

NEWS

Book review

Voltammetric Determination of Molecules of Biological Significance

by **W. Franklin Smyth**,

170 pp, John Wiley & Sons, £35 ISBN 0471933457

Voltammetric methods of analysis are of increasing importance and have even given rise to commercially relevant devices. It is therefore valuable to have the subject extensively yet succinctly described. Dr Smyth covers the field thoroughly: indeed it is amazing to realize the types of compounds for which voltammetric methods of analysis have proved valuable ranging from sulphonamides to carbamates, arsonates to isocyanates. It is a brief book; too brief because the reader would have been better served if the author had chosen to be critical about some of the methods used or at least considered them in a comparative manner. For example, there is a lengthy table which includes the various methods used in the determination of glucose and other sugars but the reader would have been better served if some comparison had been made

between them. Perhaps the author avoided this problem by including only those methods in which he had confidence but the reader should have been informed. In the Preface, Dr Smyth states that if the reader wishes to know about 'the basic principles of the particular voltammetric techniques,' he or she 'is referred to standard texts for information'. This may be fine for electrochemists but I imagine that the author (and the publishers) hope that the work will find use by analytical chemists to whom many of the electrochemical techniques, certainly in their modern forms, are anything but familiar. No doubt this would have required a longer book but I imagine that many readers would have been grateful. Having said so, I would not like to give the impression that the text is seriously flawed: if voltammetric techniques have been used successfully, the fact will be recorded in this valuable but brief account.

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