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Book review

Progress in Ion Exchange – Advances and Applications, edited by A. Dyer, M.J. Hudson and P.A. Williams; Royal Society of Chemistry, Cambridge, 1997; price £79.50, XII+498 pp.

This book contains papers presented at the Ion Ex '95 Conference held in Wrexham, UK in September 1995. The scope of this conference was unusually broad, covering: (1) novel materials and applications, (2) ion chromatography and electrophoresis, (3) resins as biosorbents, (4) ion exchange for environmental clean-up, and (5) ion exchange in inorganic materials. The appeal of a conference such as this is that we can benefit from the ideas and wisdom of some of the premiere workers in the field. But at the other end of the scale there are apt to be a number of routine and uninspired presentations. This book reflects this almost unavoidable disparity. Fortunately the content and interest level of the "average", or middle, papers is pretty good. Most of the papers are concisely written with a similar format, reflecting an excellent editing job. Many of the papers are essentially a review of recent work from their own laboratory.

Readers no doubt will differ greatly as to what interests them, but let me note a few specific personal impressions. A paper by D.C. Sherrington on synthesis and structure of polymer resins gets the book off to a fine start. For example, *quantitative* structural analysis of methylene bridging due to chloromethyl groups is now possible. Several of the other papers in this section present some interesting new ideas on novel polymers.

Papers on ion chromatography and electrophoresis include a review of cation-exchange columns by S.L. Somerset and capillary ion electrophoresis in the nuclear power industry by N.J. Drew. While interesting, no attempt at all was made to cover any advances or references outside the authors' own company. Other papers in Part 2 are generally of good quality, but they contain little information that is really new or exciting. Several interesting papers are included in Part 3 on resins as biosorbents. For example, chromatographic strategy in bioproduct purification is discussed by J.H. Creedy, and the use of iodinated resins in water disinfection is covered by L.E. Osterhoudt. A total of 18 papers is presented in the section on ion-exchange for environmental clean-up. The use of a fibrous ion exchanger (J. Lehto et al.) is intriguing. The book concludes with 13 papers on inorganic ion-exchangers.

Despite some ups and downs, this will definitely be a valuable and useful book for many chemists. Even a single piece of important information or a new research idea makes any book truly worthwhile.

Ames, IA, USA — James S. Fritz

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