etter to the Editor

IS ASARONE A TRANQUILLISER

Dandiya and co-workers in (1) have reported that asarone is not responsible for ancing the barbiturate induced hypnosis exhibited by acorous oil because, although, one is present to an extent of 80% in Indian oil and 7% in European oil, there is no appre-le difference in the sedative properties of these oils. In 1961, Sharma, *et al* (8) again reported that "B-asarone appears to be more potent than asarone". However in Dandiya and Menon(3) found that asarone was more potent than B-asarone. Another rising as well as irreconsilable part of their findings is that synthetic asarone is devoid ny CNS activity while isolated one shows pronounced effects (2). In 1965 Dandiya and non (5) further showed that asarone inhibited tremorine induced tremors. Thus it would the first tranquilliser to have been reported which instead of producing Parkinsons' disease offer protection to the extrapyramidal tract.

These contradictory as well as fascinating findings of Dandiya *et al* attracted author's rest towards asarone. Asarone was therefore isolated from *Acorus Calamus Linn* by slight ification of the method reported earlier (7). Its structure was confirmed by mixed m.p. rmination, microanalysis, super-imposable I.R. spectra and by prepration of its picrate. solution of the durg was prepared as described by Dandiya and Menon (3).

Its effect on Spontaneous Motor Activity (SMA) of mice was studied by the procedure rted by Dandiya and Menon(4). The animals, treated even with a dose as high as 15 *kg*. of asarone, exhibited normal SMA, were responsive to tactile and auditory stimuli, nding which is in sharp contrast to their observations (4). A dose of 3 *mg/kg* and 10 *mg/* f asarone did not increase the pentobaritone induced hypnosis. An increase of only 46:9% leeping time was recorded with 15 *mg/kg*. In contrast to the findings of Menon and Dan-(6) asarone even upto 15 *mg/kg*. dose did not exhibit any significant hypothermia in mice. average fall of rectal temperature of a group of 10 mice, after 2 hours of its administration, only 0.91° C. Unlike the reports of Dandiya and Menon(3), doses even upto 15 *mg/kg* of one could neither prevent fighting behaviour in paired mice subjected to mild foot shock, could it block the Conditioned Avoidance Response (CAR) in trained rats (only 2 out of rats).

Thus from the present work it is evident that asarone is devoid of any tranquillising property. Menon and Dandiya (6) have even gone to the extent of establishing the mechanism of tranquillising activity of asarone which seems to be a futile exercise in science particularly when the drug does not possess any antipsychotic activity.

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