

Book Review

Inorganic Chemistry Concepts Vol. 4, Inorganic Molecular Dissymmetry, by Y. Saito. Springer-Verlag, New York, price \$ 42.00.

This is the fourth volume of a series entitled *Inorganic Chemistry Concepts*. Like the previous three, this volume is on physical inorganic chemistry, which at present is hardly of burning interest although the blurb makes claims to topicality.

Saito is well known for his work on the absolute configurations of metal complexes as determined by anomalous X-ray scattering, so it is not surprising that after an initial discussion on stereochemistry, there is a lengthy chapter on this topic. This is easily the best section of the book. Subsequent chapters deal with conformational analysis, isomerism, electron-density distributions determined by X-ray diffraction (no mention of polarized neutron scattering) and circular dichroism.

None of these chapters is particularly illuminating to the present reviewer because, as a past practitioner of the art, it is clear to me that nothing radically new has happened in the area since about 1970. Is it really necessary to tell us, some 25 years later, that Moffitt made an error in the sign of the angular momentum operator? Much of the book has this nostalgic quality.

The author says that the examples he selects are those that interest him but by doing this he has left out a lot of important work. Moreover, even after he has made his selections, he omits a complete discussion by ignoring similar work done by others.

It is not obvious that this book is necessary, and for the price one might have expected a better and more balanced review of the literature.

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