

## BOOK REVIEW

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VATRKES MIGRDICHIAN: **Organic Synthesis**, Vols. I and II. Reinhold, New York, 1957. 1500 pp., 280s.

ORGANIC synthesis is such a vast subject that to attempt to compress it, as does Dr. MIGRDICHIAN, into about 1,000 pp. of text is manifestly impossible. Indeed, the magnitude of the task is so great that it is doubtful if any one man—however dedicated he might be—could hope to succeed. The two volumes under review represent a compromise between a detailed text of synthetic methods, which would run to many volumes, and a series of general, but critical, essays. It cannot be claimed that the end product is a resonance hybrid of the two ideal states. Whilst many factual statements are strung together, the coverage does not appear to be complete in any section and the treatment appears to be quite uncritical. The literature is covered, one would judge from the lists of references, up to the end of 1952, although the author does not state this in the preface.

In the light of these facts, the claim on the dust jacket that these volumes constitute "the most systematic, fully integrated and up-to-date presentation of organic synthesis in all its aspects ever published. This truly monumental work is so complete and so precise in its coverage of the subject that it surpasses even specialized texts in each and every phase of this vast field" can scarcely be maintained. If the author had been more modest in his objective and, in particular, more critical in his survey of the literature, the work would have been more worthwhile.

The arrangement of the subject matter is logical. Vol. I deals with open-chain saturated compounds, Vol. II with open-chain unsaturated, with alicyclic and with aromatic compounds. Vol. I includes useful sections on organo-metallic compounds. Each chapter is documented with references which should be valuable as starting points for further literature searches. The research worker may well find it useful to secure a general background from these two volumes before consulting more specialized texts or the literature. The volumes are well printed and free from trivial errors.

Whilst these volumes may not be as significant as the claims made for them would suggest, nevertheless they will find a place in many libraries. The reader cannot but respect the industry and effort of the author. If the author has failed in his objective, it is not through his own faults, but simply because the task chosen was so great as to defeat even a Hercules.

D. H. R. BARTON

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### Publisher's Notice to Contributors

It is regretted that due to a rather unexpectedly large increase in the number of manuscripts submitted for publication in *Tetrahedron* towards the end of last year, the time taken to publish a manuscript increased to approximately 7 months. Steps have now been taken to ensure that the delay in publication shall not exceed 5 months and will be considerably less for short papers or Letters to the Editor, which normally will be published within 30–60 days.