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Book review

Gas Chromatography of Organometallic Compounds, by T.R. Crompton,
Plenum Press, New York and London, 1982, vii + 589 pages, £75.00

In his preface to this book the author states that he has attempted to present a review of the state of the art and to provide detailed practical procedures to enable workers to carry out an analysis without recourse to the literature. Consideration of the content shows that he has, in fact, presented such minute detail of practical methods as to verge on the absurd. It is of little use to the modern chromatographer of organometallics to learn that a Wilkens A-90-P gas chromatograph was used, or that the chart paper was run at 15 cm per minute on a 0.5 mV recorder, and so on. Indeed, except where special equipment was used, little if any of the practical details are of any use, and the information would be better gained by perusal of the relevant literature pertaining to a particular separation. In this reviewer's opinion, at least a quarter, and possibly a third, of this book is superfluous.

There is little doubt that the author has covered the literature in some detail. There are 528 cited references, the large majority covering the period 1960–75, and on the basis of this account it would appear that little relevant work was published between 1975 and 1982. It would have been useful if the review had dealt critically with the work presented, but there is little comment, and instead mainly a list of what has been done. Nevertheless, there are some useful sections; for example, the compilations of retention indices in the form of tables and figures. In the seven chapters, the organometallic compounds of the various groups are considered, with particular attention to Group IVB. While some useful information is presented, it is not sufficient to warrant the very high cost.

The author set himself a very difficult task with this review volume. It was a worthwhile objective, and it is a pity that the book falls so far short of what could have been achieved.

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