useful material here. The publishers are to be commended for keeping the price to a modest level by current standards, and all libraries should be purchasing this series.

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Inorganic Biochemistry of Iron Metabolism, by R.R. Crichton, Ellis Horwood Limited, Chichester, 1991, pp. 263. $85.95. ISBN 0-13-728742-9

This is a book written by an enthusiast who has not been afraid to let his personality express itself. This may not be acceptable to all in a scientific culture where one is encouraged to render everything impersonal, but I found it refreshing. I hope others might, too.

The book attempts to cover most aspects of iron in biology, and also to provide introductory background. This is ambitious, and the background is perhaps most use as revision for those already familiar with the field. Headings such as "Low Molecular Weight Iron" might cause problems whereas those skilled in the art can easily accept it. A long chapter summarises the functions of iron in biological systems, and then the meat of the book commences, as the author deals, in turn, with iron uptake and release in cells, plants and animals, iron transport, release into cell metabolism, and storage. The final part of the book deals with more macroscopic effects, regulation of iron levels, the effects of iron overload and deficiency on man, iron and oxidation, and finally, iron and infection. There is an extensive bibliography and a short index.

This is not a book for organometallic chemists as such, but a book for anyone interested in coordination chemistry and its particular expression in biological systems. It is well written, and the author has not been afraid to express his own ideas. It provides a valuable perspective for those of us who might be tempted to believe that iron in biology is iron-sulfur clusters plus a bit of other things. I strongly recommend it.

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Dioxygen Activation and Homogeneous Catalytic Oxidation (Proc. 4th Int. Symp., Hungary, September 1990), Studies in Surface Science and Catalysis, 66 edited by L.I. Simándi, Elsevier, Amsterdam, 1991, pp. xiv + 700. US$225.50. ISBN 0-444-88876-4

Normally I do not look favourably upon books arising from conferences or symposia. They are often generated by exposing the various authors to some sort of duress, the contributions are short and lack comprehensiveness, and are often not of value to someone who did not attend. The inclusion of posters helps very little, since one is not able to amplify the telegraphic presentation by talking directly to the authors. Admitting all this, and more, the present volume was a pleasant surprise.

This volume presents a reasonable account of the field of homogeneous oxidation of organic molecules. The editor is to be congratulated on producing the volume relatively quickly and on persuading the authors to expand even the posters into papers of reasonable length. There are 13 main sections, commencing with the oxidation of saturated, aromatic, and unsaturated hydrocarbons, passing through sections on copper, iron, and cobalt catalysts, and finishing with industrial and miscellaneous applications.

The individual contributions are generally adequately referenced, and they include both reviews and research papers. The latter include some experimental details. The production (camera-ready) is to some degree uneven, but I have no doubt that this volume will be generally much more useful than is usual for volumes arising from conferences. That being so, I still have some reservations. At the price charged, who is going to buy it apart from libraries? Is the effort put into producing it commensurate with the benefit to the community? Or will most of the material appear as experimental papers in more accessible and conventional journals, resulting in dual publication? This is a good and interesting volume. Whether such volumes are the best way of reaching the community is still not clear.

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