

sales of this volume and later ones in the series. Chemists frequently express anger these days about the cost of specialist books and journals (usually, in my experience, because they do not understand that the prices of such items are determined by the sales, rather than the sales by the prices) but they should consider the number of such publications which could be purchased for the cost of a single postdoctoral research assistant.

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Reductions in Organic Chemistry; by M. Hudlicky. Ellis Horwood, Chichester, 1984, xvi + 309 pages. £35.00. ISBN 0-85312-345-4.

In his Preface the author says "This book encompasses indiscriminately all the types of reductions and superimposes them over a matrix of types of compounds to be reduced", and this gives a good indication of its scope and form. (It would have been wiser, though, to omit the adverb 'indiscriminately'; the author means by it that he has dealt with all types of reduction and not just a selected few, but it tends also to imply that he has not exercised judgement in his account, which is far from the case.) He also describes it as a "Pocket Dictionary of Reductions" and this description also is a good one, indicating as it does that the volume provides a classified source of concise information on the properties of a very wide range of reducing agents and the conditions under which they are used.

The scope and organization are well indicated by the titles of the four main sections, viz. (i) categories of reduction (37 pages), (ii) the reduction of specific types of organic compounds (137 pages), (iii) correlation tables (23 pages), and (iv) procedures (18 pages), along with the sub-headings in the first section, viz. catalytic hydrogenation (13 pages), reduction with hydrides and complex hydrides (9 pages), electroreduction and reduction with metals (9 pages), and reductions with non-metal compounds (6 pages). There are 1175 references, and also a useful list of reviews and monographs on specific reduction methods, an author index, and a clear comprehensive subject index.

Of the chapters dealing with the various methods, that on catalytic reduction is the least satisfactory, but this is not important because so many reviews of that subject are already available. Very useful indeed are the so-called "correlation tables", which reveal at a glance which types of reducing agent can be used with specific types of organic compounds, and refer the reader to the pages under which the relevant reactions are discussed. Also very valuable are the descriptions of 50 typical experimental procedures (which rightly present reports of methods used for specified compounds, not just generalized guidance). The book will be of immediate use to a very wide range of research supervisors and their research assistants at all levels, and I certainly expect to make extensive use of it. It should not just be in all libraries associated with organic and organometallic laboratories but also available widely in those laboratories as a handbook.

The book (which is distributed by Wiley) is well produced, and is reasonably priced when account is taken of the fact that it is conventionally printed, and not yet another reproduction of a typescript. The publishers should also consider the possibility of issuing a lower price softcover version, which could prove to be very attractive.

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