

amide-nitrogen of proteins is not, strictly understood, a function of trypsin at all, but is to be attributed to the action of a specific enzyme, possibly of tissue origin, by which trypsin as usually prepared is liable to be accompanied.

The discovery of the enzyme in kidney seems to justify the opinion quoted from Hunter and Smith—and this enzyme has been shown to be directly concerned with ammonia metabolism.

The action of the kidney enzyme suggested so strongly that it was amide-nitrogen that was being attacked that the more simple, direct and accurate method of acid hydrolysis was tried. This was particularly indicated by the fact that no ammonia was ever liberated by the new enzyme from the protein-free fraction of blood, so that it was possible to use the blood proteins only for the ammonia determination.

Acid hydrolysis was found to give results of the same magnitude as those obtained by the use of the new enzyme. The method that was developed is now in the course of publication elsewhere.

The amide-nitrogen of blood is to be carefully distinguished from the conception of an ammonia-precursor or ammonia "mother-substance." From the metabolic standpoint it has been shown by studying the changes in amide-nitrogen during changing conditions of acid-base balance in the body that the amide-nitrogen of blood comes from ammonia formed in the tissues.

Parnas<sup>5</sup> has measured the ammonia that develops when blood is allowed to stand, and his values, which are only 2 to 4 per cent. of the values hereby established, he has designated as representing an ammonia-precursor or "ammonia mother-substance." The work of Parnas has, therefore, no relation to the presence of amide-nitrogen. After considerable study by himself and collaborators, Parnas concludes that his "ammonia mother-substance" bears no relationship to the state of acid-base balance: "Es wird daraus geschlossen, dass die Ammoniakmuttersubstanz des Blutes eine andere physiologische Funktion hat als *Ammoniak* als solches zu bilden, und dass aus den abgespaltenen Aminogruppen in vivo andere Stickstoffverbindungen entstehen."

In the latest articles that have come to the attention of the writer, the "ammonia mother-substance" of Parnas has been abandoned and the attempt made to attach metabolic significance to the exceedingly low values for ammonia which must now be considered as accidental values developed during the course of the analysis.

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<sup>5</sup> Parnas, J. K., and Heller, J., *Biochem. Ztschr.*, 1924, clii, 1.

## AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE THE SPRING MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

THE regular spring meeting of the executive committee of the council of the American Association was held at the Cosmos Club, in Washington, on Sunday, April 22, with the following members present: Cattell, Curtiss, Humphreys, Johnston, Kellogg, Livingston, Wilson. The absent members were: Moulton, Osborn, Pupin, Ward. The chairman, Dr. J. McKeen Cattell, presided. The following is a summary of the business transacted.

1. The minutes of the last meeting were reported as having been approved by mail.

2. The permanent secretary reported that, since last September 30, there had been a net increase in membership of 1,453. The number of members in good standing on April 21st was 15,074, with 1,241 additional names on the roll, but in arrearage for dues for one or two years. The total number of names on the roll was therefore 16,315. The number of those in arrears was proportionately somewhat less than for the same date last year. About next October 1 there will be sent out between 75,000 and 80,000 invitations asking non-members to join the association. Members are asked to continue to send to the Washington office names of persons who might be interested to join.

3. A letter was read from William L. Corbin, librarian of the Smithsonian Institution, who said, in part: "I am writing to thank you and, through you, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, for the very generous gift of miscellaneous publications that the association made not long ago to the Library of the Smithsonian Institution. We are deeply appreciative of this gift and most grateful for it. Already, in checking up these publications, we have discovered hundreds of complete volumes and parts of volumes needed in our standard sets. Not a few of these we had found it impossible before to get from any source. Other volumes and parts of great value to us are coming to light every day as the work of sorting the contents of the boxes goes on."

4. It was voted that the regular fall meeting of the executive committee will be held at the Cosmos Club, in Washington, on Sunday, October 21, 1928, the morning session to open at 11 o'clock.

5. A committee of three was named, to cooperate with the section committee of Section K (Social and Economic Sciences), to elect a section secretary and to arrange for the section at the approaching New York meeting. This committee consists of J. McK. Cattell, B. E. Livingston and Edwin B. Wilson, the last mentioned being chairman.

6. Dr. Wesley C. Mitchell, director of research,

National Bureau of Economic Research, was elected a member of the section committee of Section K for the term of office ending at the close of the annual meeting of December, 1931.

7. A special committee on linguistic sciences in the association was named, as follows: George M. Bolling, B. E. Livingston and Edward Sapir, the latter being chairman. This committee was requested to consider further the problems of Section L (Historical and Philological Sciences) with special reference to the needs of those interested in the linguistic sciences. It was also asked to name a chairman and a secretary for the section from the field of linguistics, to name an eminent scientist in this field to represent it by an address at the approaching New York meeting, and to arrange for a suitable program in linguistics for that meeting.

8. A petition from the Linguistic Society of America, for a special section on linguistic sciences in the association, brought up the general problem of section classification and subdivision, and it was the consensus of opinion of the executive committee that it would be well to consider in the near future the suggestion that a new arrangement of association sections be adopted, with perhaps just three sections or divisions (exact, natural and humanistic sciences, for example) instead of the present larger number. If such a plan were adopted there might be several subsection organizations in any section and the affiliated societies would function, in Association organization, as subsections. There would then be only three association vice-presidents and only three retiring vice-presidential addresses at an annual meeting. This suggestion should receive further attention.

9. Dr. R. G. Hoskins, of the Harvard Medical School, Boston, Mass., was elected to the secretaryship of Section N for the current year, his term to expire at the close of the fifth New York meeting.

10. In view of the present vacancies, caused by death and resignation, in the committee of one hundred on research and in its subcommittees, which will need to be filled in the near future, it was voted that the term of office of members of the committee and of its subcommittees shall extend from the time of their election to the close of the next following annual meeting of the association. It was also voted that the present members of the committee and of its subcommittees shall hold office till the end of the fifth New York meeting.

11. The executive committee expressed its great regret at the resignation of Dr. Maynard M. Metcalf, secretary of the subcommittee on research in educational institutions and chairman of the joint committee on research in colleges, and its appreciation of the work accomplished under Dr. Metcalf's leadership.

12. Dr. C. E. Seashore, dean of the Graduate School,

University of Iowa, was named secretary of the subcommittee on research in educational institutions and the executive committee expressed its hearty approval of a continuation of the joint committee on research in colleges, if that seems desirable to the other organizations that have taken part in the work of the joint committee. These are as follows: National Research Council, American Council on Education, American Association of University Professors, American Council of Learned Societies, Social Science Research Council.

13. It was voted that matters coming before the executive committee of the association from the committee of one hundred on research or from its subcommittees shall be considered first by the executive committee of the committee of one hundred, which shall transmit them, with recommendations, to the executive committee of the association.

14. A report on the work and prospects of the committee of one hundred on research was presented, from Dr. Rodney H. True, secretary of the committee of one hundred, which was accepted and referred to the executive committee of the committee of one hundred, with power to arrange for carrying on the work of the committee until the end of the fifth New York meeting, including the use of treasury funds in that period to amount to not more than one thousand dollars.

15. The executive committee of the committee of one hundred on scientific research was asked to present to the executive committee of the association, for consideration at its next regular fall meeting, a plan for the future organization and work of the committee of one hundred.

16. It was voted that, for the four-year period beginning at the end of the fifth New York meeting, any member of any affiliated organization may join the American Association without paying the entrance fee.

17. It was voted that the price of the next volume of Summarized Proceedings and Directory of Members (which is to be published in the fall of 1929) shall be \$2.50 (or \$3.50 bound) to members who remit for it in advance of publication; \$3.00 (or \$4.00 bound) to members who remit for it after publication, and \$4.00 (or \$5.00 bound) to non-members.

18. The question of the desirability of altering the rules by which the annual American Association prize of \$1,000 is awarded was considered, having been taken up previously by the permanent secretary in correspondence with the members of the executive committee, and it was voted to make no changes at this time. The permanent secretary was asked to arrange a committee of five to decide on the New York award of the prize, vice-presidents and retiring vice-presidents being considered especially suitable for appointment to this award committee.

19. The following resolution was adopted, recommending to the Congress of the United States the establishment of a National Institute of Health:

*Resolved:* That the Executive Committee of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, approving the action taken by the medical section of the association at Nashville, and representing the 16,000 members of the association, urges Congress to give special consideration to the desirability of providing means of maintaining human health in some such manner as is outlined in the Ransdell bill, S. 5835.

20. The academy conference was requested to consider the problem of providing increased facilities for the encouragement of junior scientific effort (reference being made to the article of Thomas Large, *SCIENCE* for March 9, 1928, page 272) and the conference was asked to make suggestions and recommendations on this subject for consideration by the executive committee at its next regular fall meeting on October 21. It was also requested that this subject be made a special order of business at the New York conference of academy representatives.

21. The following resolution was adopted concerning the provision of courses in elementary German and French in high schools:

*Resolved:* That it is highly desirable that all who are to undertake work in science should be familiar with German and French, and that a knowledge of these two languages should be acquired by students before they enter college.

22. Michael I. Pupin and J. McKeen Cattell were named as official delegates to represent the American Association at the conferring of a gold medal on Thomas A. Edison by the Society of Arts and Sciences on May 24, at the Astor Hotel in New York City.

23. A committee of three was named, to cooperate with the American committee on preparations for the World Engineering Congress to occur at Tokio in 1929. This committee consists of: E. Lester Jones (chairman), Robert L. Sackett (vice-president for Section M) and N. H. Heck (secretary of section M).

24. An appropriation of \$50 from the permanent secretary's funds was made to aid the educational work of the American Institute of Sacred Literature.

25. In response to a request for a final subscription to aid the work of the National Conference on Outdoor Recreation, an appropriation of \$50 was made for that purpose, from the permanent secretary's funds.

26. An appropriation of \$100 from the permanent secretary's funds was made to aid the American Library Association's committee on work with the

blind, to secure the printing of scientific books in Braille.

27. The American Library Association was officially affiliated with the American Association for the Advancement of Science. It is to have one representative in the association council.

28. The executive committee invited the Archaeological Institute of America to become affiliated with the American Association.

29. The College Art Teachers were invited to take part in the fifth New York meeting and to arrange a scientific program.

30. The American Philological Association was invited to have its New York program included in the General Program of the fifth New York meeting and to be otherwise the guest of the American Association as far as that may seem desirable to the Philological Association.

31. Sixty-nine members were elected to fellowship, distributed among the sections as follows: Section A, 1; Section B, 37; Section C, 2; Section E, 1; Section M, 21; Section N, 4; Section O, 1; Section Q, 2.

32. The permanent secretary was instructed to send, with the statement cards to be mailed next October 1, requests to all members asking for nominations for president of the association, as was done October 1, 1927.

33. A nominating committee was named for the fifth New York meeting, to present to the council nominations for general secretary, permanent secretary, treasurer, two executive committee members (to succeed Vernon Kellogg and Edwin B. Wilson), two council members (to succeed L. O. Howard and D. T. MacDougal), two members of the committee on grants for research (to succeed Joseph Erlanger and Nevin M. Fenneman), a member of the finance committee, and a representative of the association on the board of Science Service. The members named for the nominating committee are: Edwin G. Conklin (chairman), L. E. Dickson, Edward L. Thorndike, David White and Charles E. Mendenhall.

34. The permanent secretary was instructed to secure several nominations for secretary of each section and to present them to the executive committee at its fall meeting on October 21, elections to be by the council at the fifth New York meeting.

35. The permanent secretary reported that plans and arrangements for the approaching New York meeting were well advanced, that President Henry Fairfield Osborn is arranging a number of attractive special features, and that the local executive committee has held a number of meetings and has the various details of the preparations well in hand.

BURTON E. LIVINGSTON,  
*Permanent Secretary.*