(GFI) database, which can be accessed via STN. This is, in future, to be updated annually, and will obviously ensure a comprehensive coverage.

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Kenneth R. Seddon

Tin-Based Antitumour Drugs; edited by M. Gielen, Springer-Verlag, Berlin, 1990, viii + 226 pages, DM128.00. ISBN 3-540-50417-6 and 0-387-50417-6.

This monograph presents the proceedings of the NATO Advanced Research Workshop on the Effect of Tin upon Malignant Cell Growth, held in Brussels in July 1989. (It is made up of eight directly reproduced typescripts, and as usual in such circumstances the type is variable in quality, but it is clearly legible even where it is unattractive in appearance.)

It is a timely publication, since there is a rapidly growing interest in the potential of tin compounds as anticancer agents, and the editor in his Foreword points to the remarkable fact that half of all tin compounds tested have been found to display antitumour activity, although none has so far reached the stage of clinical studies.

The first paper (by B.K. Keppler) offers an instructive account of the use of platinum complexes in cancer therapy and then considers the role of derivatives of other elements. Subsequent papers are concerned specifically with tin compounds; one (by N.F. Cardarelli) will be of particular interest to older readers in that it states "Evidence suggests that (1) tin hormones or chalones of thymic origin exist, (2) that they act on the genome in such a way as to (3) destroy malignant cells, and (4) retard the onset of senescence".

The monograph will certainly act as a stimulus to research on the pharmaceutical potential of tin compounds, and I suspect that it will also be much quoted in applications to grant-giving agencies for fundamental projects in organotin chemistry that are not really concerned with biological activity at all!

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Colin Eaborn

Dictionary of Organometallic Compounds. Cumulative Structure Index to Volumes 1–5; edited by J.E. Macintyre, Chapman and Hall, London, 1990, ix + 256 pages, £150.00. ISBN 0-412-235680-5.

Publication of the Fifth Supplement marks the end of the first edition of this highly regarded dictionary. (In the future new editions will be produced complete at fairly short intervals rather than at longer intervals with supplements.) Appropriately the edition ends with a structure index covering the original volume and all five supplements, and since for all but the simplest compounds the compounds are shown as clearly drawn structural diagrams it is very easy to form an overall impression of the range of organometallic compounds known for each element or to locate a particular compound or type of compound. Even to glance through the structures for an element is instructive and can be a stimulus to ideas for future research. In looking through the pages I was surprised to see that a significant number of the compounds are not organometallic in terms of the most commonly

used definition (i.e. containing a carbon–metal bond), and the proportion of these is much higher for some elements than for others; I doubt the wisdom of including such compounds (e.g. Me_2NAsCl_2, $(t\text{-}BuO)_3As$).

The complete first edition of the Dictionary should certainly be available to all organometallic chemists and in all libraries associated with the teaching of advanced chemistry.

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