

We have detected steroid saponins in the herb *Veronica gentianodes* Vahl. (gentian speedwell) family Scrophulariaceae, in the flora Georgia. The sum of the steroid sapogenins from the plant was obtained by the method of continuous hydrolysis of the raw material [1]. Its separation into individual components was performed by chromatography on a column of silica gel L 40/100  $\mu\text{m}$  (Czechoslovakia). Benzene eluted from the column a sapogenin with mp 205-207°C  $[\alpha]_{\text{D}}^{20} -130^\circ$  (c 1.0; chloroform); on TLC it was found at the level of an authentic sample of diosgenin. The monoacetate of the substance had mp 200-202°C,  $[\alpha]_{\text{D}}^{20} -122^\circ$  (c 1.0; chloroform). The IR spectrum of the substance obtained and of its acetate confirmed its identity as diosgenin [2].

Subsequent washing of the column with benzene-chloroform (1:1) led to the isolation of a dihydroxy sapogenin with mp 265-268°C,  $[\alpha]_{\text{D}}^{20} -77^\circ$  (c 1.0; chloroform); melting point of the diacetate 240-242°C;  $[\alpha]_{\text{D}}^{20} -97^\circ$  (c 1.0; chloroform). A mixture with authentic sample of gitogenin gave a single spot on TLC and caused no depression of the melting point. The IR spectra of the substance corresponded to that of gitogenin [3].

The yield of diosgenin calculated on the air-dry raw material was 0.075% and that of gitogenin was 0.05%.

No steroids of the spirostan series have been isolated from this plant previously.

## LITERATURE CITED

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2. C. R. Eddy, M. E. Wall, and M. K. Scott, Anal. Chem., 25, No. 2, 266 (1953).
3. M. M. Benidze, Khim. Prir. Soedin., 805 (1981).