- 844 Table 14.3, column 1, row 3, change " v_D " to " vD ". Left-hand column, lines 2 and 3, change "the Wyckoff letter (column 1), the multiplicity (column 2)" to "the Wyckoff letter (column 2), the multiplicity (column 1)".
- 850 Left-hand column, line 17, change "Auslöchungen" to "Auslöschungen".
- 851 Right-hand column, line -30, change "(Table 14.3, 845" to "(Table 14.3), 845".
- 851 Right-hand column, line -21, change "Laue class symmetry" to "Laue class and symmetry".
- 852 Right-hand column, line -20, change "Priority rule, 50, 806" to "Priority rule, 52, 806".

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Book Reviews

Works intended for notice in this column should be sent direct to the Book-Review Editor (R. O. Gould, Department of Chemistry, University of Edinburgh, West Mains Road, Edinburgh EH9 3JJ, Scotland). As far as practicable books will be reviewed in a country different from that of publication.

Acta Cryst. (1987). A43, 839-840

Symmetry: unifying human understanding. (Vol. 10 of Modern applied mathematics and computer science, Series editor E. Y. RODIN.) Edited by I. HARGITTAI. Pp. xvi+1045. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1986. Price US \$115.00.

This is a coffee-table book, not a textbook at all - for it gives no single, coherent, developed account of its subject.

But what a coffee-table book! A serious and a massive one. The coffee table itself will have to be strongly made, and many hundreds of cups of coffee will be poured before the contents of this book are fully absorbed, such is the size and such the volume, detail and variety of the contents of this production.

It is a collection of 65 mostly quite disparate essays, each on some symmetry-related topic, contributed by a galaxy of distinguished authors from 18 different countries. Each of these essays is a small gem in its own right; they average about 16 pages in length (about 10000 words, since the print is small); they are in excellent English and are usually

complete with a business-like list of references. There are very many fascinating illustrations all through the book, some ten or so in colour. It is a book that is hard to put down once one has lifted it up. Only in one case (Zvilna, on trihedrons) are there some infelicities.

The sheer range of subject areas is striking. Predictably, quite a number of the essays are on symmetry in the graphic arts (about nine); but there are also articles on symmetry in ornaments, dance, music, mathematics, fractals, even literature, as well as biology, physics and chemistry. Symmetry in various aspects of chemistry scores ten essays (of course, the editor is a chemist himself) which include symmetry considerations in reactions, bonding, isomerism and the Periodic Table. Readers of Acta Cryst. will want to know how crystallography fares in this compilation. Indeed, some six or seven essays are explicitly related to crystallography. Of these, the one I find most interesting and readable (although the English here is occasionally less than perfect) is Vainshtein's, on biological molecules; Senechal's essay is also both interesting and thoughtful, ending by posing the unsolved problem of the origin of twinned crystals, after a fine survey of crystal morphology;