

Book review

Organometallic and Coordination Chemistry of Platinum, by U. Belluco, Academic Press, London, 1974, xii + 701 pages, £17.50.

This volume is part of the Academic Press series of monographs on organometallic chemistry edited by P.M. Maitlis, F.G.A. Stone and R. West, and the only comparable book in the field is that by F.R. Hartley "The Chemistry of Platinum and Palladium" (Applied Science Publishers, London, 1973). Books of this kind have several functions. They may act as introductions for students commencing research projects in the area or for experienced workers new to platinum chemistry. They may also find use as handbooks for research groups concerned with platinum chemistry, providing an adequate summary of published material and rapid entry to the primary literature. The books by Belluco and Hartley fulfill the first of these functions rather well. The various chapters provide readable and accurate accounts of classes of compounds or of topics in the physical aspects of their chemistry, and the recipes for starting materials given by Hartley are useful for giving new research students some grasp of the practicalities of synthetic methods. Both books offer a considerable saving of time to the worker new to the field.

Both books fail to reach the highest standard as handbooks for the worker active in the area. His time would be saved by ready access to a piece of work perhaps only vaguely remembered. The thoroughness of the authors makes it probable that the fact he requires is between the covers, but insufficient attention has been given to the problem of access. I would have liked to find a much better subject index in both books, and preferably an author index as well. The problem of access in Belluco's book is accentuated by the fact that about 150 of the 701 pages are taken up with short summaries of recent papers which are organised only under the chapter headings of the main text. There follows a list of titles of even more recent papers, which has not been subjected to any grouping. It would surely have been better to accept the limitations of the book format in its coverage of the latest developments and to have used the space for summary tables of references or for an expanded index.

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