of course, left its mark on the expository style: it is very concise with a large number of references and, which is especially convenient, a large number of formulas and reaction schemes. The critical approach is completely absent in the reviews, but it would evidently be too demanding to require this of such an effective publication. It should be noted as a positive fact that in a number of cases the authors deal with the biological activity of compounds and present references to reviews and the most important studies published up to the middle of 1971. The book contains a comprehensive author index, and it might have been supposed that the references in it give an objective indication of the contribution of every scientist to this branch of chemistry. However, this is not the case: the names of a number of well-known chemists, the research of which thus has escaped the field of vision of the compilers of the book, are absent in the index.

From the point of view of heterocyclic chemists it would be more desirable if the handbook were entirely devoted to the chemistry of heterocyclic compounds. Nevertheless, the publication of this useful book, which makes it possible to form a judgment regarding the principal trends of research in the chemistry of heteroaromatic compounds and, of course, substantially facilitates literature searches, should be welcomed even in its present form.

*Chemical Society, London, 1973.

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