

BOOK REVIEWS

Kunststoff-Handbuch. DR. RICHARD VIEWEG and DR. ERNST BECKER
Eds. Carl Hanser, Verlag Munich. Vol. III.

Since 1965 there appears the individual volumes of the *Kunststoff-Handbuch*, which promised to become an indispensable source for fundamental and applied information in the entire field of plastics. The number of volumes, twelve; the size of each volume, 500–800 pages; and the names of the contributors make it certain that the Handbook will become a classic in its field not only in factual content but, also in style, organization, and appearance. Professor Richard Vieweg, who is the Editor in Chief deserves great admiration for the courage to start such a gigantic job and for the efficiency of its execution.

Volume III is devoted to natural products, which have been modified by chemical means to improve their properties and widen their applicability. Plywood is the first material for which the original production methods and applications are described; there follows cellulose in numerous modifications from Vulkanfiber to cellophane, bottle tops, and sponges. Two long chapters are devoted to cellulose esters and cellulose ethers with an admirably complete listing of numerous important recent patents and technical articles. The last chapter describes the uses of modified proteins, particularly casein and recognizes the fact that this specific branch of modified natural products is not growing any more very substantially.

This review would be incomplete without mentioning the introduction by Dr. Ernst Becker which presents a brief but very impressive history of the development of modified natural products in the field of commercial plastics.

H. Mark

Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn