

## Book Reviews

*Selective Reactions of Metal-Activated Molecules (Proceedings of the Symposium held in Würzburg, September 18–20, 1991)*

H. Werner, A.G. Griesbeck, W. Adam, G. Bringmann and W. Kiefer (eds.), Vieweg, Braunschweig/Wiesbaden, 1992, pp. 235 + x. DM98. ISBN 3-528-06450-1

This book consists of abstracts of the lectures given at the Symposium followed by abstracts of posters, which occupy about 40% of the volume. Despite the somewhat uneven presentation of some of the contributions, the editors have done a reasonable job.

I must admit to being unenthusiastic about books such as this, based upon symposia or conferences. A good lecture should provide a good review, presenting data and assessing it critically. The thirteen plenary lectures presented vary, but some of them fulfil these criteria reasonably well, though in the nature of things the authors will always concentrate on their own work. The material ranges from biological (the Role of Iron in Lipoxxygenase Activity) to very physical (Structures of Solvated Metal Ions and Complexes in Solution Determined by EXAFS). This latter is very interesting, though it is not obvious why such a lecture was included. Other lectures are more conventional in scope (asymmetric oxidation, symmetric synthesis, chiral reagents, etc.). The shortest contribution is perversely entitled "In Search of Nonselectivity". Most synthetic transition-metal chemists do not find this a problem, unless it is in the avoidance. Occasionally, the lack of the editorial hand of a native English speaker is evident, but the overall standard is excellent. However it is not clear from the index whether all thirteen or only twelve of the plenary lectures are presented here.

The poster abstracts are in three groups. A poster is meant to be a summary presentation of data which can be discussed with a presenter. I very much doubt whether poster abstracts (is that the correct word?) can fulfil this aim. There are not enough details for a good evaluation, and the reader cannot pose questions. In fact, these are more than abstracts. They cover the areas of dioxygen and C–H bond activation, organo-metal-assisted selective synthesis, and spectroscopic and theoretical studies on the structure and dynamics of metal-bonded molecules. A vibrational analysis of benzonaphthopyrone does not seem to fit well into the

last category, but in general the contributions are of fairly wide interest.

The editors state that they hope to have provided a useful (admittedly selective) survey of current trends and concepts in this area of chemistry. To a degree, they have, and many will find some value in this volume. However, if you really want to do this, why not write (or edit) a book devoted to a more comprehensive treatment?

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*Gmelin Handbook of Inorganic and Organometallic Chemistry, 8th Edition, In Organoindium Compounds 1*  
Springer-Verlag, Berlin, 1991, pp. 442 + xiii. ISBN 3-540-93541-6

This volume represents the only Gmelin volume devoted to organoindium chemistry yet to appear, and it claims a complete literature coverage until Spring, 1991. It deals with compounds in which at least one indium–carbon bonding interaction can be assumed.

The volume begins with indium "triorganyls". This is an English rendering of a German phrase which the reviewer finds unpleasant, but which he is forced to admit has certain advantages. Then the discussion moves to organoindium halides, and then on through organoindium derivatives with oxygen, sulfur, selenium, boron, nitrogen and its congeners, and transition metals. All these compounds contain indium(III), and the final section of the book considers organoindium compounds in lower oxidation states.

The author, J. Weidlein, has apparently been exceedingly thorough, listing every compound reported, including some for which apparently no properties have been determined. His "General Remarks" are useful summaries of the data in the relevant section, but he also on occasion makes valuable critical comments which aid literature evaluation.

Certainly, with this compendium one does not need access to the original literature. However, inevitably it concentrates on preparations and properties (including