A CHEMISTRY LESSON

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Following the monumental success of our article "A Geography Lesson" which appeared in the August 1970 Word Ways, we have decided to offer the reader a further episode of logological instruction. The previous article concerned itself with various aspects of geographicologology (the logology of placenames); this article will deal with one particular facet of chemicologology (the logology of chemical names).

Authoritative reference books inform us that there are 103 chemical elements known to man. (However, University of California scientists at the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory reported the synthesis of element 104, tentatively named rutherfordium, in 1969 and of element 105, tentatively named hahnium, in 1970.) A number of these 103 elements are also known by other names. CUPRUM is another name for copper, which explains why the chemical symbol for copper is Cu; the chemical symbol for tungsten is similarly explained by the alternative names of WOLFRAM or WOLFRAMIUM. QUICKSILVER, a name for mercury, is an obvious description of the silver-colored liquid element.

However, not all of the alternative names for the elements are as well-known as the ones just quoted. Element number 100, now called fermium, was originally called by some people CENTURIUM. A few chemistry texts can be found which use CENTURIUM instead of fermium when discussing this element. Other alternative names exist merely as obsolete terms from alchemy. The names of mythological personages were often used as element names in alchemy. Yet other alternatives result from industrial usage where precise chemical nomenclature has often been ignored.

Apart from alternative names for the elements, there are variant spellings for many of the names. KOBOLD, ZINGH, WISMUTH, FOSFORUS, STRONTIAN and AIRN are recorded variants of cobalt, zinc, bismuth, phosphorus, strontium and iron. A multitude of similar examples is known to us.
We list below some 103 element names. These names are alternative names for some of the elements, variant spellings of others, alchemic names and so on and so on. The 103 names do not represent all of the 103 known elements. Many of the names in the list correspond to one and the same element. For example, ten of the names refer to gold. What we are going to ask the reader to do to earn his chemiologicological colors is to give the common, well-known, everyday equivalents of the 103 names presented below.

The correct answers to this quiz will be found in Answers and Solutions at the end of this issue. Before the reader plunges willy-nilly into this quiz, a few words of warning might be appropriate. The name plutonium on this list is not to be equated with the transuranic element having atomic number 94 which is actually called plutonium. The plutonium on our list is a genuine synonym for another, totally unrelated, element; it is the name of this latter element that we want from the reader. The name transuranium on our list is not to be confused with the adjective transuranium, which is generally taken to signify all elements with atomic number in excess of 92. Instead, we want the reader to give us the name of the element that has actually been referred to by some as transuranium.

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1. adamantine 27. dragon
2. alabamine 28. dubium
3. alderbanrianum 29. dvicesium
4. alkaligen 30. dvimanganese
5. altum 31. dvitellurium
6. anemium 32. ekaboron
7. anglohelvetium 33. ekacaesium
8. argentum virum 34. eka-iodine
9. ausonium 35. ek-aluminum
10. austrium 36. ekamanganese
11. azoch 37. eka-neodymium
12. azote 38. ekaosmium
13. azoth 39. ekarhenium
14. bastard of tin 40. ekasilicon
15. bohemin 41. ekatantalum
16. boracium 42. eka-iron
17. borium 43. ekaamineum
18. brevium 44. erythronium
19. brimstone 45. esperium
20. capronium 46. exa- bor
21. celtium 47. far
22. csiopielum 48. ferrum
23. columbium 49. florentium
24. denebium 50. glucinium
25. dephlogisticated air 51. helvetium
26. diana 52. hierro
53. hydrargire 79. quebrith
54. illinium 80. quick
55. jargonium 81. radiotellurium
56. jupiter 82. red
57. luna 83. ridge
58. magnesia 84. russia
59. mars 85. saturn
60. masurium 86. scheelium
61. moldavium 87. selfer
62. natrium 88. shiny
63. neoytterbium 89. sol
64. niccolium 90. spanker
65. nigrium 91. spelter
66. nipponium 92. spirit (two answers)
67. obrison 93. sylvanium
68. obrize 94. the moon
69. oceanium 95. transuranium
70. oro 96. uralium
71. osmund 97. venus
72. pelopium 98. verium
73. phthore 99. virginium
74. phtor 100. wedge
75. plumbum candidum 101. white
76. plumbum cinereum 102. yellow
77. plumbum nigrum 103. yerne
78. plutonium

The names in this article cannot all be found in any one reference work. In preparing the article, we made use mainly of the following sources:

Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition
Funk & Wagnall's New Standard Dictionary of the English Language
Hackh's Chemical Dictionary, Third Edition, 1944 (completely revised by Julius Grant)

A. ROSS MORTISTE

Spec tool for the Chemical Game. Nicholas B. azs's V. Anagrams, 1964.)

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