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<th>Title</th>
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Synthesis of δ-Valerolactone

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Dehydrogenations of aliphatic glycols to the corresponding lactones with copper catalyst have been studied by several investigators1-6. With copper chromite, Schiepp7, and Hachihama8 prepared δ-valerolactone by the dehydrogenation of 1, 5-pentanediol which was obtained by the hydrogenation of δ-hydroxyvalerolactone. However, no study on catalytic dehydrogenation of hydroxyaldehyde which is supposed to be an intermediate in the lactone formation, is found in the literature. The results obtained in a previous study7 of the dehydrogenation of 1, 4-butanediol to γ-butyrolactone with copper-zinc oxide, suggested that δ-valerolactone might be prepared from δ-hydroxyvalerolactone or 1, 5-pentanediol with the same catalyst.

An attempt to dehydrogenate δ-hydroxyvalerolactone or 1, 5-pentanediol with copper-zinc oxide in vapor phase has been successfully carried out to give δ-valerolactone in good yields. This procedure has an advantage over the air oxidation4'6' of δ-hydroxyvalerolactone to δ-valerolactone with cobalt acetate.

The infrared spectrum of the product obtained from δ-hydroxyvalerolactone was the same with that of δ-valerolactone from 1, 5-pentanediol (Fig. 1). It shows strong bands due to lactone group at 5.75μ, 8.63μ, and 9.46μ, as described in the literature9.

δ-Hydroxyvalerolactone was prepared by the hydrolysis of dihydropyran10. Its infrared spectrum shows a strong band due to hydroxyl group at 2.96μ and a weak band due to carbonyl group at 5.80μ (Fig. 2). It is in accord with the fact that δ-hydroxyvalerolactone exists predominantly as the cyclic lactole, 2-hydroxy-terahydropyran11.

EXPERIMENTAL

3, 4-Dihydro-α-pyran. It was prepared by a catalytic conversion of tetrahydrofurfuryl alcohol over the activated alumina12. From 102 g. of tetrahydrofurfuryl alcohol there was obtained 60 g. (71%) of dihydropyran, b. p. 85-86°C, nD20 1.4350, d,19 0.9072 (lit. b. p. 84-86°C). MRd: Found, 24.2; Calcd., 24.3.

δ-Hydroxyvalerolactone. From 60 g. of dihydropyran there was obtained 25 g. (33%) of δ-hydroxyvalerolactone, b. p. 54-55°C/3mmHg, nD20 1.4515, d,15 1.0527 (lit. b. p. 54-55°C/3mmHg, nD20 1.4514, d,15 1.0537). MRd: Found, 26.2; Calcd. for the cyclic form, 26.3.


δ-Hydroxyvalerolactone gave a 2, 4-dinitrophenylhydrazone melting at 106-107°C (lit.10 109°C).
**NOTE**

![Infrared spectrum of δ-valerolactone](image1)

**Fig. 1.** Infrared spectrum of δ-valerolactone.

![Infrared spectrum of δ-hydroxyvaleraldehyde](image2)

**Fig. 2.** Infrared spectrum of δ-hydroxyvaleraldehyde.

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**Anal.** Found: C, 46.99; H, 5.11. Calcd. for C_{6}H_{10}O_{2}N_{4}: C, 46.81; H, 5.00%.

**Catalyst.** The catalyst consisting of 20% copper and 80% zinc oxide which had been prepared previously for the dehydrogenation of 1,4-butanediol\(^{17}\), was used. It was made in tablets, 8 mm in diameter and 2 mm in thickness.

**Dehydrogenation of 1,5-pentanediol.** The apparatus and the procedure for the dehydrogenation were essentially the same as those described previously\(^{17}\).

The dehydrogenation tube (60 cm x 15 mm) packed with 50 ml. of the catalyst was heated in a furnace. Activation of the catalyst was carried out at 220°C in a stream of hydrogen until the reduction was completed. A quantity of 20 g. of 1,5-pentanediol (b. p. 115°C/3 mm Hg, \(n_0\) 1.4481, \(d_4\) 0.9876) was introduced with 20 l./hr. of hydrogen in a period of two-hours. The reaction temperature was maintained at 230°C. The product was collected in a trap cooled with ice water, and distilled to yield 16.5 g. (86%) of δ-valerolactone, b. p. 73~75°C/3 mm Hg, \(n_0\) 1.4550, \(d_4\) 1.1017 (lit\(^{19}\), \(n_0\) 1.4553, \(d_4\) 1.104). MR\(_D\): Found, 24.7; Calcd. 24.7.

**Anal.** Found: C, 59.90; H, 8.16. Calcd. for C_{6}H_{10}O_{2}: C, 59.98; H, 8.05%.

**Hydrazide of δ-valerolactone.** δ-Valerolactone (0.5 g) was added into 0.5 ml. of 85% aqueous hydrazine hydrate. The mixture became clear with a evolution of heat and solidified on cooling. After a recrystallization from 95% ethanol, the hydrazide was obtained in colorless crystals melting at 105~106°C (lit\(^{19}\), 105~106°C). It was very soluble in water.

**Anal.** Found: C, 45.62; H, 9.20. Calcd. for C_{6}H_{12}O_{2}N_{2}: C, 45.44; H, 9.15%.

**Dehydrogenation of δ-hydroxyvaleraldehyde.** After the activation of the catalyst with hydrogen at 220°C for 2 hrs., the pressure in the reaction system
**NOTE**

was reduced to 20~30 mmHg. δ-Hydroxyvaleroaldehyde was introduced by vacuum distillation in a period of one-hour. The reaction temperature was maintained at 230°C. The sample (10g) gave 7.5g. (76%) of the product, b.p. 73~74°C/3mmHg, \(n_d^25\) 1.4550, which was identified as δ-valerolactone. It formed a hydrazide, m. p. 105~106°C, which gave no depression when mixed with an authentic sample.

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