

Recensio

M. J. S. DEWAR, *Hyperconjugation*

Ronald Press Co., New York, 1962. VI, 184 p. Price: \$ 7.50

The idea of Hyperconjugation has, for some time, been one which produced extreme differences of opinion between chemists. Some have regarded it as an established fact, while others would claim it to be entirely spurious, the observations supposedly supporting it being caused entirely by other effects. In such circumstances a book from Professor DEWAR is particularly welcome. There is surely no other chemist who combines, as well as he does, a wide knowledge and experience of organic chemistry with a real understanding of theoretical methods and principles. In addition to this, of course, it is impossible to imagine him writing anything but an interesting book which will not only instruct the reader but will also stimulate him to have a greater interest in the matters dealt with.

Certainly as regards the book being reviewed, Professor DEWAR has produced a valuable and lively addition to our literature. His object has been to examine all aspects of the idea of Hyperconjugation. This he does most ably, finally reaching the concluding that a very great deal, and possibly all, of the evidence for the hypothesis is inconclusive.

Professor DEWAR has never been a man afraid of having fresh ideas of his own and the discussions contained in this book have in many places a marked individuality.

Consequently any reader is bound to feel objections, possibly even strong ones, to some parts of the book. The present reviewer felt that the relation of equivalent orbitals to those formulated using the valence-bond method was not in all places correctly described, and, perhaps even more, that the approach to, and handling of, hybridisation was very liable, if not certain, to give less expert readers a completely wrong view of this device. However such faults, if they are accepted as such, do not alter the fact that this is a most interesting book dealing with an interesting topic. It is enlivened with phrases such as: "Nothing will be lost by this except complexity", and provides a most worth-while analysis of a subject which badly needed it.

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