

BOOK REVIEW

Annual Surveys of Organometallic Chemistry, Volume 1, by D. SEYFERTH AND R. B. KING. Elsevier Publishing Company, Amsterdam, 1965. pp. viii + 330, D. fl. 55.-

It has been stated that two new scientific or technological periodicals are launched into the world every day. Certainly, as chemists, we all feel the pressure of increasing numbers of primary journals and even of review journals, many of doubtful value to the scientific community. They increase both the cost of disseminating scientific knowledge and the task of the scientist in its retrieval from the literature. Anything which lightens the load is to be welcomed. Annual surveys of the literature, provided they include all work of importance and do not appear in too great a number, are a partial answer to the problem.

The new periodical under review is an annual survey of the chemistry of compounds containing at least one metal to carbon bond. It is the only new chemistry periodical which your reviewer has welcomed in twenty years. It has been well prepared by two young and enthusiastic authors, who have combed 64 academic journals including Chemical Abstracts. Its coverage of the academic literature is sufficiently complete and in sufficient detail to allow the reader to appreciate fully the main advances during the year 1964. It brings to mind at once the Annual Reports of the Chemical Society. Its standard is similar but it gives a much fuller survey of its narrower field. It is free from errors, well written, well produced and easy to read. Nevertheless it displays some of the tedium of style of such compilations, e.g. nearly every paragraph in the second half of the book starts with the names of authors of papers in the primary journals.

It contains 310 pages of text equally divided between a Part I, "Main Group Metals" and a Part II, "Transition Metals", the responsibility of D. Seyferth and R. B. King respectively. Part I includes on its borders in the Periodic Table mercury, zinc, cadmium, boron, silicon, antimony and bismuth, but neither arsenic nor tellurium. Part II includes the actinides and lanthanides in Group III, copper, silver and gold, and all elements between these in the Periodic Table. The volume has no subject index but a contents list which suffices because the metals are treated in order of the Periodic Table. There is an author index so that any particular worker's contribution can be rapidly surveyed.

The volume is strongly recommended to all who are interested in organometallic chemistry, and many would welcome it to their private libraries, but at about £ 5.10.0. it will not get the very wide circulation which it deserves.

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