



Book Review

Ullmann's Encyclopaedia of Industrial Chemistry (Fifth completely revised edition. A1 to A28: alphabetically arranged articles; B1 to B8: basic knowledge.) Edited by W. Gerhartz, VCH, Weinheim, FRG, 1988

Review of the six volumes: A11 to A16

A11: Synthetic inorganic fibres to formaldehyde. ISBN 3-527-20111-4.

A12: Formamides to hexamethylenediamines. ISBN 3-527-20112-5.

A13: High performance fibres to imidazole and derivatives. ISBN 3-527-20113-0.

A14: Immobilized biocatalysts to isoprene. ISBN 3-527-20114-9.

A15: Natural isotopes to magnesium compounds. ISBN 3-527-20115-7.

A16: Magnetic materials to mutagenic agents. ISBN 3-527-20116-5.

This encyclopaedic work is obviously the 'bible' of industrial chemistry, but it would be a shame if it was only used by industrial chemists. Where else would you find 'gold' next to 'gout remedies' or 'holography' next to 'hormones' or 'lasers', 'laxatives', 'lead', 'leather', and 'liquid crystals' in succession? It contains a great deal of information of use to chemists, physicists, food scientists, and biochemists. In the six volumes under review the elements fluorine, lead, lithium and magnesium receive full coverage, but so do fungicides, molluscicides and insect-controlling agents. Full chemical structures and proprietary names are provided, as they are in the mammoth section (110 pages) on flavours and fragrances. Foods and food technology merit 130 pages, whilst lubricants merit 95 pages, and glass 83 pages. The

biologist and pharmaceutical chemist are not forgotten since there are excellent sections on hormones, immunotherapy and vaccines, genetic engineering, and immobilisation of antibodies and enzymes.

No one perusing these volumes could fail to find something of interest whether they are a specialist in 'margarines and shortenings', or just discovering for the first time the complexities of these food substances. The same could be said for the gas production expert who discovers the fascination of 'icecream and frozen desserts', or the physicist who knows all there is know about 'magnetic materials' but gains new insights into 'holography', 'information storage materials', or 'lasers'.

The complete set of volumes is obviously an essential purchase for an industrial chemical concern, but the books will be very widely used in libraries that can raise the money needed for their purchase.

John Mann