

Journal of Organometallic Chemistry, 438 (1992) C13
Elsevier Sequoia S.A., Lausanne

Book review

The Organometallic Chemistry of the Transition Elements, by R.H. Crabtree, John Wiley and Sons Inc., New York, 1988, pp. 422 + xv. £16.50. ISBN 0-471-57388-4

This is a Wiley International Edition, soft-cover in a student edition, an unabridged reprinting of the original hard-cover 1988 version. Therefore it will be familiar to those who survey such textbooks for teaching. It is based on a lecture course given by the author to students at Yale. His personality comes through clearly. It is an attractive book. It attempts to cover a vast amount of material, and assumes very little knowledge of basic chemistry. There is a brief introduction to coordination chemistry, which, for example, discusses Werner theory, the *trans*-effect, and HSAB. Each Chapter contains lists of problems and some basic references. At the end of the book are brief solutions to the problems.

The subject is moving so fast that in some ways this book already shows its age. Some of the treatments are so cursory that they probably will convey little understanding to the poorer student. The book is intended for senior undergraduates and for post-graduate courses. As such, it will certainly fulfil most of the needs of UK undergraduates. I find its general presentation with its emphasis on mechanisms and reactions rather than structures refreshing and useful. Whether it is to be preferred to other competitors in the area, some of more recent vintage, is an open question.

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