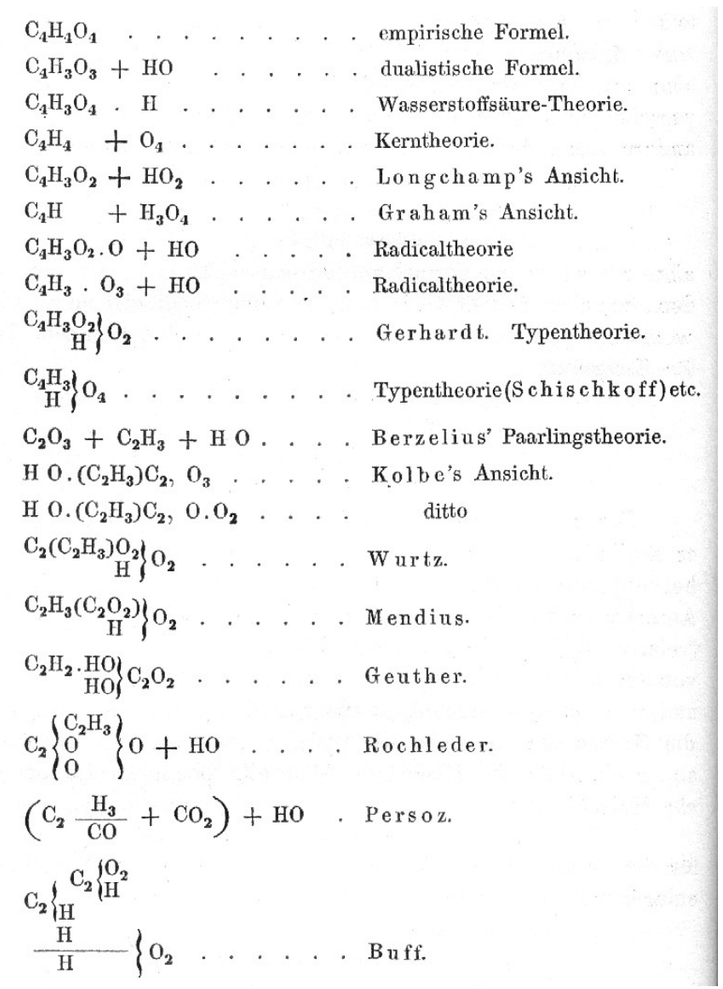
The Karlsruhe Congress

In 1860 the first international chemistry conference was held in Karlsruhe, Germany. Over 140 delegates attended the three-day meeting, which set out to establish precise meanings of terms like *atom*, *molecule*, and *alkalinity*, and to agree on a standard set of atomic weights. Until this point, multiple systems had been in use, and so arguments about molecular formula were rife - adjacent are the 19 different formulae for acetic acid in use!

Clearly by 1860 chemistry had become a large enough discipline to warrant an international congress to discuss nomenclature and convention. The Karlsruhe Congress paved the way for bodies like IUPAC, and is strikingly similar to the way we hold scientific conferences today, 160 years later.



$C_4H_4O_4$	empirische Formel.
$C_4H_3O_3 + HO$	dualistische Formel.
$C_4H_3O_4 . H$	Wasserstoffsäure-Theorie.
$C_4H_4 + O_4$	Kerntheorie.
$C_4H_3O_2 + HO_2$	Longchamp's Ansicht.
$C_4H + H_3O_4$	Graham's Ansicht.
$C_4H_3O_2 . O + HO$	Radicaltheorie
$C_4H_3 . O_3 + HO$	Radicaltheorie.
$\left.\begin{matrix}C_4H_3O_2\\H\end{matrix}\right\}O_2$	Gerhardt. Typentheorie.
$\left.\begin{matrix}C_2H_3\\H\end{matrix}\right\}O_4$	Typentheorie (Schischkoff) etc.
$C_2O_3 + C_2H_3 + HO$	Berzelius' Paarlingstheorie.
$HO.(C_2H_3)C_2, O_3$	Kolbe's Ansicht.
$HO.(C_2H_3)C_2, O.O_2$	ditto
$\left.\begin{matrix}C_2(C_2H_3)O_2\\H\end{matrix}\right\}O_2$	Wurtz.
$\left.\begin{matrix}C_2H_3(C_2O_2)\\H\end{matrix}\right\}O_2$	Mendius.
$\left.\begin{matrix}C_2H_2.HO\\HO\end{matrix}\right\}C_2O_2$	Geuther.
$C_2\left\{\begin{matrix}C_2H_3\\O\\O\end{matrix}\right\}O + HO$	Rochleder.
$\left(C_2\frac{H_3}{CO} + CO_2\right) + HO$	Persoz.
$C_2\left\{\begin{matrix}C_2\{O_2\\H\\H\end{matrix}\right.$ $\left.\begin{matrix}\\\\\end{matrix}\right\}O_2$	Buff.