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https://doi.org/10.18297/etd/96

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University of Louisville

The Condensation of Formaldehyde and Methyl Acridine

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty

Of the Graduate School of the College of Arts and Sciences

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Of Master of Science

Department of Chemistry

By

Clifford Albin Belch

1925
Very little is known about the acridine ring system. Such compounds as acriflavine, brucine and strychnine are generally believed to contain the acridine ring system. These compounds are all very important drugs. Acriflavine has been used in the treatment of diseases which are due, in whole or in part, to trypansomia. Strychnine and brucine which have many and varied uses need not be described here but they are natural plant products. For this reason, acridine derivatives are interesting.

Other derivatives of the acridine type should be of some interest. Methylacridine lends itself to reactions readily. Its condensation with formaldehyde will be discussed in the following pages.

For this reason, he gave the following formula:

\[
\text{CH}_3\text{N} \cdot \text{C}_6\text{H}_4\text{O}_2
\]

\[
\text{CH}_3\text{N} \cdot \text{C}_6\text{H}_4\text{O}_2
\]

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\]

\[
\text{CH}_3\text{N} \cdot \text{C}_6\text{H}_4\text{O}_2
\]
The literature concerning the products derived from the condensation of methy lacridine with other substances is very incomplete.

A Parai Kaschitz has obtained m-nitro benzal-m-methy lacridine by heating together meta nitro benzaldehyde and m-methy lacridine, with zinc chloride, hydrochloric and acetic acid. In this case water was removed and a condensation product with a double bond was obtained. To this substance he assigned the following formula:

\[
\text{CH}_2\cdot\text{CH} \cdot \text{C} \cdot \text{CH} \cdot \text{CH}
\]

When he melted these substances together with zinc chloride he obtained para-nitro benzal mes methy lacridine. To this he gave the following formula:

\[
\text{CH} \cdot \text{CH} \cdot \text{C}_6\text{H}_4\text{NO}_2
\]

Konrad Friedlauder has obtained acridyl phenyl ethanol \(\text{C}_{12}\text{H}_8\text{N} \cdot \text{CH}_2\cdot\text{CH} \cdot \text{CH(OH)} \cdot \text{C}_6\text{H}_5\) or

\[
\text{CH}_2\cdot\text{CHOH} \cdot \text{C}_6\text{H}_5
\]
by heating benzaldehyde and methylacridine together in a sealed tube in a water bath for twenty-four hours. This product was of the aldol type. He has also prepared m-nitro-cinnamonyl-acridine by heating m-methyl acridine and m-nitro benzaldehyde in sealed tubes for twenty-four hours. This product has a double bond, water having been eliminated in the condensation process.

Koenig has prepared condensation products of methylacridine and formaldehyde. Two different products were isolated. The first substance isolated was I methylacridine de ethonal and the other II methylacridine ethonal. To these compounds he assigned the following formulas as shown by these reactions:

I

\[
\text{CH}_3 \quad + 2 \text{CH}_2\text{O} \rightarrow \quad \text{CH}_2=\text{CH}_2\text{OH}
\]

II

\[
\text{CH}_3 \quad + \text{CH}_2\text{O} \rightarrow \quad \text{CH}_2\cdot\text{CH}_2\cdot\text{OH}
\]
The first of these compounds was obtained in crystalline form but the latter was not so obtained.

Koenig also condensed ethylmethylacridine with formaldehyde by heating them together.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{CH}_2\cdot\text{CH}_3 & \rightarrow \\
\text{C}_\text{H}_2\text{C}_\text{H}_3 & \rightarrow
\end{align*}
\]

Koenig, as previously stated, has condensed methylnacridine with formaldehyde and obtained two different products. Three possible reactions may give three different compounds as illustrated by the following equations:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{CH}_3 & \rightarrow \\
\text{H}_2\text{C}_\text{H}_3\text{C}_\text{H}_2\text{N} & \rightarrow
\end{align*}
\]
It is generally known that the methyl groups of picoline and quinoline are very reactive. The methyl group of methylacridine is likewise very reactive. The reaction may take place in two different manners. (I) The first possible reactions will give a condensation product of the aldel type. (II) The second reaction will give, by the elimination of water, unsaturated bases which are oxygen free. The second reaction takes place in the presence of zinc chloride.

\[
\text{CH}_3 + \text{OCH}_2 \text{CH}_3 \rightarrow \text{CH}_2 \text{OCH}_2 \text{CH}_3
\]

\[
\text{CH}_3 + \text{OCH}_2 \text{CH}_3 \rightarrow \text{CH} = \text{CH} \cdot \text{CH}_3 + \text{H}_2 \text{O}
\]

Koenig, as previously stated, has condensed methylacridine with formaldehyde and obtained two different products. Three possible reactions may give three different compounds as illustrated by the following equations:
The conditions chosen, as later described, were such that the product should be the mono-derivative (1). This substance is necessary as a starting material in the preparation of other compounds, amino compounds especially, of acridine.

The following equations show the reactions which we expect to take place. The first two products have been obtained in good crystalline form.
Some obstacles were encountered at various stages of this work. In the preparation of the condensation products it was found that the time of heating must be increased from two to six hours to give a good yield. Under these conditions the yield was uniform and since the temperature was not changed the increase must have been due to the length of time of heating. Various solvents were tried in the purification of the condensation product but two only were selected. These were alcohol and benzene.
It was found that, while benzene gave good crystals of the condensation product it could not be used because each molecule of condensation product had combined with one molecule of benzene to form the crystalline product. This was proven by the high carbon and hydrogen content of the substance crystallized from benzene than that obtained from alcohol.

The preparation of the chloride of the condensation product had to be carried out in the absence of water. In the presence of water the chloride was hydrolyzed forming the free base and hydrochloric acid. Various salts of the condensation product were prepared for analytical purposes. The hydrochloride, picrate and benzoyl derivatives were prepared. These were all used in combustions to determine the composition of the base. The benzoyl derivative by yielding a certain composition on combustion proved the presence, in the condensation product, of the hydroxyl group.
PREPARATION OF METHYLACRIDINE.

Diphenylamine.

Diphenyl amine is necessary for the preparation of methylacridine. A method was selected which would give a good yield and at the same time would be practical when large amounts of starting materials were used.

100 grams of aniline and 114 grams of aniline hydrochloride were mixed in a thick walled flask and heated in an autoclave at 240°C for twenty-four hours. At the end of this time the contents of the flask were poured out into a large container. The flask was rinsed out with dilute hydrochloric acid and the washing added to the major portion. The whole was then acidified with hydrochloric acid and treated with about two liters of boiling water to hydrolyze the hydrochloride to methylacridine and hydrochloric acid. On cooling and standing, the diphenylamine separated. It was then filtered, washed and dried. It was later distilled from a retort by direct heat. At 275°C the diphenylamine melts to an oily liquid and at a slightly higher temperature distilled. It was recovered in a weighed flask. The yield was 50%.

\[
\text{PhNH}_2 + \text{PhNH}_2 \xrightarrow{\text{heat}} \text{PhN=NCPh} + \text{NH}_4^+ \text{Cl}^-
\]
Methyl acridine.

For each 50 grams of diphenylamine 30 cc of glacial acetic acid and 65 grams of zinc chloride were added to the flask in which the diphenylamine was received. The mixture was then heated on an oil bath at 220° C for 14 hours. The melt was then dissolved in 75% sulphuric acid poured into water. This removes most of the zinc salts. After filtering the residue was repeatedly extracted with dilute (5%) hot hydrochloric acid. The filtrates were united and allowed to cool and then filtered. On neutralized with ammonium hydroxide the methylacridine precipitates as a yellow flocculent body. This was then filtered, washed with water and dried by suction. The methyl acridine was then purified by dissolving it in methyl alcohol—10 grams methylacridine to 50 cc of CH₃OH and gradually adding another solution of tartaric acid in methyl alcohol (10 grams of tartaric acid in 100 cc of methyl alcohol). Methyl acridine-tartrate separated. After standing several hours the mixture was filtered and the
residue washed with water. The well washed residue was then transferred to a large flask and covered with water. A clear solution of sodium carbonate was then added until alkalinity was obtained whereupon the methyl-acridine again precipitated. It was then washed with water filtered and dried. Yield 75%.

1 gram of methyl-acridine and 10 grams of penta-chlorophenol were dissolved in alcohol and heated on a water bath for six hours. A brownish yellow sublimate separated. This was filtered and dissolved in dilute ethyl alcohol. On standing yellow crystalline substance precipitated. It dissolves with difficulty in dilute alcohol but is readily soluble in absolute alcohol. Melting point 154-155°C.

Analysis.

Substance used 0.36 grams. Obtained 0.36 0.364 0.364

Calculated from the empirical formula C_15H_15NO

C = 83.7%  H = 5.25%

Found C = 81.08%  H = 5.12%
PREPARATION OF METHYLACRIDINE ETHANOL.

1 gram of methyl acridine and an equa-molecular weight of formaldehyde--20% solution were dissolved in alcohol and heated on a water bath for six hours. A brownish yellow substance separated. This was filtered and dissolved in dilute ethyl alcohol. On standing yellow crystalline substance precipitated. It dissolves with difficulty in dilute alcohol but is readily soluble in absolute alcohol. Melting point 154-155° C.

Analysis.

Substance used 1738 grams. Obtained CO₂ 6345 g. H₂O .0986

Calculated from the empirical formula C₁₅H₁₃NO

\[ C = 85.7\% \quad H = 5.83\% \]

Found \[ C = 81.06\% \quad H = 6.13\% \]
PREPARATION OF THE PICRATE OF THE CONDENSATION PRODUCT.

To a solution of the condensation product in alcohol a solution of picric acid in alcohol was added as long as precipitation occurred. The yellow crystalline precipitate was separated by filtering. This was recrystallized from dilute ethyl alcohol. This substance was soluble with difficulty in dilute alcohol, ether, and water. Melting Point 179° C.

Analysis:

Substance .1050 grams CO₂ 2163 g. H₂O 0401 g.

Calculated from the empirical formula C₂₁H₁₆N₄O₈

C = 55.82%  H = 3.58%

Found C = 56.1%  H = 4.2%

Calculation of:

CI₂H₁₆N₄O₈

CI = 12.50%

Found CI = 12.50%
PREPARATION OF METHYLACRIDINE ETHANOL HYDROCHLORIDE.

A small amount of the condensation product was dissolved in alcohol and a few drops of concentrated hydrochloric acid added. It was then boiled and cooled constantly during the addition of the phosphorus pentachloride. The mixture was then boiled until solution took place. On cooling and standing the hydrochloride of methylacridine ethanol precipitated. It was filtered and dissolved in absolute alcohol. On standing long yellow needles separated. It begins to darken at 240° and at 260° C it blackens.

Analysis:

Substance 1.774 g. AgCl 0.0999

2128 g. AgCl 1.1999

Calculated from the empirical formula

C₁₅H₁₃NOHCl

Cl = 13.66%

A sample of the compound was prepared and its melting point according to 130° C. It decomposes at 140° C. Dinitrobenzene test positive. Difficulty soluble in alcohol but easily soluble in water.
PREPARATION OF METHYLACRIDINE ETHANOL CHLORIDE.

Four grams of the condensation product were treated with 4.5 grams of phosphorus pentachloride. The mixture was stirred constantly during the addition of the phosphorus pentachloride. No reaction took place. 10 cc of chloroform were then added. The reaction began at once with evolution of much heat. The mixture was heated on a water bath with water condenser. The condenser was then removed and the heating continued until the chloroform was all expelled. It was next heated under reduced pressure to remove phosphorus oxychloride and phosphorus pentachloride. It was then dissolved in petroleum-ether and a small amount of absolute alcohol. Crystals separated after long standing. This compound melts with decomposition at 114° C. The Bielstein test was positive.

A picrate of this compound was prepared and its melting point determined as 140° C. It decomposes at 160° C. Bielstein test positive. Difficulty soluble in alcohol but easily soluble in water.
A hydrochloride of the chloride was next prepared by treating the chloride with a small amount of hydrochloric acid. This salt crystallized from the mother liquor in yellow needles. It is difficult to dissolve in absolute alcohol and ether but readily soluble in water. It darkens at 200° C and then melts at 240° C.
PREPARATION OF THE BENZOYL DERIVATIVE OF
METHYL ACRIDINE ETHANOL.

1 gram of methyl acridine ethanol was treated
with benzoylchloride with constant shaking in alkaline
solution. It was then heated for 1 hour on a water bath
to decompose any remaining benzoyl chloride. It was
then filtered and the residue dissolved in dilute ethyl
alcohol from which a brownish yellow crystalline sub-
stance separated. This had a melting point of 151° C.
It was soluble in alcohol but insoluble in ether and
water.

Analysis.

Substance .1734 g. CO₂ 52.16 g. H₂O .0831 g.
Calculated from the empirical formula

C = 81.48%  H = 5.3%

Found  C = 82.00%  H = 5.3%
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