

During the past year, communications from four laboratories have been published reporting the isolation of a new oxytocic alkaloid from ergot. Until recently there has been doubt as to whether or not the principles reported by these laboratories were identical (termed "Ergotocin" by Kharasch, "Ergometrine" by Dudley and Moir, "Ergobasine" by Stoll and "Ergostetrine" by Thompson). In a jointly signed statement (SCIENCE, February 28) Kharasch, King (acting for Dudley), Stoll and Thompson say there is "no doubt that the alkaloid obtained in the four different laboratories was the same substance. . . ."

It is necessary, therefore, that a suitable *non-proprietary* name which is *not therapeutically suggestive* be adopted for the new alkaloid. Not one of the several names that have been proposed by the discoverers complies with these requirements. The Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry of the American Medical Association, in session March 14, therefore determined to adopt the new, non-proprietary name "Ergonovine" (ergo-nov-ine). The council concedes to the discoverer of a product the right to the use of a proprietary name. It can not, however, accept more than one proprietary name because of the confusion to which such practice gives rise. In the present case several different names have been proposed. It seems impossible to establish undisputed priority. The council has decided therefore that it would recognize no proprietary name.

The *Journal* of the American Medical Association writes editorially as follows:

Last year the isolation of a new alkaloid from ergot was reported within a relatively short period from four different laboratories, two in the United States, one in England and one in Switzerland. The new substance was found in each case to be different in its properties from the previously known alkaloids of ergot; its oxytocic effects were much more prompt and more lasting than those of ergotoxine or ergotamine and the required dosage was smaller. Some discrepancies in the reported physical and chemical properties of the material isolated by the different investigators led to doubt as to the identity of the four products; four names were proposed, ergometrine (Dudley and Moir), ergotocin (Kharasch and Legault), ergobasine (Stoll and Burekhardt) and ergostetrine (Thompson). Owing to the confusion entailed by the doubt as to the identity of the four products so designated, workers in the four laboratories commendably agreed to exchange specimens and to compare the various products. Kharasch, King (acting for the late Dr. Dudley), Stoll and Thompson have now reported that their "comparisons of the melting points and mixed melting points of the four alkaloids and of certain of their salts, and of their optical activities in different solvents in cases where sufficient material was available, leave [them] in no doubt that the material obtained in the four different laboratories was the same substance, and that the four names given to it are synonyms." Elsewhere in this issue the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry reports the adoption at its annual session on March 14 of a new non-proprietary name for this alkaloid,

"ergonovine." This new term was chosen instead of one of those already proposed because of the difficulty of determining priority and because of possible conflict of the other names with the policy of the council governing nomenclature. The agreement among the investigators concerned as to the identity of the alkaloid and the adoption of a single name to replace the four previously in use (and others employed in addition by commercial firms) should now prevent further confusion.

### CONSERVATION IN COLORADO

A CONFERENCE was called on February 28 by Governor Johnson, of Colorado, to which were invited authorities on conservation of the federal and state governments to discuss a plan to establish a game refuge in South Park, which would be designed to preserve one of Colorado's natural beauty spots, provide a sanctuary for all types of native game and furnish a playground for the entire United States.

Preliminary plans call for the setting aside of approximately 549,000 acres in the heart of Park County and the addition to it of 851,000 acres now incorporated in the Pike National Forest. Natural conditions in South Park would be restored and the areas stocked with buffalo, elk, deer, beaver and other forms of wildlife.

The area includes South Platte and Arkansas drainage areas on the west, the Continental Divide on the north, Kenosha Pass on the northeast, the Puma and Tarryall Hills on the east and the division between the Platte and Arkansas watersheds on the south and southeast.

Approximately 59 per cent. of the 549,000 acres proposed for the refuge is now privately owned, while the remaining 41 per cent. is owned by the federal, state or county governments. The scenic beauty of the park is unsurpassed, and as a refuge it would remain unspoiled. Although surveys have not been completed, it is estimated the 1,400,000 acres could support at least 60,000 head of big game animals and countless smaller animals. It is believed that the land could be withdrawn, water rights secured and the refuge actually started for approximately two and a half million dollars.

### THE SEATTLE MEETING OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

THE twentieth meeting of the Pacific Division, American Association for the Advancement of Science, and associated societies will be held under the auspices of the University of Washington, Seattle, from June 16 to 20. The number of societies proposing to join in this meeting is substantially greater than in that of any previous meeting of the division. The names of the societies with the names and addresses of the persons in charge of the programs follow: