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### Book review

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"Organic Reactions", Volume 25, W. G. Dauben, editor-in-chief, John Wiley and Sons, New York/London/Sydney/Toronto, 1977, xxv + 490 pages, \$ 27.50.

The usual conservative, dark blue color of the binding of the volumes of this series has been replaced with bright silver to celebrate the 25th volume. As the preface tells us, in these 25 volumes some 130 distinct synthetic organic reactions have been surveyed by 184 authors. In the 38 years since its conception, "Organic Reactions" has come to occupy an important place in the review literature of organic chemistry, and it is a series which also is of considerable value to the organometallic chemist.

Volume 25 opens with a short, personal account of the history of "Organic Reactions" by A. H. Blatt. The scientific content comes in three chapters. In the first, L. A. Paquette discusses the Ramberg-Bäcklund rearrangement, in which an  $\alpha$ -haloalkyl sulfone undergoes base-induced HX elimination with formation of an episulfone, followed by SO<sub>2</sub> extrusion from the latter to give an olefin. The synthetic applications of phosphoryl-stabilized anions, principally in the preparation of olefins, are covered in detail by W. S. Wadsworth, Jr., one of the originators of this useful chemistry. The third chapter, by W. Nagata and M. Yoshioka, brings a discussion of the hydrocyanation of conjugated carbonyl compounds, a reaction in which dialkylaluminum cyanides play an important role.

In all three chapters the discussion, which covers mechanism, scope and limitations, and side-reactions, is followed by selected recipes from the literature and finally a tabular survey of the applications of the reaction in question. An abundance of references is provided. The coverage of the literature appears to extend through 1975.

This newest addition to "Organic Reactions" has a good choice of topics and should be of interest to all organic

chemists, especially when they are concerned with olefin synthesis. All three chapters are well written and cover their respective subjects thoroughly and well. The price of this book is a reasonable one which an individual purchaser can afford.

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