

Beilstein and His Era

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Summary

In the information age the collection and selection and of useful updated data are important problems in the chemistry field. The Beilstein Handbook of Organic Chemistry has a long history since the first edition was published in German and is still very popular for chemists even at the present time. Recently, this English Handbook has become a new database system of client server type with possible charge use through electronic publishing. In the present paper a short biography of Dr. Friedlich Konrad Beilstein (1838-1906), a Russian chemist who was the first editor of the Handbook is described.

Born in St. Petersburg, where he received his primary education, he left at the age of only fifteen for Heidelberg, where he studied chemistry under Bunsen. After two years he became a pupil of Liebig in Munich and he was much affected by other distinguished young scientists whom he met in Germany. Although he published many excellent papers, even in the field of experimental research, his name is has become immortal because of the production of the Handbook which became an integral part of his life. Additional brief details about some famous chemists, Liebig, Bunsen, Kekulé, Hofmann, Perkin, Williamson and Borodin who were very active in the Beilstein era also included.