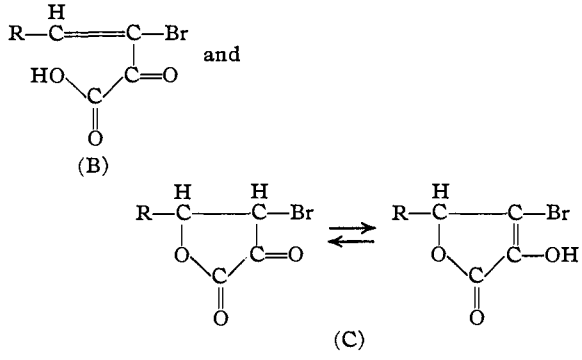
between the two forms—it seems highly improbable that so great a barrier could be involved in the mere formation or breaking of a bond as weak as that of a hydrogen bridge. At any rate, it appears undesirable to resort to such a novel explanation for the isomers in question until all other interpretations more in harmony with the classical theories of organic chemistry have been examined and excluded.

The authors of the above-mentioned papers have considered and rejected one other possible explanation, *cis* and *trans* isomerism. However, they do not mention a third interpretation which appears more probable than either of the two they discuss, namely, structural isomerism involving lactone formation. This may be illustrated as follows



This interpretation furnishes a logical explanation of the experimental facts: (1) the yellow compound (B) is moderately soluble in water, but only slightly soluble in benzene; on the other hand, the white compound (C) is insoluble in water and is soluble in benzene. (2) The yellow isomer is rapidly esterified in the cold by methyl alcohol and hydrogen chloride to form a yellow ester; the white compound does not react with this reagent, but may be "esterified" by treatment with diazomethane to yield a white methyl derivative (the enol group is probably methylated) isomeric with that obtained from the yellow acid. (3) Treatment of the yellow isomer with dilute alkali forms a yellow salt which is soluble in water and insoluble in alcohol and from which the original acid may be regenerated by acidification; the white isomer forms a white salt (probably involving the enol group) which is soluble in alcohol but insoluble in water. (4) Extended treatment of this white salt with alkali transforms it into the yellow salt; treatment of the yellow acid with dilute hydrochloric acid for extended periods of time, as well as keeping it at its melting point for a short time, transforms it into the white derivative.

Regardless of how further study may deal with this interpretation, it appears to be fairly certain that the type of isomerism which has been proposed, based upon the formation of hydrogen bridges, cannot be accepted without more conclusive evidence.

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

RECEIVED JANUARY 20, 1941

ELECTROPHILES AND ELECTRODOTES

Sir:

The term *electrodomic* by which it is proposed[1] to describe molecules (bases and reductants) which share their electron pairs with acids (in G. N. Lewis' sense) or yield electrons to oxidants, seems ill-chosen. English offers few adjectives derived from *διδωμι* to serve as guides, but such a form as *electrodotic* (or electrodotal (*cf.* anecdotic, anecdotal, epidotic) is surely preferable. The "m" is merely personal in function and the combination "dom" by its suggestion of *domicile* or *dominance* makes an impression quite contrary to that intended.

Professor Luder has expressed agreement with this suggestion.

Since the idea expressed by this word is likely to grow in importance, a stitch of pedantry now may save nine later.

(1) W. F. Luder, *Chem. Rev.*, **27**, 579 (1940).

DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY NORRIS F. HALL
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RECEIVED JANUARY 23, 1941

A NEW SPONGE STEROL

Sir:

During the chemical investigation of a series of rudimentary organisms, a mixture of sterols from a fresh-water sponge[1] was acetylated and subjected to repeated chromatographic adsorption analyses, using activated alumina. The fraction most strongly adsorbed displayed a strong Rosenheim reaction and showed absorption maxima at 272.5, 282.5 and 294.5 mμ, which correspond to those obtained with ergosterol and 7-dehydrocholesterol.[2] The maximum at 282.5 mμ had an extinction coefficient of 7200, as compared

(1) *Spongilla lacustris*, collected and stored under acetone at Trout Lake, Vilas County, Wisconsin.

(2) Windaus, Lettré and Schenck, *Ann.*, **520**, 98 (1935).

with 12,900 for ergosterol. Too little of this product, which appears to be approximately 56% pure, was available for further purification.

The fractions which were less strongly adsorbed yielded, on systematic chromatographic analysis, a sterol acetate which appears to be homogeneous by this technique. The free sterol gave a strong Liebermann reaction and a precipitate with digitonin. The Rosenheim test was negative and no insoluble bromide could be obtained either with the free sterol or its acetate. Its composition is $C_{29}H_{50}O$ as determined from its various derivatives: sterol, m. p. 136.5–137°, $[\alpha]_D$ −41.8°[3]; acetate, m. p. 137°, $[\alpha]_D$ −47.6° (calcd. for $C_{31}H_{52}O_2$: C, 81.5; H, 11.5. Found: C, 81.4; H, 11.6); benzoate, m. p. 137.5°, $[\alpha]_D$ −17.1° (calcd. for $C_{36}H_{54}O_2$: C, 83.2; H, 10.5. Found: C, 83.0; H, 10.3); and *m*-dinitrobenzoate, m. p. 200°, $[\alpha]_D$ −18.3° (calcd. for $C_{36}H_{52}O_6N_2$: C, 71.0; H, 8.6. Found: C, 71.2; H, 8.7).

The sterol acetate was hydrogenated in the presence of platinum oxide in glacial acetic acid. An uptake of hydrogen equivalent to one double bond was observed. The hydrogenated sterol proved to be identical with stigmastanol. Derivatives of the saturated sterol and of stigmastanol were prepared together: stanol, m. p. 134–135°, $[\alpha]_D$ +23.3°; acetate, m. p. 129°, $[\alpha]_D$ +11.5° (calcd. for $C_{31}H_{54}O_2$: C, 81.2; H, 11.9. Found: C, 81.1; H, 11.7); *m*-dinitrobenzoate, m. p. 210°, $[\alpha]_D$ +13.9° (calcd. for $C_{36}H_{54}O_6N_2$: C, 70.8; H, 8.9. Found: C, 70.7; H, 8.9); stanone, m. p. 155°, $[\alpha]_D$ +38.9°; and the stanone oxime, m. p. 210° (calcd. for $C_{29}H_{51}ON$: C, 81.0; H, 12.0. Found: C, 80.8; H, 12.1). All mixed melting points with the corresponding derivatives of stigmastanol showed no depression.

The sterol is unlike any reported in sponges. The saturated sterol spongosterol[4] and the monounsaturated clionasterol[5] and microclionasterol,[6] contain 27 carbon atoms and are not well characterized.

The sterol skeleton structure is identical with that of stigmasterol. The position of the double bond is not at C_{5-6} since a comparison with 22,23-dihydrostigmasterol, synthesized by Fernholz and Ruigh,[7] revealed unmistakable differences.

The presence in a sponge of a sterol having the stigmasterol nucleus is of interest to comparative biochemistry. The position of the double bond in this sterol is now being studied.

(3) All rotations were carried out in chloroform.

(4) Henze, *Z. physiol. Chem.*, **41**, 109 (1904).

(5) Dorée, *Biochem. J.*, **4**, 72 (1909).

(6) Bergmann and Johnson, *Z. physiol. Chem.*, **222**, 220 (1933).

(7) Fernholz and Ruigh, THIS JOURNAL, **62**, 3346 (1940). The author is grateful to Dr. Ruigh for samples of the free sterol and its acetate.

DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY ABRAHAM MAZUR
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RECEIVED FEBRUARY 19, 1941

NEW BOOKS

Fundamentals of Semimicro Qualitative Analysis. By ERWIN B. KELSEY and HAROLD G. DIETRICH, Assistant Professors in Chemistry, Yale University. The Macmillan Co., Inc., 60 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y., 1940. x + 350 pp. 12 figs. 15 × 22 cm. Price, $2.75.

Semimicro methods in teaching chemistry have been given a wide welcome in the last few years and it is safe to conclude that they are here to stay. The time is therefore ripe for some new texts based on these methods and in the field of qualitative analysis this present book should fill the need very satisfactorily.

There are two sections of approximately equal length, entitled, respectively. "Fundamental Theory" and "Analytical Procedure." In the first we have a clear and concise discussion of the nature of solutions; salts, acids, and bases; homogeneous and heterogeneous equilibrium; complex ions; and the principles of oxidation and reduction. Both the old and newer views of ionic solutions are presented, and considerable space is devoted to a discussion of the Brönsted–Lowry concept of acids and bases. The related concept of hydrated ions, such as $Al(H_2O)_6^{+++}$, as acids is discussed briefly, but the authors do not use this concept to any noticeable extent in the interpretation of experiments.

On the whole there is a fine balance between the necessarily elementary presentation and the precision and rigor of logic that ought to be the foundation of every introductory book which is to play a part in the training of scientists. Each fundamental principle is stated in words and symbols, illustrated graphically if possible, made concrete with well chosen specific examples, and clarified by the addition of actual computations with all figures included. There are practice exercises and recommendations for collateral reading.

The second section opens with a ten-page description of the special technique of semimicro analysis. The systematic procedure is then presented, in form following