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ELECTROCHEMICAL SYNTHESIS OF 3-AMINO-4-HYDROXYCOUMARIN

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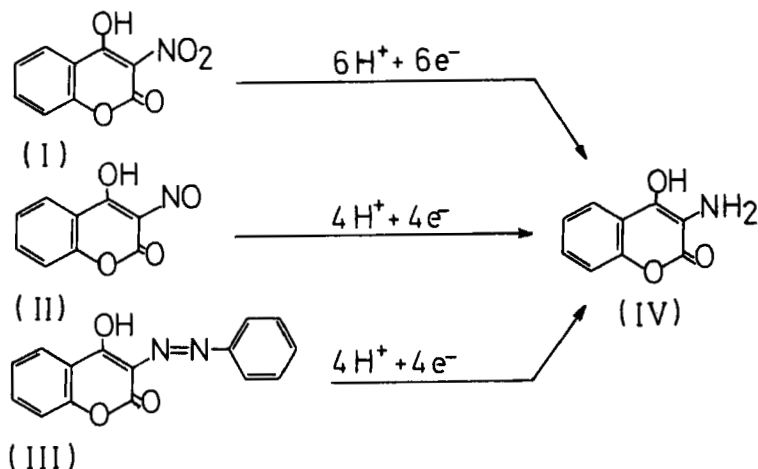
ELECTROCHEMICAL SYNTHESIS OF 3-AMINO-4-HYDROXYCOUMARIN

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3-Amino-4-hydroxycoumarin(IV)-which is a constituent part of the antibiotic novobiocin¹ has been found to possess antibacterial and fungicidal properties of its own.^{2,3} The published syntheses of IV are based in most cases, on the reduction of 3-nitro(I),⁴ 3-nitroso(II),⁵ or 3-phenylazo-4-hydroxycoumarin(III)⁶ by conventional methods.^{4,7-9} These methods either give low yields, involve complex procedures or require the use of expensive catalysts. These disadvantages severely diminish the value of chemical reduction as a method of preparation of substantial amounts of IV.

Electrochemical reduction which has recently been



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competing successfully with classical chemical methods even on an industrial,¹⁰ offers important advantages. We now describe the novel electrochemical reduction of (I), (II) and (III) (see Scheme).

EXPERIMENTAL

Mps were determined on a Kofler block and are uncorrected.

Electrolytic cell.¹¹ A magnetic stirrer bar was placed on the bottom of a 1000 ml beaker and covered with a pool of mercury to serve as the cathode. An unglazed cylindrical porcelain diaphragm was used to separate a compartment containing the platinum-wire anode. During electrolyses the beaker was immersed in a water bath kept at the temperatures specified and the mercury cathode was stirred. Cathode potentials were measured with a vacuum-tube voltmeter against a S.C.E.

Catholytes: (A) 100ml glac. CH_3COOH + 50 ml 20 %HCl

(B) 100 ml 96 % $\text{C}_2\text{H}_5\text{OH}$ + 50 ml 20% HCl.

Anolyte: 20% HCl in all experiments.

Fixed potentials for controlled-potential reductions were selected on the basis of preliminary data obtained by electrolyses at constant current densities.¹²

Numbers of electrons transferred in electrochemical reductions were determined coulometrically at controlled potentials.

3-Amino-4-hydroxycoumarin.-Compounds I, II, or III in amounts ranging from 1 to 10 g, dissolved in catholyte, were placed into the cathode compartment of the cell and electrochemically reduced at either constant current density or at

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controlled potential under conditions specified on Tables I and II, respectively. When electrolysis was complete, the catholyte was removed and its volume brought to about 30 ml under reduced pressure. After having been adjusted to pH 5 with saturated Na_2CO_3 solution the light-green residue was placed in a refrigerator for several hours. The separated solid was collected by filtration and dried over CaCl_2 for 24 hrs before weighing. Identification of products was carried out after several recrystallizations from 70% ethanol. The purified compound, mp. $222-224^\circ$ (unchanged after admixture with authentic (IV) gave correct elemental analyses; its ir spectrum was identical with that of (IV) and it yielded the same azomethine derivative with benzaldehyde¹³ as did authentic (IV).

TABLE I. - ELECTROLYSES AT CONSTANT CURRENT DENSITIES

Compound	Catholyte	Temp.	i (A/dm ²)	Yield (%)
I	B	80 ^o	1.580	74.6
II	B	20 ^o	1.620	68.5
III	A	20 ^o	1.428	96.5

TABLE II. - ELECTROLYSES AT CONTROLLED POTENTIALS

Compound	Catholyte	E (V vs. S.C.E.)	Temp.	n^a	Yield (%)
I	A	-0.130	50 ^o	5.27	60.8
	B	-0.400	80 ^o	5.21	85.5
II	B	-0.130	40 ^o	3.40	52.5
III	A	-0.090	40 ^o	3.72	98.2

^aNumber of electrons transferred determined coulometrically

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