at 280 and 294-4 m\_\text{A}, the total protein content can be calculated from the expression

\text{Total protein (g./100 ml.) = } 9-76 \times (2-2E_{294-4} - E_{280}) .

Estimation of serum protein concentration from serum specific gravity. The relationship between the serum protein concentration \( (P) \) in g./100 ml. and the serum specific gravity \( (G) \) is usually expressed in the form

\[ P = a(G - b) \]

where \( a \) and \( b \) are constants.

Sera from 320 cattle have been examined, the serum protein values varying from 4-5 to 11-0 g./100 ml. and the specific gravities from 1-0200 to 1-0405. For the specific gravity range 1-0220 to 1-0365 (corresponding to a serum protein range of from 5-5 to 9-6 g.) the equation relating these quantities, obtained using values for 312 sera, was

\[ P = 362-0 \times (G - 1-0020) \]

\( (a = 362-02 \pm 7-668, b = 1-00197 \pm 0-000202) \). Beyond these limits the relationship was no longer linear.

DISCUSSION

The value for the constant (1-0020) obtained for cattle in the equation relating serum protein concentrations and serum specific gravity is low compared with that found for the plasma of other species (Van Slyke, Hiller, Phillips, Hamilton, Dole, Archibald & Eder, 1950). The value for this constant should agree approximately with the specific gravity of a solution of the serum crystalloids. The sera were obtained from adult zebu cattle which were undoubtedly existing on a low plane of mineral nutrition, and it is possible that the low value of \( b \) reflects a lowered serum content of mineral salts.

SUMMARY

1. The tyrosine content of mixed bovine serum proteins has been determined. 1 mg. of tyrosine is contained in 19-78 mg. of total protein (tyrosine determined using the Folin & Ciocalteu reagent) or 19-68 mg. of total protein (tyrosine determined spectrophotometrically).

2. A linear relationship exists between the serum protein concentration and the serum specific gravity, provided that the latter falls within the range 1-0220 to 1-0365. Within these limits

\[ P = 362-0 \times (G - 1-0020) \]

Thanks are due to Mr J. D. Brewer for technical assistance.

REFERENCES


Reaction Between Hydrocyanic Acid, Cyanide Ion and Ferricytochrome c

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(Received 2 June 1951)

Potter & Lockhart (1939) reported that the enzymic reduction of cytochrome c by either the dihydrocozymase-diaphorase system or the succinic dehydrogenase system was blocked by 0-01 m-cyanide. In later communications (Lockhart & Potter, 1941; Potter, 1941), it was concluded that cytochrome c was involved in a reaction with cyanide. The evidence presented to support this conclusion can be summarized as follows. (1) By incubation of cytochrome c with cyanide, the enzymic reduction of the former was partly or completely prevented, depending on the cyanide concentration, and on the time and pH of incubation. The enzyme systems
which are responsible for the reduction of cytochrome c were not affected. (2) Incubation with cyanide also shifted the absorption maximum of ferricytochrome c at 530 mμ, about 5 mμ, toward the red.

This conclusion was later confirmed by Horecker & Kornberg (1946), who studied this reaction in considerable detail and suggested that complex formation involved only the free cyanide ion. These workers demonstrated the reversibility of the reaction and determined the formation velocity constant and equilibrium constant from which they calculated the dissociation velocity constant. They also obtained values for the heat of dissociation and the energy of activation for the formation of the complex. The absorption spectrum of the ferricytochrome c-cyanide complex, obtained by Potter in the green region, was extended by these workers to the red. They found that the feeble bands of ferricytochrome c at 655 and 695 mμ disappeared when it was converted to the complex.

In spite of the conclusive evidence put forward by these workers, the fact that cytochrome c forms a reversible complex with cyanide does not seem to have been generally accepted (see, for instance, Theorell, 1947; Wyman, 1948). In the present investigation, some of the results of Potter and of Horecker & Kornberg have been confirmed.

The formation velocity constant and the equilibrium constant of the reaction have been determined at different temperatures and over a wider pH range than hitherto investigated. Evidence is presented to show that ferricytochrome c is capable of reacting with both hydrocyanic acid and free cyanide ion; the former reaction predominates in acid solutions and the latter in neutral and slightly alkaline solutions. From the kinetic and equilibrium data forward and back velocity constants and the two equilibrium constants are calculated, together with heats and entropies of activation and the overall change in heat content and entropy associated with the formation of the complex. Where comparison is possible, the numerical values of those quantities differ from those reported by Horecker & Kornberg as would be expected because at the pH of their experiments, i.e. 7-4, the reactions with both hydrocyanic acid and cyanide ion are important, whereas they analysed their data in terms of a reaction with cyanide ion alone.

Experiments are also presented showing that the velocity constant for the formation of the complex decreases above pH 9-2, which may be attributed to an ionization in the ferricytochrome c molecule such that the formation of the complex occurs predominantly by reaction of the acid form.

It has been shown previously, however, that endogenous cytochrome c, i.e. cytochrome c as present in living cells and in certain colloidal enzyme preparations, does not react with cyanide (Tsou, 1951b). The present paper deals exclusively with exogenous cytochrome c.

**EXPERIMENTAL**

*Cytochrome c* of iron content 0-34 % was prepared by the method of Keilin & Hartree (1945). Heart-muscle preparation containing the enzymes responsible for the reduction of cytochrome c by succinate was prepared according to the Keilin & Hartree method as previously described (Tsou, 1951).

**Cyanide.** Neutral solutions were prepared each week and the cyanide concentration was determined by titration against standard silver nitrate solution immediately before use.

Following Latimer (1938), we have taken the results of Harman & Worley (1924) on the hydrolysis of KCN as the most reliable data for the ionization constant of HCN, $K_a$.

From their values of the hydrolysis constant at various temperatures and the values for $K_w$, the ion product of water, at temperatures 15-40° given by Harned & Owen (1943), we have calculated the values of $K_a$ appropriate to the temperatures of our experiments. These are given later in Table 3. We have made no correction for ion strength, partly because Harman & Worley's experiments were carried out at an ionic strength comparable to that employed in the present investigation. However, in calculating $K_a$ from the hydrolysis constant a value of $K_w$ corrected for ion strength should strictly be used. But in view of the uncertainty in the hydrolysis data shown by the different results obtained by previous workers, e.g. Madsen (1901) gives a value for $K_w$ of $4 \cdot 7 \times 10^{-10}$ at 18°, whereas the value calculated from Harman & Worley's data is about $2 \cdot 5 \times 10^{-10}$, and considering that the correction to $K_w$ would only be of the order of 15 %, we have chosen to neglect it. It must be borne in mind that values of velocity constants and equilibrium constants obtained later are subject to correction if a better value of $K_a$ becomes available.

**Buffers.** Below pH 8-0, 0-075 M-phosphate buffers were used; and in the pH range 8-0-10-0, 0-075 M-borate buffers. pH measurements were made with a glass electrode and a Cambridge pH meter.

**Light absorption.** This was measured with a Beckman photoelectric spectrophotometer.

**Estimation of reaction rate.** The cytochrome c solution used was first acidified to about pH 3-4 and aerated to ensure complete oxidation. It was then titrated back to neutrality. This solution (1 ml.) was mixed with 5 ml. of 0-15 M-buffer of the required pH, the correct amount of neutralized cyanide, and water to make a total volume of 10 ml. (solution A). The pH of the solution was measured immediately at the end of the experiment at each temperature with a glass electrode assembly. Solution B was made up from 1 ml. of heart-muscle preparation, 5 ml. of 0-4 M-succinate and 0-25 M-phosphate buffer, pH 7-4, to a total volume of 50 ml. Periodically, 1 ml. portions of solution A were pipetted into 2 ml. portions of solution B. The optical density at 550 mμ of such a mixture was read against a blank in a Beckman spectrophotometer until a maximum value was reached (usually after 10-30 sec.). The blank contained the same concentrations of all the reagents except cytochrome c. At this stage, the uncombined cytochrome c was fully reduced.
The molar concentration of free cytochrome \( c \), at any time \( t \) can be calculated from the following equation

\[
[c] = \frac{D_t - D_a}{1.88 \times 10^4} \times 3,
\]

where \( D_t \) is the steady density of the mixture prepared at time \( t \); \( D_a \) is the density when all the cytochrome is converted to the cyanide complex prior to mixing with the heart-muscle preparation. This figure can also be obtained by multiplying the total concentration of cytochrome \( c \) by 0.92 \( \times 10^4 \) which is the molecular extinction coefficient of the complex at 450 m\( \mu \). (Tsou, 1952); and 1.88 \( \times 10^4 \) is the difference between the molecular extinction coefficient of ferrocyanochrome \( c \) (Theorell & Åkesson, 1941 a) and that of the complex at 550 m\( \mu \). When KCN is present in excess, the reaction is first order and the velocity constant is calculated from

\[
k_{\text{obs}} = - \frac{2.3 \times \frac{\text{d} \log [c]}{\text{dt}}}{[\text{KCN}]} \times \frac{\text{d} \ln [c]}{\text{dt}},
\]

where \([\text{KCN}]\) is the concentration of total cyanide and \( \frac{\text{d} \log [c]}{\text{dt}} \) was obtained graphically by plotting \( \ln [c] \) against time (Fig. 1).

**Estimation of equilibrium constant.** The same method is also available for estimation of the equilibrium constant of the reaction between cytochrome \( c \) and cyanide, except that lower cyanide concentrations and longer incubation times have to be used. Precautions to prevent loss of HCN vapour were necessary (Horecker & Kornberg, 1940).

**RESULTS**

**Order of reaction.** In presence of excess cyanide, the reaction followed the first-order Eqn. ii, as is shown in Fig. 1. These first-order constants, \( k_{\text{obs}} \), were found to depend on the hydrogen-ion concentration, as shown in Fig. 2, where the values obtained at 11-7 and 24-6° are plotted as a function of pH over the range 6-0–10-0. Similar results were obtained at 18-2 and 30-4° for the pH range 6-0–8-0.

**Equilibrium measurements.** Using the method described above, the equilibrium concentration of the ferrocyanochrome \( c \)-cyanide complex in solutions containing ferrocyanochrome \( c \) and potassium cyanide was measured at several potassium cyanide concentrations over the pH range 5-8–7-5. From the results an equilibrium constant \( K_{\text{KCN}} \) was calculated for the overall reaction from the equation

\[
K_{\text{KCN}} = \frac{[\text{cyt. } c\text{-CN}]}{[\text{cyt. } c] \times [\text{KCN}]}.
\]

It will be shown below that this overall equilibrium constant is compounded of two equilibrium constants appropriate to the two paths the reaction can take, one involving the un-ionized HCN molecule.
and the other involving the free cyanide ion. By expressing the experimental results in this form, i.e. Eqn. iii, they are more amenable to analysis. Values of this equilibrium constant over the pH range 5-8-7-5, at 13-8 and 24-6°, are recorded in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Equilibrium constant data at 13-8° for the formation of the ferricytochrome c-cyanide complex calculated from Eqn. iii at different hydrogen-ion concentrations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pH</th>
<th>KCN (mM)</th>
<th>$K_{KCN}(\times 10^{-4} M)$</th>
<th>$K_{KCN}(\times 10^{-4} M)$</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.206</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.30</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>0.526</td>
<td>0.513</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.74</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.98</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.41</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Equilibrium constant data at 24-6°

(K_{KCN} values are calculated from Eqn. iii.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pH</th>
<th>KCN (mM)</th>
<th>$K_{KCN}(\times 10^{-4} M)$</th>
<th>$K_{KCN}(\times 10^{-4} M)$</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.319</td>
<td>0.323</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.327</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>0.852</td>
<td>0.889</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.826</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.72</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.98</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.46</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

An examination of the hydrogen-ion dependence of the bimolecular velocity constant for the formation of the complex given in Fig. 2 shows that at high hydrogen-ion concentrations, up to about pH 6-0, the velocity constant is independent of pH and has a low value, but that as the solution is made more alkaline, pH 7-0-9-0, the velocity constant increases rapidly. This suggests that in the pH range 6-0-9-0 we are dealing with two reactions giving the complex, the first with HCN and the second with CN⁻:

$$k_{HCN}$$
$$\text{cyt. c + HCN} \rightleftharpoons \text{cyt. c.CN} + \text{H}^+,$$  \( (1) \)

$$k_{CN^-}$$
$$\text{cyt. c + CN}^- \rightleftharpoons \text{cyt. c.CN}.$$  \( (2) \)

Representing the individual velocity constants for these two reactions by $k_{HCN}$ and $k_{CN^-}$, it can be shown that the observed bimolecular velocity constant, $k_{obs}$, should be given by

$$k_{obs} = \frac{k_{HCN} \cdot [H^+] + k_{CN^-} \cdot K_a}{[H^+] + K_a},$$  \( (iv) \)

since the fraction of un-ionized HCN and the cyanide ion at any hydrogen-ion concentration are given by $\frac{[H^+]}{[H^+] + K_a}$ and $\frac{K_a}{[H^+] + K_a}$, respectively, where $K_a$ is the ionization constant of HCN. Thus, to test the mechanism given by reactions 1 and 2 above, $k_{obs}([H^+] + K_a)$ can be plotted against $[H^+]$, for, if Eqn. iv holds, the graph should be linear. Fig. 3, which is the plot for the data at 24-6°, shows that this is so. Similar linear plots were obtained for the data at 11-7, 18-2 and 30-4°. This linearity supports the mechanism given by reactions 1 and 2 and the further analysis rests on this basis.

The slope of the line in Fig. 3 gives the value of $k_{HCN} = 3.26 \pm 0.02 \text{m}^{-1} \text{min}^{-1}$ and the intercept could be used to obtain a value of the product $k_{CN^-} \cdot K_a$. However, a better value for this quantity with more accurately determined limits can be got by an alternative plot of the data. The function $k_{obs}([H^+] + K_a) [H^+]$ plotted against the reciprocal of $[H^+]$ is also linear and the slope in this case is given by $k_{CN^-} \cdot K_a$. Using a value of $K_a$ calculated as described above, $k_{CN^-}$ is found to be $914 \pm 24 \text{m}^{-1} \text{sec}^{-1}$ at 24-6°. The formation of the complex from the free cyanide ion thus proceeds about 280 times faster than the formation from the undissociated HCN molecule at this temperature. The calculated values of $K_a$ and the values for $k_{HCN}$ and $k_{CN^-}$ at the four temperatures used are listed in Table 3.

Fig. 4 shows the appropriate plot to determine the activation energy $E$ for the two reactions. The vertical lines within the circles in this diagram represent the spread of the experimental values.
Table 3. Velocity constants for ferricytochrome c-cyanide complex formation and ionization constants for HCN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temp. (°)</th>
<th>$k_{HCN}$ × 10^10 (m⁻¹ min⁻¹)</th>
<th>$k_{CN^-}$ (m⁻¹ min⁻¹)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11·7</td>
<td>1·64 ± 0·015</td>
<td>253 ± 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18·2</td>
<td>2·51 ± 0·03</td>
<td>465 ± 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24·6</td>
<td>3·57 ± 0·02</td>
<td>914 ± 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30·4</td>
<td>5·21 ± 0·04</td>
<td>1560 ± 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examination of Fig. 2 now shows that the above mechanism for the formation of the complex does not hold over the entire pH range examined. If it did so, in the alkaline solutions when all the cyanide is present as CN⁻, $k_{obs}$ should tend asymptotically to $k_{CN^-}$. It is clear that another ionization is operative, responsible for a diminution in the velocity function of the complex. The ionization of HCN has already been taken into account, so this additional ionization must be attributed to the ferricytochrome c. The position of the maximum in Fig. 2 indicates roughly that the pK for this ionization lies between 8·5 and 9·2, having a bigger value the lower the temperature.

The simplest mechanism based on an ionization of this kind is to assume that the acid form of ferricytochrome c reacts with HCN and CN⁻, giving the complex, and that the alkaline form does not react at all. If $K_p$ is the ionization constant of ferricytochrome c, then the fraction of the acid form at any hydrogen-ion concentration will be given by

$$\frac{[H^+]}{K_p + [H^+]}$$

and it follows that the relation between $k_{obs}$, the observed velocity constant for the formation of the complex, and $k_{calc}$, the value this velocity constant would have if the ionization did not occur, will be given by

$$k_{obs} = k_{calc} \frac{[H^+]}{K_p + [H^+]}.$$  

According to this equation, $k_{obs}/k_{calc}$ plotted against the reciprocal of $[H^+]$ should be linear. Fig. 5 shows the data for 24·6° and 11·7° plotted in this way. Quite good straight lines are obtained which thus support this simple ionization mechanism and it may be concluded that the assumption that

Table 4. Kinetic data for ferricytochrome c-cyanide complex formation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reacting species</th>
<th>$k$ at 24·6° (m⁻¹ sec⁻¹)</th>
<th>$E$ (kg.cal.)</th>
<th>$A$ (m⁻¹ sec⁻¹)</th>
<th>$\Delta H^*$ (kg.cal.)</th>
<th>$\Delta S^*$ (e.u.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HCN</td>
<td>0·0543</td>
<td>18·4 ± 0·4</td>
<td>2·2 × 10¹³</td>
<td>17·8 ± 0·4</td>
<td>-5·9 ± 1·4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN⁻</td>
<td>15·2</td>
<td>17·0 ± 0·5</td>
<td>5·4 × 10¹³</td>
<td>16·4 ± 0·5</td>
<td>0·5 ± 1·7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5. Acidity constants, heats and entropies of ionization for certain groups in proteins as compared with those of an ionizing group present in ferricytochrome c

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>pK</th>
<th>Temp.</th>
<th>(\Delta H) ((\text{kg}.\text{cal.}))</th>
<th>(\Delta S) (e.u.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phenolic OH (tyrosine)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9-8-10-4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6-0</td>
<td>-24-4 to -27-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glyoxaline (histidine)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5-6-7-4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6-9 to 7-5</td>
<td>-0-3 to -10-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glyoxaline (haemin-linked)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9-5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6-2</td>
<td>-22-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haemin-water (in metmyoglobin)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8-85</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3-85 ± 0-4</td>
<td>-27-0 ± 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group in ferricytochrome c</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8-75</td>
<td>24-6</td>
<td>2-9 ± 0-7</td>
<td>-30 ± 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Cohn & Edsall (1943). The limit 8-5 in the pK for histidine-glyoxaline is taken from Theorell & Åkeson (1941 b). The \(\Delta H\) and \(\Delta S\) values are for both amino-acids and peptides and in general are experimental values at various ionic strengths.

(2) Russell & Pauling (1939). The \(\Delta H\) value is that used by Wyman (1948).

(3) George & Hanania (unpublished results). The figures refer to an ionic strength similar to that used in the present investigation. The true thermodynamic values at 25° are nearer pK = 8-99, \(\Delta H = 5-9 ± 0-7\) kg.cal. and \(\Delta S = -21 ± 2\) e.u.

(4) Present study.

Table 6. Derived kinetic data for the dissociation of the ferricytochrome c-cyanide complex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dissociation</th>
<th>Dissociation constant, (k), at 24-6° (sec.-1)</th>
<th>Dissociation constant, (E) (kg.cal.)</th>
<th>Dissociation constant, (A) (kg.cal.)</th>
<th>Dissociation constant, (\Delta H*) (kg.cal.)</th>
<th>Dissociation constant, (\Delta S*) (e.u.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>free cyt. +</td>
<td>k\text{HCN} = 1-13 × 10(^{-6}) M(^{-1})</td>
<td>E\text{HCN} = 9-2 ± 1-0</td>
<td>A\text{HCN} = 7-1 × 10(^{5})</td>
<td>(\Delta H^*\text{HCN} = 8-6 ± 1-0)</td>
<td>(\Delta S^*\text{HCN} = -21-6 ± 3-0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN(^{-})</td>
<td>k\text{CN} = 1-25 × 10(^{-6})</td>
<td>E\text{CN} = 15-9 ± 1-0</td>
<td>A\text{CN} = 6-25 × 10(^{4})</td>
<td>(\Delta H^*\text{CN} = 15-3 ± 1-0)</td>
<td>(\Delta S^*\text{CN} = -30-8 ± 3-0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the reaction of the alkaline form of ferricytochrome c giving the complex can be neglected was justified.

From Eqn. vi it can be seen that the slopes of these two lines give the values of \(K_d\) at the two temperatures. The values are 1-43 ± 0-07 × 10\(^{-8}\) and 1-78 ± 0-02 × 10\(^{-8}\) at 11-7 and 24-6°, respectively, corresponding to pK values of 8-84 ± 0-03 and 8-75 ± 0-01. Table 5 gives the heat and entropy of ionization calculated from these data, together with comparable data for the ionization of groups known to occur in proteins, and for the water molecule bound to the haemin group in metmyoglobin (see Eqn. 3).

\[
\text{Fe}^+(\text{H}_2\text{O}) \rightleftharpoons \text{FeOH} + \text{H}^+. \tag{3}
\]

Using the values of \(k\text{HCN}\) and \(k\text{CN}\) obtained above, the equilibrium data recorded in Tables 1 and 2 can be analysed in the following way. The overall equilibrium constant \(K_{\text{KCN}}\) will be given by the equation

\[
\frac{k\text{HCN}}{k\text{CN} K_a + K_a K_d}, \tag{vii}
\]

where \(k\text{dim}\) is the velocity constant for the dissociation of the complex. The three constants in the numerator are known, and its numerical value has been calculated for each pH value in Tables 1 and 2. This divided by the respective value of \(K_{\text{KCN}}\) gives the corresponding value of \(k\text{dim}\). In Fig. 6, \(k\text{dim}\) obtained in this way is plotted against \([\text{H}^+]\). The straight lines obtained show that \(k\text{dim}\) is compounded of a hydrogen ion-dependent dissociation and a normal dissociation. Inspection of reactions (1) and (2) shows that this was to be expected, for the corresponding back reactions would have these characteristics. If \(k\text{HCN}\) and \(k\text{CN}\) represent the velocity constants for these back reactions, \(k\text{dim}\) being the velocity constant at unit hydrogen-ion concentration, then

\[
k\text{dim} = k\text{CN} + K\text{HCN} [\text{H}^+]. \tag{viii}
\]

The intercepts and slopes in Fig. 6 can thus be identified with \(k\text{CN}\) and \(K\text{HCN}\). These constants have the values 2-7 × 10\(^{-4}\) min.\(^{-1}\) and 7-5 × 10\(^{-4}\) min.\(^{-1}\) at 24-6° and 13-8° respectively. Table 6 lists the energies of activation, temperature-independent factors, heats and entropies of activation, calculated from these values in the same way as that used for the formation velocity constant data in Table 4. The individual equilibrium constants for reactions (1) and (2)
can now be calculated, for $K_1 = k_{KCN}/k_{HCN}$ and $K_2 = k_{CN^-}/k_{CN^-}$. In addition the change in heat content, $\Delta H$, and the entropy change associated with the two reactions, may be obtained from the difference between the heats and entropies of activation of the forward and back reactions respectively. These data are listed in Table 7.

Table 7. Derived equilibrium constants and overall heat and entropy changes for the formation of the solvated ferricytochrome c-cyanide complex at 24·6°C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reacting species</th>
<th>Equilibrium constants</th>
<th>$\Delta H$ (kg.cal.)</th>
<th>$\Delta S$ (e.u.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HCN</td>
<td>$4·8 \times 10^{-4}$</td>
<td>9.2 ± 1.4</td>
<td>+15.7 ± 4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN⁻</td>
<td>$1·22 \times 10^{9}$ M⁻¹</td>
<td>1.1 ± 1.5</td>
<td>+31.3 ± 4.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The complicated nature of the overall reaction revealed by this analysis shows that it would not have been possible to obtain reliable quantitative data from measurements of the equilibrium constant alone over a range of pH. Combining Eqn. vii with Eqn. viii the full expression for the overall equilibrium constant is

$$K_{KCN} = \frac{k_{HCN}[\text{H}^+][\text{CN}^-]}{k_{CN^-}[\text{H}^+][\text{CN}^-].}$$

In acid solution this expression reduces to $k_{HCN}/k_{CN^-}$ and so a value of $K_1$ could be obtained, but in solutions sufficiently alkaline to assume that $K_1$ is negligible, the ionization of the ferricytochrome c itself intervenes. At intermediate pH values a knowledge of individual velocity constants is essential for the analysis.

**DISCUSSION**

Horecker & Kornberg (1946) determined the velocity constants and the equilibrium constants over a pH range of 7·4–8. They found that these constants, when calculated on the basis of cyanide ion, remained constant within this pH range and they concluded, therefore, that ferricytochrome c reacted exclusively with cyanide ion. Results obtained in the present study have shown that ferricytochrome c reacts with both hydrocyanic acid and cyanide ion, the velocity constant for the latter reaction being about 280 times as large as that for the former reaction. The reaction with hydrocyanic acid is significant only at those pH values where cyanide is present predominantly as undissociated hydrocyanic acid.

Horecker & Kornberg’s values for the velocity constant, the equilibrium constant and the activation energy for the cyanide ion reaction do not agree with ours. In part this is due to not taking into account the reaction with undissociated hydrocyanic acid and in part to using a different value for the ionization constant of hydrocyanic acid. They do not state explicitly what value they have used, but in the caption to one of their figures they gave the free cyanide ion concentration at pH 7·4 in $4·5 \times 10^{-3}$ M-potassium cyanide as $7·9 \times 10^{-4}$ M-cyanide ion at 24°C. This corresponds to a value for the ionization constant of hydrocyanic acid of $7·0 \times 10^{-10}$ M in accord with the data of Madsen (1901). Using this and their value of 950 min⁻¹ for $k_{CN^-}$, it can be shown that their experimental velocity constant would be about 9·5 M⁻¹ min⁻¹, whereas our data lead to a value of 11·4 M⁻¹ min⁻¹. There is thus far less numerical discrepancy between the experimental data than would appear from the determined constants, e.g. $k_{CN^-} = 914$ and $550$ M⁻¹ min⁻¹ in our analysis and theirs, respectively. Their value for the activation energy, however, is widely different from ours, i.e. 26·1 kg.cal. as compared with our value of 17 kg.cal. We do not understand why this is so, except that it would arise if the fraction of free cyanide ion in potassium cyanide solution had been taken as independent of temperature. The difference between the activation energies corresponds closely to the heat of ionization of hydrocyanic acid of 9·8 kg.cal. (Madsen, 1901) or 10·8 kg.cal. (Harman & Worley, 1924) required on this supposition. The discrepancy between the values for the equilibrium constant, $K_2$, can also be accounted for in a similar way.

There is a very simple relationship which should hold between the two equilibrium constants for the formation of a complex through an ion and the corresponding undissociated acid. In the case of ferricytochrome c the cyanide complex is formed by reactions (1) and (2) (see p. 443). From the expressions for the two equilibrium constants, $K_1$ and $K_2$, it follows that $K_1/K_2 = K_a$, where $K_a$ is the ionization constant for hydrocyanic acid. In Table 8 the values of $K_1/K_2$ from the data obtained at 13·8 and 24·6°C are compared with $K_a$. The agreement is very satisfactory in view of the lengthy derivation of the two equilibrium constants. The differences between the overall heats and entropies of the formation of the complex which are listed in Table 7 are also a consequence of this relationship between the two equilibrium constants. The differences should

Table 8. Relation between the equilibrium constants of the cyanide and hydrocyanic acid reactions with ferricytochrome c and the ionization constant of hydrocyanic acid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temp. (°)</th>
<th>13·8</th>
<th>24·6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temp. (°)</td>
<td>13·8</td>
<td>24·6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equilibrium constant of HCN reaction, $K_1 = 10^4$</td>
<td>2·72</td>
<td>4·8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equilibrium constant of CN⁻ reaction, $K_2 = 10^4$</td>
<td>1·12</td>
<td>1·22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$K_1/K_2 = 10^{10}$</td>
<td>2·43</td>
<td>3·93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ionization constant of HCN times $10^{10}$</td>
<td>1·90</td>
<td>3·57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
correspond to the heat and entropy of ionization of hydrocyanic acid, i.e. $\Delta H = 10.8 \text{ kg.cal. and } \Delta S = + 6.4 \text{ e.u. (entropy units), which can be seen to be the case within the rather wide limits of the experimental uncertainty associated with these derived quantities.}

The peculiar features of the formation of this cyanide complex can best be shown by the data for its formation from the cyanide ion by reaction (2). It is formed in a slightly endothermic reaction, $\Delta H = 1.1 \pm 1.5 \text{ kg.cal. (Table 7), yet the activation energies for the forward and back reactions are quite large, 17.0 \pm 0.5 and 15.9 \pm 1.0 \text{ kg.cal. respectively (Tables 4 and 6). An activation energy of this magnitude is not unreasonable for the back reaction which involves the breaking of a Fe-CN bond, but the high activation energy for the forward reaction suggests that a strong bond has to be broken to allow the cyanide complex to form.}

The overall entropy of formation of the complex in reaction (2) has a very large positive value, $\Delta S = 53.3 \pm 4.7 \text{ e.u. (Table 7). Now in this reaction the cyanide ion is bound, and some part of its total entropy of +25 e.u. will be lost (Latimer, 1938). This might easily be about 10 e.u. and so, when the cyanide complex forms, an entropy change of about +40 e.u. must arise from changes in structure in the ferricytochrome c itself. This is very suggestive that the haematin is bound on both sides of the iron atom, for the high activation energy required to above would be required to free one of the iron valencies, and the large positive entropy change would result from the more random arrangement of that part of the protein molecule previously bound to the iron atom. Such a model for cytochrome c has been discussed by Theorell (1941).

The dissociation of the complex is necessarily attended by a large negative entropy of activation, $-30.8 \pm 3.0 \text{ e.u. (Table 6). This contributes to a great extent to the low value for the dissociation velocity constant, which has a low temperature-independent factor of } 6.25 \times 10^5, \text{ compared with those for normal reactions of about } 10^{19}. \text{ In fact the existence of the complex can be regarded as a consequence of this low dissociation velocity constant. The formation velocity constant, apart from the high activation energy, is normal in that the temperature-independent factor is about } 10^{19} \text{ (Table 4). This reaction may be contrasted with other haemoprotein reactions such as that between haemoglobin and oxygen, when the existence of oxyhaemoglobin is not a consequence of a slow dissociation velocity constant but of an extremely large formation velocity constant. It is an attractive hypothesis to suppose that the orientation and binding of the haem or haematin groups is responsible for these differences. Hanania, George & Irvine (unpublished results) have recently observed that the formation of the metmyoglobin-cyanide complex is comparatively slow. The observed bimolecular constant at pH 7.0 and 18° is about } 80 \text{ M}^{-1} \text{ sec.}^{-1} \text{ compared with the value } 0.037 \text{ M}^{-1} \text{ sec.}^{-1} \text{ for ferricytochrome c under the same conditions. This suggests that simple structural considerations alone cannot account for differences in reactivity.}

Kinetic studies in alkaline solutions indicate that the reaction between ferricytochrome c and cyanide is affected by an ionizing group in the vicinity of the prosthetic group of the former. The dissociated form of ferricytochrome c reacts with cyanide, if at all, much more slowly than does undissociated ferricytochrome c with cyanide ion. This ionizing group in ferricytochrome c which affects the formation velocity of the cyanide complex is of particular interest in connexion with the binding of the haemin-iron atom to the protein. No ionizing group with precisely the same pK value has been revealed in other investigations. By oxidation-reduction potential studies, Rodkey & Ball (1950) discovered an ionizing group with a pK value of 7-8 and by spectrophotometric titration, Theorell & Åkeson (1941b) showed that an ionizing group, with a pK of 9-35, is responsible for the change in absorption spectrum of ferricytochrome c from types III to IV. The pK value obtained in the present study is sufficiently different from that of Rodkey & Ball to exclude identification of the two groups concerned. On the other hand, it seems to be possible that the ionizing group responsible for the change in absorption spectrum obtained by Theorell & Åkeson might be the same group described in the present work. The discrepancy in pK values could be attributed to the differences in ionic strength of the ferricytochrome c solutions used, and it is not inconceivable that cytochrome c preparations with an iron content of 0.34 % used in the present work might behave slightly differently from the preparation of iron content 0.43 % employed by Theorell & Åkeson.

By titration studies, Theorell & Åkeson (1941c) reached the conclusion that only one of the three histidine molecules present in cytochrome c was titrated within its normal pH range and two haemin-linked acid groups were titrated between pH 9 and 10. It was argued therefore that these two haemin-linked groups were both histidine glyoxaline groups. This theory has also received the support of Paul, who succeeded in splitting off the cytochrome c prosthetic group from the protein (Paul, 1950), and in a brief communication (Paul, 1949) also reported that between pH 4 and 6 two more acid groups were titrated in the protein residue than in the intact cytochrome molecule. However, no details of the latter findings have yet been made available. Unfortunately, the heat of ionization of Theorell & Åkeson’s haemin-linked acid groups was not
reported. The heat and entropy of ionization of the
group described in the present work seem to be
rather different from what would be expected from a
histidine glyoxaline residue, although it is not
known whether haem-inlinked glyoxaline groups
might have slightly different values. The pH value
of 9.5 reported by Russell & Pauling (1939) for
glyoxaline in the methaemoglobin-glyoxaline com-
plex is an indication that this may
range 6–0–9–0
values of
in the
full
range is not yet
out, however,
point to, however, that the heat of ionization for the
group in cytochrome c is particularly low, i.e.
2.9 ± 0.7 kg.cal., whereas weak acids with a pH in
this range usually have heats of the order of
10–12 kg.cal. (Cohn & Edsall, 1943).

SUMMARY

1. A kinetic investigation of the formation of the
ferricytochrome c-cyanide complex over the pH
range 6–0–9–0 suggests that both un-ionized hydro-
cyanic acid and the free cyanide ion react:

\[
\text{Cyt. c} + \text{HCN} \rightleftharpoons \text{Cyt. c-CN} + \text{H}^+ ,
\]

(1)

\[
\text{Cyt. c} + \text{CN}^- \rightleftharpoons \text{Cyt. c-CN}^- .
\]

(2)

Analysing the data given in this mechanism, the
bimolecular constants \(k_{\text{HCN}}\) and \(k_{\text{CN}^-}\) were found
to be \(5.43 \times 10^{-2}\) and \(15.2 \text{m}^{-1} \text{sec}^{-1}\) respectively,
at 24.6°. From experimental data at various

ranges, the activation energies were determined as
18±4 ± 0.4 and 17.0 ± 0.5 kg.cal. re-

dissociation velocity constants were calculated and
found to be of the form

\[
k_{\text{diss.}} = k_{\text{CN}^-} + k_{\text{HCN}} [\text{H}^+] ,
\]

where \(k_{\text{CN}^-}\) and \(k_{\text{HCN}}\) can be identified as the re-
verse of reactions (2) and (1) respectively. At
24.6°, \(k_{\text{CN}^-}\) and \(k_{\text{HCN}}\) are \(1.25 \times 10^{-5}\) sec.\(^{-1}\)
and \(1.3 \times 10^{5} \text{m}^{-1} \text{sec}^{-1}\) respectively and the activation
energies 15.9 ± 1.0 and 9.2 ± 1.0 kg.cal.

3. Combining these kinetic data gives the values for the equilibrium constants for reactions (1) and
(2), \(K_1 = 4.8 \times 10^{-4}\) and \(K_2 = 1.22 \times 10^{4} \text{m}^{-1}\). The
corresponding changes in heat content and entropy are
9.2 ± 1.4 kg.cal. and \(+15.7 \pm 4.4\) e.u.; and
1.1 ± 1.5 kg.cal. and \(+31.3 \pm 4.7\) e.u. respectively.

4. Kinetic experiments in alkaline solutions,
pH 9–10, showed that the velocity constant for the
formation of the complex decreases, which may be
attributed to an ionization on the ferricytochrome c
molecule such that the formation of the complex
occurs predominantly by reaction of the acid form.

5. The pK for this ionization was calculated as
8.75 at 24.6° and the heat and entropy of ionization
were found to be 2.9 ± 0.7 kg.cal. and \(-30 \pm 3\) e.u.
respectively.

6. The quantitative data given above support a
model for ferricytochrome c in which the haematin
iron atom is firmly bound on both sides to the
protein.

We wish to express our gratitude to Prof. D. Keilin,
F.R.S., for his constant interest and advice in this work.

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