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# Metal Complexes in Aqueous Solutions

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Stability constants are fundamental to understanding the behavior of metal ions in aqueous solution. Such understanding is important in a wide variety of areas, such as metal ions in biology, biomedical applications, metal ions in the environment, extraction metallurgy, food chemistry, and metal ions in many industrial processes. In spite of this importance, it appears that many inorganic chemists have lost an appreciation for the importance of stability constants, and the thermodynamic aspects of complex formation, with attention focused over the last thirty years on newer areas, such as organometallic chemistry. This book is an attempt to show the richness of chemistry that can be revealed by stability constants, when measured as part of an overall strategy aimed at understanding the complexing properties of a particular ligand or metal ion. Thus, for example, there are numerous crystal structures of the Li<sup>+</sup> ion with crown ethers. What do these indicate to us about the chemistry of Li<sup>+</sup> with crown ethers? In fact, most of these crystal structures are in a sense misleading, in that the Li<sup>+</sup> ion forms no complexes, or at best very weak complexes, with familiar crown ethers such as 12-crown-4, in any known solvent. Thus, without the stability constants, our understanding of the chemistry of a metal ion with any particular ligand must be regarded as incomplete. In this book we attempt to show how stability constants can reveal factors in ligand design which could not readily be deduced from any other physical technique.

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