

“CRYOLOGY”

SHORTLY before the war this new word for the study of glaciology was coined in Central Europe. The Greek noun *κρύος* means “cold.” It is not clear why this word should be applied exclusively to cooled water; it could equally well be used for any cooled substance, for example carbon dioxide or ice cream.

It is argued by some that “glaciology” has come to mean the study of glaciers, but the Latin *glacies* denotes ice and it cannot be right to appropriate the word for a single branch of the wide range of ice study. Neither do the Germans use *Glaziologie* nor the French *Glaciologie* in this restricted sense.

It is of course unfortunate that the Greek word for ice, *κρύσταλλος*, which in the sixteenth century was also the correct English word for that substance, has come to have another meaning and has now been acquired for another science, but it is too late to be reproachful about that now.

An objection has been raised to linking the Latin *glacies* to the Greek *λόγος* and one or two highly ingenious alternatives have been offered to satisfy the mind of the protesting purist. But it seems a pity to introduce a new word when we already have one which has been in use for so long.

We have had the word “Glaciology” for many years. Wright and Priestley, in the great treatise on the whole study of snow and ice which they made in the years 1910–13, entitled their work “Glaciology.”

In America the word “cryology” is coming into fashion to describe the study of refrigeration. For this its use is far less illogical and unnecessary. More than one prominent American glaciologist has written to express approval of it in this sense and abhorrence of its use for the scientific study of ice. One of them has also pointed out that in English-speaking countries cry-ology has a slightly ridiculous ring.

It was partly in an endeavour to make the word “glaciology” universal and to combat the unwelcome newcomer, that this Society adopted the former word in its new title. It is to be hoped that “cryology,” so far as the scientific study of ice is concerned, will not be heard of again.

G. SELIGMAN

MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF
GEODESY AND GEOPHYSICS

THE following subjects were set at the Washington meeting in 1939 for papers to be read at Oslo in 1947 before the International Commission of Snow and Glaciers, one of the Commissions of the International Association of Hydrology. The Association is one of the component bodies of the Union.

1. The origin, drift and ablation of icebergs as aids in forecasting their seasonal appearance.
2. The physical changes in the snow conducive to run-off and particularly to flooding.
3. The study of the crystal structure of a glacier and its influence upon glacier movement.

Mr. G. Seligman, who has been appointed Chairman of the British Group of the Commission of Snow and Glaciers, will be glad to hear from any member who can make a contribution to these subjects by writing a paper or taking part in the discussions.

The following four special subjects have been assigned for action to temporary committees :

- (a) Standardization of maps of snow-cover and ice-cover for the world.
- (b) Uniform classification of different types of snow and snow-cover, and uniform nomenclature for the same.
- (c) A system of classification for the international bibliography of snow and ice.
- (d) Standardization of methods of snow-surveying and forecasting run-off from snow.