

chemistry borders on physics, geology, materials science and metallurgy do not match the high standard set by the rest of the book.

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Tellurium in Organic Synthesis

N. Petragnani, Academic Press, London 1994 £45.00
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I awaited the review copy of "Tellurium in Organic Synthesis" with a keen sense of anticipation since it seemed to me that the book was timely, and that it might possibly encourage further research with this fascinating but unfashionable element. The book is one in the Academic Press series "Best Synthetic Methods", and is written by Nicola Petragnani who has contributed to the literature of organotellurium chemistry during four decades. Having now received and read the book I must confess to a slight feeling of disappointment.

Perhaps the major point of concern is that a superficially attractively produced book costing £45.00 should contain more proof reading errors than I have encountered in any other publication, be it book, article, or thesis. The actual text is relatively free of such errors but they abound in the equations and references. Thus in many equations products and reactants are identical; in some bonds are missing and in others numbers in formulae are not sub-scripted. Within the references the names of numerous authors are misspelt and initials are used as an alphabetic equivalent of random numbers. For example, D.L.J. Clive, an important contributor to the area, is listed as: D.L.Y., D.L.J., D.L., L.J., C.J., — a case of "will the real Professor Clive please stand up"! Spot checks on the numerical accuracy of the references were more reassuring, but one does not expect this level of carelessness in a book of this type.

The book is designed as a half-way house between the monograph and the laboratory manual. Thus, in

addition to surveys of the available organotellurium-based methodologies, each section contains practical details of individual syntheses. A one page introductory chapter is followed by a short chapter giving details of the preparation of inorganic tellurium reagents, the value of which is questionable. My own students will be surprised to be told that, in the solid state, TeCl_4 has the ionic structure $\text{TeCl}_3^+ \text{Cl}^-$, a "fact" supported by a Raman study of 1954! More useful is the next chapter detailing the syntheses of the major classes of organotellurium compounds. It could, with no loss of value, have been shorter, but perhaps those less familiar with the field than this reviewer might find it helpful to have such a review in situ. The treatment is uncritical, various routes to particular classes of compound being catalogued. This may, however, be wise, since, it is my own experience that different workers often develop particular preferences for one route over another, and that these preferences differ between the workers.

The meat of the book is encountered on page 88 with the long final chapter "Tellurium in Organic Synthesis". The chapter is sensibly sectioned and well indexed, and is generally user-friendly. Each section opens with a summary of the particular methodology, followed by a series of typical laboratory procedures that could be adapted to a particular worker's needs; the section ends with a listing of references. I was unaware of major omissions in coverage.

Although I have been critical of some aspects of the presentation of this book, it would be quite untrue to suggest that the volume is lacking in merit. I found it generated ideas as I was reading, which is always a good sign; also, unlike some new books, it does fill a genuine gap. Thus, if synthetic chemists can exercise patience when they encounter the numerous typographical errors, they may agree with me that it will prove to be one of the more useful recent additions to personal and institutional libraries.

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