

Inverse problems in Mössbauer spectroscopy are, however, too methodological to be usefully detailed in books on applications aimed at a broad readership. In any case more than just one isolated chapter on spectral analysis would be necessary for a fair exposition of that delicate problem. Some chapters mention the new and exciting extensions of the Mössbauer technique using synchrotron radiation facilities that will hopefully be included in one of the next volumes of the series. To conclude, volume 2 (as well as volume 1) of *Mössbauer Spectroscopy Applied to Magnetism and Materials Science* is a useful tool not only for practitioners of Mössbauer spectroscopy but also for materials scientists who are interested in the original stories often told by nuclear probes.

Reviewer: Gérard Le Caër, *Ingenieur Civil des Mines (Mining Engineer)*, is *Directeur de Recherche au CNRS (National Center for Scientific Research) Laboratoire de Science et Génie des Matériaux Métalliques (Laboratory of Science and Engineering of Metallic Materials)*, *Ecole des Mines de Nancy (Mining School of Nancy)*. *Le Caër has been using Mössbauer spectroscopy in metallurgy and in solid-state chemistry for about 30 years. He has also been working on amorphous metallic alloys and currently works mainly on nanomaterials and mechanical alloying. He is also interested in some topics in statistical physics where he has been more particularly involved in topological models of disordered cellular structures and in random matrices.*

Current Opinion in Solid State and Materials Science

A.K. Cheetham, M.S. Dresselhaus, and J.M. Thomas, eds.

(Current Chemistry, London)

6 issues/year

Subscription: Personal \$240/

On-Line \$264; Institutional \$960/

On-Line \$1,055; Students \$120/

On-Line \$120 in US.

ISSN 1359-0286

In recent years several short-review journals have appeared to complement the venerable *Annual Reviews and Critical Reviews* series with their format of large, comprehensive reviews. These new publications include the *Trends in...* series, *Polymer News*, and many newsletters covering advances in technology. Since there are no established models, these new journals have great freedom to define their audience and develop their own style.

Current Opinion divides materials into 13 fields (including Electronic Materials, Metals and Alloys, Biomaterials, and

Polymers) and visits each once per year. Each has one or two section editors who provide an overview to introduce about half a dozen articles on specific topics. Each article has a bibliography, which is annotated to highlight important papers with titles and, occasionally, brief summaries. The intention is that the bibliography will be a useful source separate from the accompanying article.

These articles are not for experts. In a few pages it is not possible to rise much above an advanced textbook level and not many authors have the courage (or arrogance) really to deliver a personal opinion or a manifesto. In contrast to the theme issues of *MRS Bulletin*, the articles are scattered over a wide range of topics and so cannot build upon one another to provide depth. The articles would be a good source for graduate student papers, for underpinning a lecture or two to seniors, or for passing time on airplanes in keeping up a broad appreciation for materials. In contrast to *MRS Bulletin*, again, it is too expensive to tear out the useful parts and leave the rest for the entertainment of the next passenger.

Breadth of coverage is also likely to be a problem. Two editors will find it difficult to cover all of polymer science, for instance. After a couple of years, there are signs of clustering in some topics. This is bad if an individual buys the journal for broad current awareness but is less of a problem if the journal is an archived source of surveys.

The balance between researchers, libraries, and publishers is clearly shifting, mainly because the mechanics of printing no longer chokes communication and the mechanics of distribution will not be a limit for much longer. Equally obvious is that no one knows quite how to respond. Journals like *Current Opinion* should be praised for trying to open new channels for scientists to talk to one another. Materials science may be a harder nut to crack than most because our research interests tend to be so diffuse, whereas other disciplines are more focused on a common set of problems-du-jour. It does seem a little ridiculous that the main sources of scientific information operate according to models established by the Royal Society three hundred years ago. These experiments deserve our interest and attention.

Reviewer: Paul Calvert is a professor in the *Department of Materials Science and Engineering at the University of Arizona in Tucson*. *He is currently working on the application of freeform fabrication techniques to composites and biomimetic materials.*

Forward Recoil Spectrometry: Applications to Hydrogen Determination in Solids

J. Tirira, Y. Serruys, and P. Trocellier
(Plenum Press, New York, 1996)

462 pp, \$110.00

ISBN 0-306-45249-9

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*Exhibiting at the 1998 MRS Spring Meeting