

Reaction of t-Alkyl Chlorides with Trichloramine-Aluminium Chloride

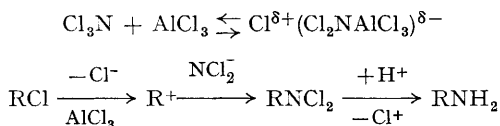
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WE have discovered a new method for the formation of t-alkyl amines involving treatment of the corresponding t-alkyl chloride with trichloramine in the presence of aluminium chloride. From t-butyl chloride and t-pentyl chloride, the corresponding amines were formed in yields of 88% and 82%, respectively, based on an equimolar relationship between trichloramine and basic product. The compounds were identified by comparison with the authentic materials.

Best results were realized with substrate: trichloramine: aluminium chloride in 4 : 1 : 2 molar ratio at -10° . The overall procedure was similar to those previously reported,^{1,2} except that the alkyl halide was added to a mixture of the other reaction components. The amine product was steam distilled into dilute hydrochloric acid. Evaporation under reduced pressure provided the amine hydrochloride which, on treatment with 50% caustic alkali and subsequent distillation, gave the free amine.

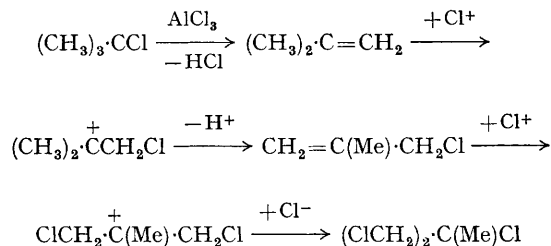
The following mechanism is suggested.



In a control experiment carried out in the absence of aluminium chloride, no reaction occurred. The catalyst apparently complexes with the alkyl halide to form a carbonium ion which is then attacked by the nitrogen-containing nucleophile. A somewhat arbitrary designation, NCl_2^- , is used for the nucleophile since its exact nature is not known.^{1b} It is significant that with the appropriate reaction conditions and work-up procedure, we were able to isolate *NN*-dichloro-t-butylamine from t-butyl chloride as precursor. The authentic material³ used for characterization was prepared from t-butylamine and calcium hypochlorite.

Our prior use of trichloramine-aluminium chloride for amination involved aromatic compounds¹ and alkanes² as substrates. The present work provides good evidence for participation of carbonium ion intermediates.

Investigation of the neutral layer yielded various polychlorinated isobutanes, including 1,2,3-trichloro-2-methylpropane, 1,1,2,3-tetrachloro-2-methylpropane, and 1,2,3-trichloro-2-chloromethylpropane (identified by elemental analyses, n.m.r. spectra, and comparison of their physical properties with the literature values⁴). A reasonable reaction pathway is given (illustrated with 1,2,3-trichloro-2-methylpropane).



Trichloramine, chlorine, and RNCl_2 could serve as sources of chloronium-type ion.

The reaction of trichloramine with t-alkyl chlorides provides a novel method for the synthesis of t-alkyl amines. The interesting specificity of the nucleophile is emphasized by the easy elimination which occurs on treatment of t-alkyl halides with amines.⁵ With few exceptions, *e.g.*, the Ritter reaction, the classical routes to t-carbinamines are characterized by a multiplicity of steps.⁵ The Ritter technique has been utilized for preparation of t-butylamine and t-pentylamine in a two-step sequence entailing use of an olefin or alcohol as substrate.^{6,7}

(Received, August 16th, 1966; Com. 606.)

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