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A LOOK AHEAD¹

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WE have come to an important milestone in the development of an organized effort to promote the advancement of chemistry in America. Fifty years have passed since the American Chemical Society was founded. Under the inspiration of one of the greatest heroes of science, a few chemists who had come together at Northumberland to honor Priestley's memory and the discovery of oxygen conceived a close association of those who had caught some of the spirit of the great experimenter, and shortly after the society was established in New York. No fitter occasion can be conceived for the birth of an idea that grew into a power for so much good.

The development of chemistry in this country was slow at the start. The new nation had to see to its material advancement. It had unlimited natural resources and its rapidly growing population, made up of those seeing freedom and opportunity, had to be housed, fed and clothed and given facilities for communication and transportation. As a result the best brains were devoted to supplying these necessities. It is only in recent years—in the memory of many of us—that the pursuit of chemistry as a life work has appealed. The young man, fifty years ago, was compelled to go to Europe to prepare himself for a scientific career; and it is only comparatively recently that a wise adviser has been able to emphasize the advantages of study at home.

But the last quarter century has seen in America a steady growth of chemistry, and the record of the last decade can not anywhere be surpassed. The story of these achievements has all been written, and we present it with pride to America and the world.

The American Chemical Society has been an important factor in this development. It has been and will be, in an increasing measure, a stimulus to further advance. Through its publications and its organization that brings together men of kindred interests, it makes possible the kind of cooperation that means success. Its efforts to educate the people to an appreciation of the importance of chemistry in the public welfare are becoming more and more successful. The value of a flourishing chemical industry in times of peace and its necessity as a means of defense in times of war are being brought home

¹ Address of the president of the American Chemical Society, given at the anniversary meeting, Philadelphia, September 6, 1926.

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