TRITERPENE ACIDS FROM THE FRUIT OF *Arbutus andrachne*

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By fractional crystallization of the combined triterpene acids that we obtained previously [1], we have isolated a triterpene acid (I) with mp 282-285°C, which coincided in its chromatographic behavior with ursolic acid. The melting point of ursolic acid is 285-287°C [2]. Identification was also performed by comparing the IR spectra of the triterpene acid (I) isolated and of a sample of ursolic acid both in the solid state and in solvents [3, 4]. The following derivatives of the ursolic acid isolated were obtained: the methyl ester with mp 160°C (according to the literature, 167-168°C), the acetate with mp 286-288°C (according to the literature, 286-289°C), and the methyl ester of the acetate with mp 246°C (according to the literature, 247°C) [2].

For the isolation of triterpene acid (II), the combined triterpene acids were first methylated with diazomethane and were then separated by column chromatography on silica gel in the petroleum ether—toluene—acetone (6:3:1) system. This gave methyl ursolate and the methyl ester of the triterpene acid (II) (4.5% of the combined acids).

In its chromatographic mobility, the methyl ester of the triterpene acid (II) coincided with that of pomolic acid (19α-hydroxyursolic acid). The melting point of the ester isolated was 110°C, while methyl pomolate melts at 128°C [5]. The IR spectra of the methyl ester of the acid (II) that we isolated and of a sample of methyl pomolate coincided [6].

Acetylation of the methyl ester of (II) yielded the 3-monoacetate of methyl pomolate, which, after two recrystallizations from ethanol, had mp 247-249°C (according to the literature, 248-249°C)[6].

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