

## BOOK REVIEW

*METHODEN DER ORGANISCHEN CHEMIE* (Houben-Weyl). Volume VIII. Oxygen Compounds III. Fourth Edition. Edited by Eugen Müller. Pp. xviii + 713 (including 13 illustrations) and Index. Georg Thieme Verlag, Stuttgart, 1952. D.M. 98.00.

Houben-Weyl, *Methods of Organic Chemistry*, enjoys international reputation as a standard reference work amongst organic chemists. The present volume, although the eighth of what is to be a series of 14 such volumes, is the first of the fourth edition to appear. This new edition has been completely revised. Some idea of the extent of the revision entailed in its preparation will be apparent in its expansion from 4 volumes in the third edition to the 14 volumes of the present edition. It is the expressed intention of the editors that greater emphasis will be placed on preparative methods than was the case in earlier editions, and it is obvious from even the most casual examination of the present volume that this is so. Individual preparative methods are given in considerable detail, so that for the great majority of preparations further reference to the original literature is unnecessary. Yields are given wherever possible, and the relative merits of alternative reactions can therefore be readily assessed. Abundant reference is made to original literature, and the editorial claim that each volume is complete to within approximately one year of its publication, would appear to be fully justified as far as volume VIII is concerned. Volume VIII, the third in the series to deal with organic compounds containing oxygen functions, contains sections which deal with the following topics: peroxides; simple derivatives of carboxylic acids; nitriles and *isonitriles*; carboxylic acids (and decarboxylation); esters of carboxylic acids; *N*-derivatives of carboxylic acids. Each section has been compiled by an expert or group of experts, and the contents of each are classified at the beginning of the section, so that reference to any particular subject is easy. An author index and complete subject index, in which individual chemical entities mentioned in the text are listed, completes the volume and greatly enhances its value. The material of each section is presented systematically, with methods of preparation of the parent types first, followed by a treatment of their transformation into various derivatives. The new Houben-Weyl will undoubtedly be of great value to the organic chemist engaged in preparative work, and will prove a useful complement to such works as Theilheimer and Elsevier. The size of the work and its price will put it beyond the range of most individual purchasers, but it can be regarded as a useful addition for any technical or college library. The material content is good, well set out, well referenced and easy to read; the volume is solidly bound and should stand up to the everyday use required of such a reference book.

J. B. STENLAKE.