

in a manner such that a change in this geometry would not be expected. The other syntheses reported for these compounds³ are consistent with this interpretation.

Neither ultraviolet nor infrared¹¹ spectroscopy provides a definitive assignment of geometry to these systems. Information on this point is furnished by the p.m.r. spectra of compounds I, II, IV, V, and VI.

The important features of these spectra are summarized in the following table:

also provide a distinction between these isomers. That this is not the case is demonstrated by the values recorded in the table for compounds III and VII.

Experimental

Compounds I, II, III, IV, and VII were prepared by the methods of Bu'lock and Smith.^{3,4} III had the same melting point, ultraviolet and infrared spectra as those recorded in the literature.¹⁹

The proton magnetic resonance spectra were obtained on

TABLE I
CHEMICAL SHIFTS^a (IN τ , P.P.M.) AND SPIN-SPIN COUPLING CONSTANTS (IN C.P.S.)

	H ₈	H ₅	H ₆	H ₇	H ₈	J ₈₅	J ₇₈	J ₆₇	J ₅₇
I	4.50	4.07		3.51	2.53	2.0	16.0		
II	4.52	4.06		3.49	2.59	2.0	16.0		
IV	4.50	4.04		3.50	2.58 ^b	2.0	16.3		
V	4.76	7.48	4.87	3.72	3.25		16.0	5.9	
		7.39							
VI	4.77	7.49	5.02	3.90	3.55 ^b		16.0	6.3	
		7.40							
III	4.56	4.16		7.79		2.4			0.9
VII	4.51	3.99		7.75		2.0			0.8

^a The chemical shifts refer to the position of the origin of the multiplet. The resonances of the unrecorded protons are unexceptional. ^b One peak of the H₈ doublet is presumed to be hidden by the resonances of the aromatic protons.

The styryl protons comprise an AB^{12,13} system in the spectra of I, II, and IV and a modified¹⁴ AB system in the spectra of V and VI. The magnitude of the coupling constant between the styryl protons is in accord with only a *trans* arrangement of the styryl system.^{15,16}

Ultraviolet and infrared correlations^{4,17,18} have been used, sometimes in conjunction with chemical data, to assign structures to 6-methyl-4-methoxy-2-pyrone (III) and 6-methyl-2-methoxy-4-pyrone (VII). These assignments proved to be critical in deciding the structures of the naturally occurring 2-pyrones. Conceivably p.m.r. spectroscopy might

a Varian A-60 spectrometer with *ca.* 35% deuteriochloroform solutions containing tetramethylsilane as an internal standard.

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Reaction of Nitriles with Hydrazine Hydrate and Raney Nickel. The Synthesis of Polynuclear Aromatic Hydrocarbons¹

WALTER W. ZAJAC, JR., AND RONALD H. DENK²

Department of Chemistry, Villanova University, Villanova, Pennsylvania

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Pietra and Trinchera³ reported the use of hydrazine hydrate and Raney nickel as an effective combination for the partial reduction of six aromatic nitriles to the hydrazones or azines, which can be hydrolyzed to the corresponding aldehydes in good yield. We are currently investigating the scope and limitations of this reaction. In a completely

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