

is pleasingly thorough, and the arrangement of the material well executed. To the Organometallic Chemist the *Surveys* remain a must as a vital aid in keeping abreast of the rapid advances occurring in the field.

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*Vol. 5, No. 2. MAIN GROUP METALS, GROUPS IA, IIA AND IIB: ANNUAL SURVEYS COVERING THE YEAR 1968;* edited by D. SEYFERTH and R. B. KING. Elsevier Sequoia, Lausanne, 1969, 146 pp. Subscription price (4 issues) \$(U.S.) 19.70.

In the short time since its inception, *Annual Surveys of Organometallic Chemistry (Organometallic Chemistry Reviews B)* has become the authoritative record of progress in this area of chemistry. The present issue (No. 2 of Vol. 5) contains reviews of the organometallic chemistry of lithium (W. H. Glaze), Sodium and Potassium (W. H. Glaze), Beryllium (E. C. Ashby), Magnesium (E. C. Ashby), Calcium (E. G. Ashby), Zinc (J. G. Noltes), Cadmium (J. G. Noltes), and Mercury (D. Seyferth). Each author provides a comprehensive coverage of the relevant literature for 1968, and the whole issue reviews approximately six hundred publications. In general, brevity and lucidity are well combined and each review can be understood without frequent reference to the original literature. However, the section on organolithium compounds would be more intelligible if the subject matter had been subdivided as in the reviews of organomagnesium and organomercury compounds. The inclusion of a brief review of organocalcium chemistry is to be commended and it is to be hoped that it succeeds in its aim to stimulate activity in this neglected area. The short account of organocadmium chemistry could have been combined with that on organozinc chemistry since most of the references for the former section are included in the latter and parts of the discussion of organocadmium compounds duplicate those for organozinc compounds. A noteworthy feature of the section on organomercury compounds, and to a lesser extent that on organomagnesium chemistry, is the injection of critical comment and an attempt to assess the evidence in matters of controversy. The mercury review also makes very effective use of references to earlier *Annual Surveys*, giving an wholly admirable sense of continuity to developments in this area.

This issue is essential reading for all interested in the chemistry of Main Group organometallic compounds, both for an authoritative account of previous work and for the stimulus it provides for further work. Some parts should appeal to a very wide range of readers, *e.g.* the subsection dealing with the use of organomercurials in organic synthesis.

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