

Usnic Acid. XII.¹⁾ The Oxidation of Dihydrousnic Acid. (I)

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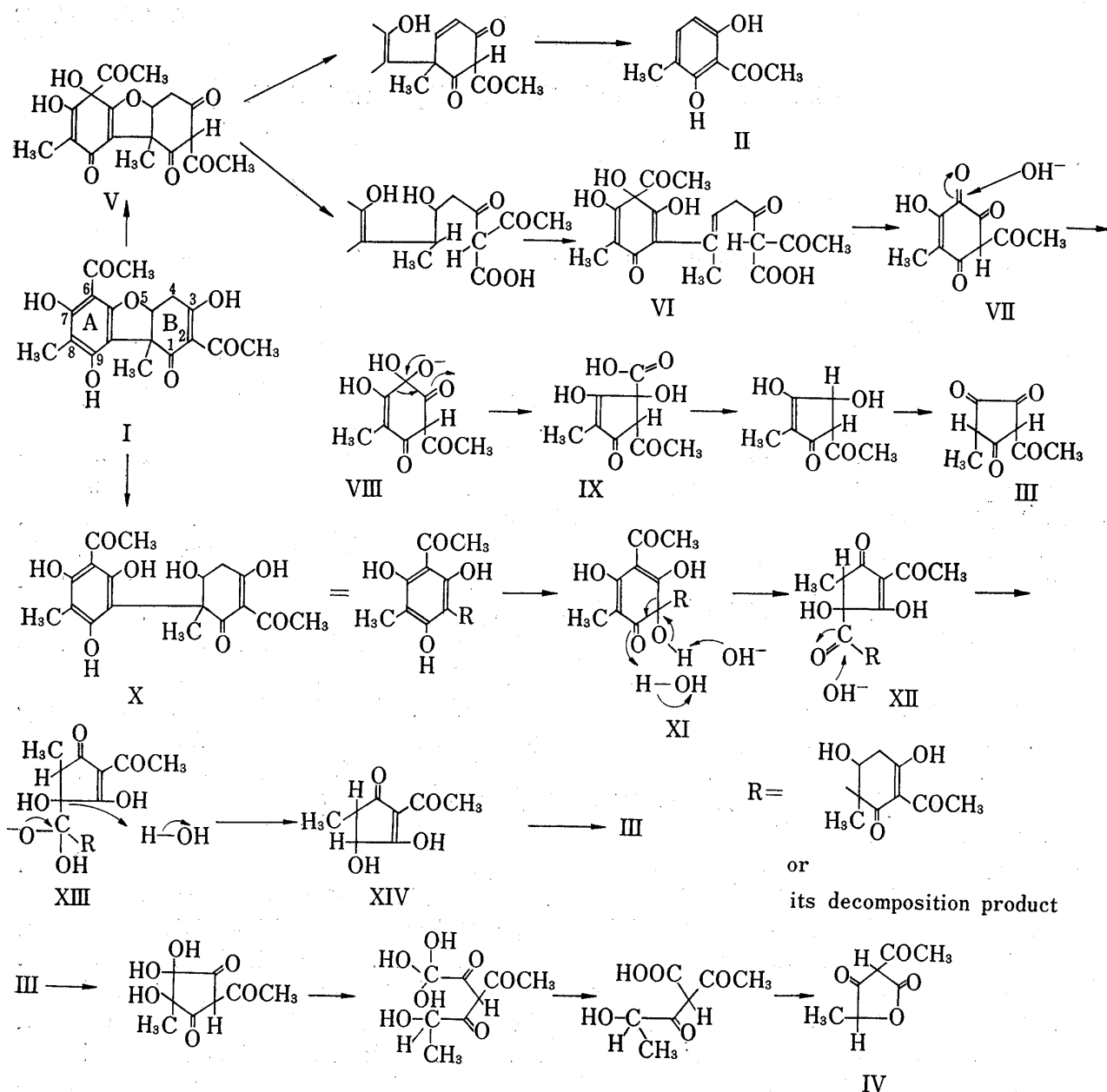
(Received September 5, 1974)

Two new oxidation products of dihydrousnic acid, III and IV were assumed to be 3-acetyl-5-methylcyclopentane-1,2,4-trione and α -acetyl- γ -methylteronic acid by the chemical and spectral evidences, respectively.

The mechanism of the formation III and IV from dihydrousnic acid was discussed.

It was reported in a previous paper³⁾ that 7-acetyl-3,5-dimethyl-6-hydroxycoumaran-2-one, a resorcinol type of compound, obtained from dihydrousnic acid (I) by dry distillation with CaCl_2 , was formed from the ring B of I. Asahina and Yanagita⁴⁾ reported that I afforded 2,6-dihydroxy-3-methylacetophenone (II), another resorcinol type of compound, by oxidation with potassium permanganate followed by distillation. Later Schöpf and Ross⁵⁾ assumed that II was formed from the ring B of I by the mechanism as shown in Chart 1. But any oxidation products from the ring A of I have not been reported as yet. This paper deals with new potassium permanganate oxidation products III and IV, obtained from I and the reaction mechanism. In alkaline solution, I was oxidised with potassium permanganate to afford yellow needles $\text{C}_8\text{H}_8\text{O}_4$ (III) of mp 218° (decomp.) and colorless needles $\text{C}_7\text{H}_8\text{O}_4$ (IV) of mp 54° . III was strongly acidic and soluble in NaHCO_3 solution under bubbling and gave violet coloration with FeCl_3 and the positive 1,3-diketone reaction (orange-red) with *o*-phenylenediamine. The ultraviolet (UV) spectra of III in both acidic and alkaline ethanolic solutions were closely similar to those of 3-acetyl-5-methylcyclopentane-1,2,4-trione,⁶⁻⁹⁾ respectively. The infrared (IR) spectra⁶⁾ of both compounds were similar. III shows nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) signals (δ -value, ppm) in CDCl_3 (110°) at 1.94 (s, 3H, $-\text{CH}_3$), 2.39 (s, 3H, COCH_3), 6.37—7.13 (broad, about one proton) and 11.6—12.24 (broad, about one proton). In 98% CF_3COOD , III shows NMR signals only at 1.80 (s, 3H, $-\text{CH}_3$), 2.41 (s, 3H, COCH_3) and at 10.87 (CF_3COOH), probably due to rapid proton exchange between enolic OH and CF_3COOH . So the signals at 11.6—12.24 and 6.37—7.13 could be assigned to enolic OH groups, *i.e.* to an acidic enol OH and a less acidic enol OH, as in the case of 3-acylcyclopentane-1,2,4-trione type of compound such as isohumulonic acid which exists in the dienolised form,¹⁰⁾ respectively. III showed an isosbestic point at 295 nm ($\epsilon=5500$) and the pK_a value of III was 2.60, UV-spectrophotometrically. The second dissociation of III might be too weak to be measured.⁶⁾ These chemical and spectral data suggest that III is 3-acetyl-5-methylcyclopentane-1,2,4-trione. The analysis of the fragmentation of the mass spectrum (MS) of III could be interpreted as shown in Chart 2, supporting the formula for the compound

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(Chart 1). The UV and IR of IV and α -acetyl- γ -methyltetronic acid¹¹⁻¹³⁾ were almost superimposable, respectively and the MS of IV could be interpreted as shown in Chart 3, suggesting that IV is α -acetyl- γ -methyltetronic acid. The NMR indicate that IV exists in isomeric forms as α -acetyltetronic acid.¹⁴⁾

The reaction mechanism of the formation of III and IV from I could be tentatively postulated in Chart 1. Namely, the first stage of the reaction might be the formation of dihydrononic acid (V), which might give II by the Schöpf's mechanism. On the other hand, the difference of the mode of dehydration would change the reaction course and VI thus formed, might be oxidised to give VII. Then VII might give III through VIII and IX by

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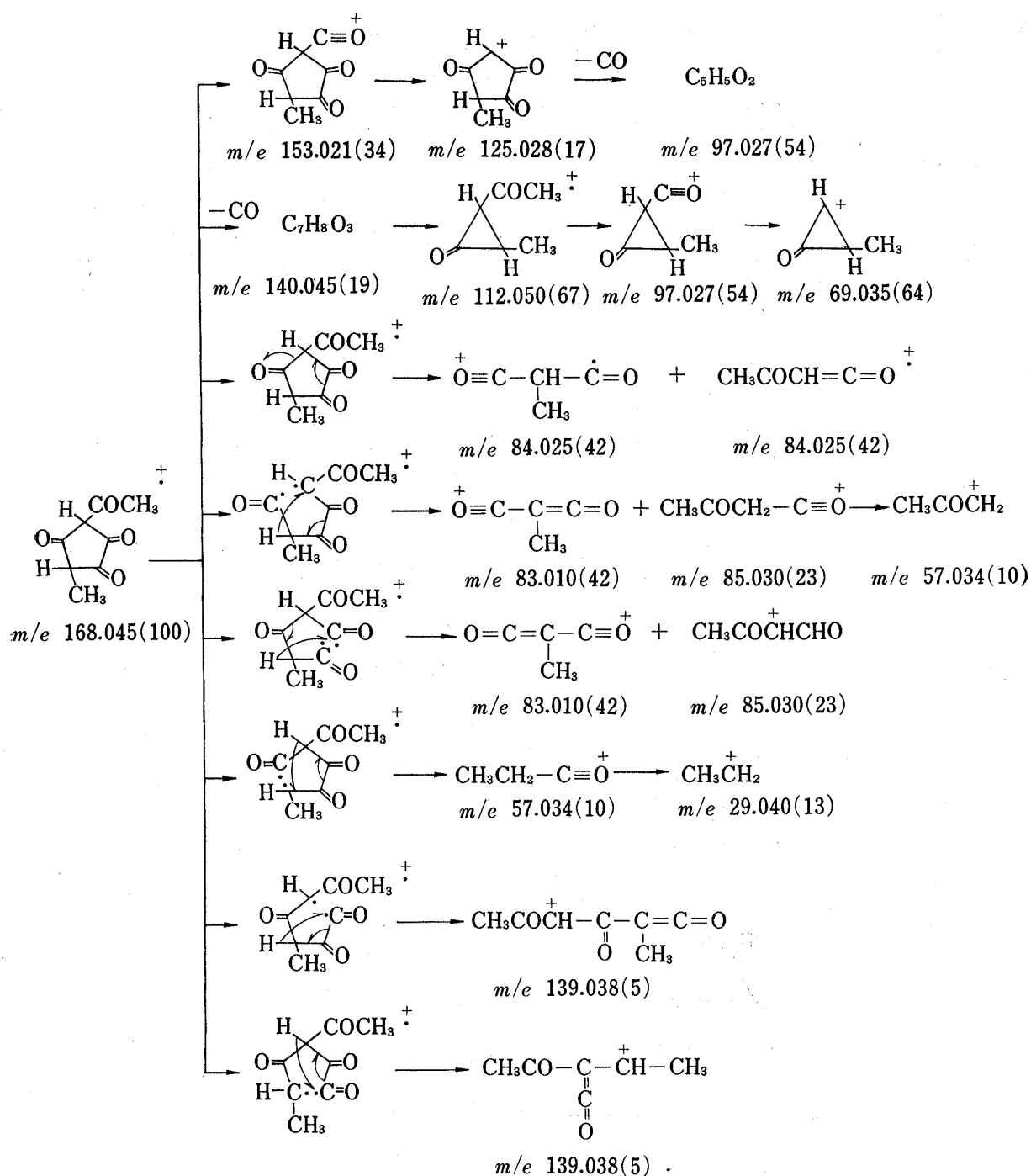
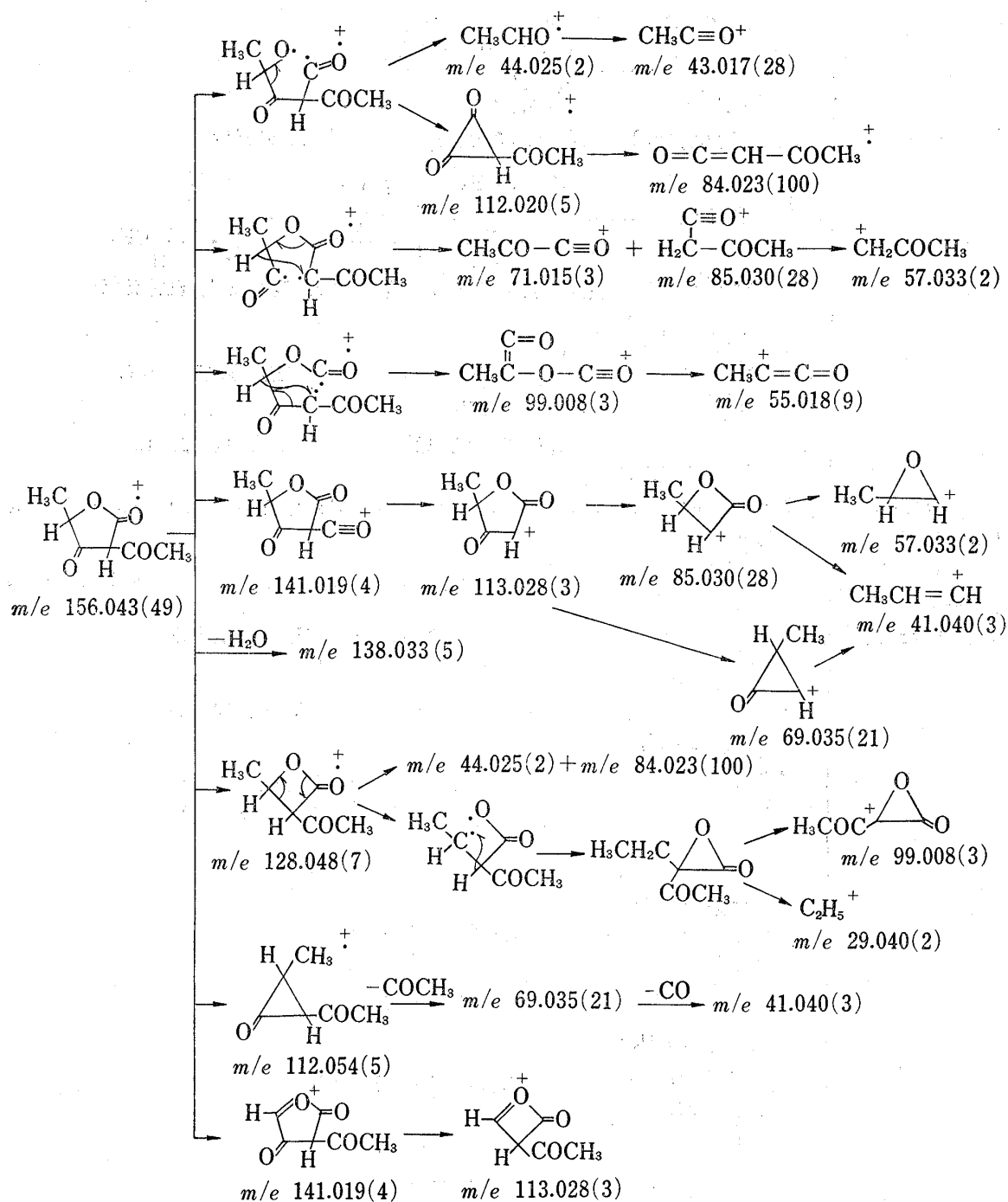


Chart 2. The Fragmentation of III

The figures in rounded brackets are the relative intensities of the fragment ions.

the benzil-benzilic acid type of rearrangement. III might be further oxidised, hydrolysed and again oxidised to give IV. In this reaction mechanism, dihydrousnonic acid, the intermediate, was assumed to be formulated as V. But dihydrousnonic acid has not been reported and was not isolated in this study. So the structure of usnic acid, forwarded by Schöpf and Ross⁵⁾ was reinvestigated by the spectral data. Usnic acid exhibits the IR bands at 1550—1530 (triketone), 1690 (C=O) and 1660 which could be assigned to an $\alpha\beta$ - $\alpha'\beta'$ -unsaturated C=O and 3500 (OH), while usnic acid exhibits the IR bands at 1545—1530 (triketone), 1690 (C=O), 1630 which could be assigned to the chelated aromatic COCH₃, but does not the IR bands of OH. These spectral data suggest that usnic- and usnic-acids are different in regard to the structure of the ring A and that all the OH groups of usnic acid are chelated, but usnic

Chart 3. The MS Fragmentation¹⁵ of IV

The figures in brackets are the intensities of the fragment ions.

acid has at least a free OH group. Usnonic acid exhibits the NMR signals of an ang-CH₃, one of COCH₃, >CH=C- and chelated enol OH, the chemical shifts of which are similar to those of corresponding groups of the ring B of usnic acid, respectively, suggesting that usnonic acid has the same ring B as usnic acid. Usnonic acid shows also the signal of a non-chelated OH, but does not show, unlike usnic acid, the signal of the aromatic chelated OH group. The absence of the signal¹⁵⁾ at 11.0 on the NMR of usnonic acid denies the presence of the chelation between C₁=O and C₉-OH groups. These spectral evidence indicates that usnonic acid could be formulated as Schöpf's formula⁵⁾ and dihydrousnonic acid as V.

15) M. Takani and K. Takahashi, *Chem. Pharm. Bull.* (Tokyo), 19, 2072 (1971).

TABLE I. NMR of Usmonic- and Usnic-acids (δ -value)

	ang-CH ₃	-CH ₃	COCH ₃	COCH ₃	=CH-	OH	Chelated aromatic OH	Chelated enol OH
Usmonic acid	1.70 (s)	1.91 (s)	2.66 (s)	2.63 (s)	5.96 (s)	4.65—4.25	—	16.20 18.20
Usnic acid ¹⁵⁾	1.8 (s)	2.2 (s)	2.70 (s) 6H		6.0 (s)	—	13.3 (C ₇) 11.0 (C ₉)	18.8

abbreviation: s: singlet; d: doublet; t: triplet; m: multiplet

However, it is reported¹⁶⁾ that humulones are easily rearranged to isohumulones under both natural and laboratory conditions, so another mechanism as shown in Chart 1 might not be excluded. Namely, dihydrousnic acid might give XI through X by the fission of the furan ring, followed by oxidation, which isomerises to XII as in the case of the isomerisation of humulones to isohumulones. Then XII might give III through XIII and XIV by hydrolysis, followed by oxidation. This is the first example of obtaining of oxidation products from the ring A of I. In this oxidation reaction of I, pale yellow needles C₉H₉O₃Cl (XV) of mp 151° and yellow plates C₁₀H₁₂O₃ (XVI) of mp 58° were obtained. By chemical and spectral evidences and finally by synthesis, XV was proved to be identical with 2,6-dihydroxy-3-methyl-5-chlor-acetophenone and XVI, 2-hydroxy-3-methyl-6-methoxyacetophenone. XV and XVI might be produced as secondary products from II during the process of the purification of the oxidation products of I.

Experimental

The IR were taken with a Nippon Bunko IR-G spectrometer, the UV with a Hitachi Recording spectrometer 323, the NMR with a JEOL PS-100 NMR instrument at 100 Mc in CDCl₃ with (CH₃)₄ Si as internal reference and the MS with a JMS-01SG mass spectrometer, the ionizing current kept at 200 μ A (III), 200 μ A (IV), while the ionisation energy being maintained at 75 eV (III), 75 eV (IV) and source temperature at 150° (III) and 30° (IV).

Oxidation of I—A solution of 4.8 g of I in 60 ml of 10% KOH was diluted to 1.5 liter with water. To this solution, 150 ml of 4% KMnO₄ was added in drops during 3 hr under vigorous stirring at room temperature. The filtered solution was acidified with dil. HCl and then filtered. The solution was salted out with NaCl and extracted with CHCl₃ several times. The CHCl₃ solution was evaporated to give brown oil (2 g), which was treated with CH₃OH. The oil was chromatographed over 300 g of silicic acid with CHCl₃-ethylacetate (3:1).

2,6-Dihydroxy-3-methylacetophenone (II)—The fractions (17 g each) from No. 9 to 14 gave yellow plates (II) of mp 138° from benzene. (125 mg). *Anal.* Calcd. for C₉H₁₀O₃: C, 65.05; H, 6.07. Found. C, 65.41; H, 6.02.

3-Acetyl-5-methylcyclopentane-1,2,4-trione (III)—The fractions from No. 27 to 29 gave 74 mg of substance, which was sublimated at 80° under 2 mmHg pressure to give yellow needles (III) of mp 218° (decomp.) from benzene. (12.5 mg). It sublimates at 170°. FeCl₃ reaction: violet.¹⁷⁾ UV $\lambda_{\max}$ (nm, ϵ): 253.5 (26300), 274 (18000) in HCl-acidic EtOH; 273.5 (30000), 298.5 (26000) in NaOH-alkaline EtOH. IR $\nu_{\max}^{\text{NaJol}}$ (cm⁻¹): 3150, 1725, 1665, 1615, 1460, 1375, 1325, 1235, 1175, 1120, 1025, 990, 875, 820, 795, 760, 725. *Anal.* Calcd. for C₈H₈O₄: C, 57.14; H, 4.80. Found. C, 57.10; H, 4.96.

Isosbestic Point and pK_a Value of III—A stock solution of containing 1 mg of III in 10 ml of EtOH was prepared. Various solution having different pH (0.34—4.82) were prepared as follow: One normal solution of HCl was diluted suitably to make a solution having desired pH. The stock solution (0.4 ml) was exactly added to 5.6 ml of the solution, prepared as mentioned above and then the absorption curve at various pH were measured. There thus exists the isosbestic point at 295 nm ($\epsilon=5500$). The pK_a value was 2.60 from the spectra at 320 nm or 253 nm.

α -Acetyl- γ -methyltetronic Acid (IV)—The fractions from No. 17 to 26 gave 186 mg of substance, which was chromatographed over 40 g of silicic acid with *n*-hexane-ethylacetate (2:1). The fractions (4 g each)

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17) Howard, *et al.*⁸⁾ reported "green" and Leucht, *et al.*⁷⁾ "blue."

from No. 7 to 10 gave substance, which was sublimated at 50° under 2 mmHg pressure to give colorless needles (IV) of mp 55–55.5°. (42 mg). UV¹¹) $\lambda_{\text{max}}^{\text{EtOH}}$ (nm, log ϵ): 231 (3.96), 265 (4.07). IR $\nu_{\text{max}}^{\text{KBr}}$ (cm⁻¹)¹³: 3410 (OH), 2960, 2920, 1755 (lactone), 1660 (C=O), 1625 (chelated COCH₃), 1390, 1370, 1345, 1315, 1235, 1175, 1115, 1080, 1060, 1020, 995, 875, 795. NMR¹²) (CDCl₃) (δ , ppm): 1.52 (d, $J=7$ Hz) and 1.54 (d, $J=7$ Hz) (3H, -CHCH₃), 2.58 (s, 3H, COCH₃), 4.71 (q, $J=7$ Hz) and 4.82 (q, $J=7$ Hz) (1H, -CHCH₃), 12.61 (s, 1H, chelated enol OH). Anal. Calcd. for C₇H₈O₄: C, 53.84; H, 5.16. Found. C, 53.81; H, 5.14.

2,6-Dihydroxy-3-methyl-5-chloracetophenone (XV)—The fractions from No. 1 to 8 from five runs were distilled under reduced pressure and the distillate was treated with ether and then benzene. The soluble part (3.4 g) was chromatographed over 300 g of silicic acid with CHCl₃-C₆H₆ (10:1). The fractions of $R_f=0.7$ gave 180 mg of substance, which was treated with *n*-hexane and separated into *n*-hexane insoluble part A and soluble part B at room temperature. The part A was sublimated under 2 mmHg at 85° to give pale yellow needles of mp 151° from *n*-hexane. (23 mg). FeCl₃ reaction: blue. The Beilstein reaction: green. Chlorine reaction: positive (Na-fusion and AgNO₃). The Gibb's reaction: negative. IR $\nu_{\text{max}}^{\text{KBr}}$ (cm⁻¹): 3380 (OH), 1620 (C=O), 710 (C-Cl). NMR (CCl₄) (δ , ppm): 2.17 (d, 3H, -CH₃), 2.75 (s, 3H, COCH₃), 6.15 (s, 1H, OH), 7.21 (m, 1H, aromatic proton), 13.20 (s, 1H, chelated OH). Mass Spectrum: $(M^++2)/M^+=0.32$ (indicative of a chlorine atom). Anal. Calcd. for C₉H₉O₃Cl: C, 53.9; H, 4.52. Found. C, 53.75; H, 4.48.

Chlorination of II—II (150 mg) was added to chlorine-saturated acetic acid at room temperature and the mixture was poured into water and filtered. The product (120 mg) was chromatographed over silica gel (20 g) with *n*-hexane-ethylacetate (10:1). The fraction of R_f 0.38 gave 2,6-dihydroxy-3-methyl-4-chloracetophenone of mp 152° from benzene, which was proved to be identical with XV by the mixed fusion, IR and thin-layer chromatography. Anal. Found: C, 54.07; H, 4.55.

2-Hydroxy-3-methyl-6-methoxyacetophenone (XVI)—The *n*-hexane soluble part B, mentioned above, gave 76 mg of substance, which was chromatographed over 40 g of silica gel with *n*-hexane-ethylacetate (20:1). The fraction of R_f 0.65 (40 mg) was sublimated under 2 mmHg at 55° to give yellow crystals of mp 58° (XVI). 17 mg. FeCl₃ reaction: blue. The Gibb's reaction: pale blue. (II showed red-violet coloration). IR $\nu_{\text{max}}^{\text{KBr}}$ (cm⁻¹): 3400 (OH), 1610 (COCH₃). NMR (CDCl₃) (δ , ppm): 2.16 (d, 3H, -CH₃), 2.66 (s, 3H, COCH₃), 3.81 (s, 3H, OCH₃), 6.24, 6.32 and 7.16, 7.24 (d-d, 2H, aromatic protons), 13.52 (chelated OH). Anal. Calcd. for C₁₀H₁₂O₃: C, 66.65; H, 6.71. Found. C, 66.51; H, 6.58.

Methylation of II—II (500 mg) in ether was methylated with diazomethane for 48 hr at room temperature and the solution was treated as usual. The product was chromatographed over silica gel (100 g) with *n*-hexane-ethylacetate (50:1). The fraction of R_f 0.57 was sublimated under 2 mmHg at 55° to give yellow plates of mp 57.5° (86 mg), which was proved to be identical with XVI by the mixed fusion and IR. Anal. Calcd. for C₁₀H₁₂O₃: C, 66.65; H, 6.71. Found. C, 66.42; H, 6.55.

Acknowledgement The authors express their deep gratitude to Dr. Y. Asahina, Emeritus Professor of University of Tokyo, for his encouragement throughout this work and to Prof. H.L. Schmidt of Technische Universität München, Dr. C.E. Dalglish, Director of "The Brewing Industry Research Foundation" and Dr. G.A. Howard of Allied Breweries Ltd, for their kind effort to find the sample of 3-acetyl-5-methylcyclopentane-1,2,4-trione and to Prof. R. Sudo of Tokyo Institute of Technology for the UV and IR of α -acetyl- γ -methyltetronic acid. Thanks are due to Mr. Y. Itatani and Miss S. Toyoshima for elemental analyses and NMR measurement and to Miss H. Hjuga for MS and to Mr. H. Ogata of Wako Junyaku Co. Ltd. for usnic acid. The authors are also grateful to Dr. M. Takani for her valuable advices.