

SCIENCE

VOL. 80

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1934

No. 2082

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SCIENCE: A Weekly Journal devoted to the Advancement of Science, edited by J. McKEEN CATTELL and published every Friday by

THE SCIENCE PRESS

New York City: Grand Central Terminal

Lancaster, Pa.

Garrison, N. Y.

Annual Subscription, \$6.00

Single Copies, 15 Cts.

SCIENCE is the official organ of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Information regarding membership in the Association may be secured from the office of the permanent secretary, in the Smithsonian Institution Building, Washington, D. C.

CHEMISTRY IN THE SERVICE OF SCIENCE¹

By Dr. A. T. LINCOLN

CARLETON COLLEGE

THE approach to the Hall of Science at the Century of Progress is so arranged as to present to the visitor some of the concepts of the phenomenal development of chemistry as a symbol of the contribution of science to the human race. By means of the strikingly beautiful murals there is depicted the growth and development of chemistry and its applications to industry, commerce and medicine. It is the natural tendency for the individual scientist to believe that the particular branch of science in which his interest lies is of basic importance in its contribution to human knowledge and thereby to human progress. The chemist, however, can claim with some justice that in his field—chemistry—all the sciences find their common meeting ground. The chemist has to perfect himself more and more in mathematics as one of his most valuable tools. An eminent mathematician has said, "The striking progress in modern physics and

physical chemistry has arisen from inquiries as to the data which specific mathematical tools could be made to yield when applied to physics and chemistry." He applies to his chemical problems the principles described by physics; he isolates, purifies and makes available for use the minerals and ores located by the geologist; he is now interpreting biological phenomena in terms of chemical changes and he is helping to pave the way for a clearer understanding and thereby a more accurate control over the physiological processes occurring in our own bodies. The automotive industry is really a chemical industry because everything used in it is chemical. This may be said of practically all the fundamental basic industries, a fact which further emphasizes the importance of chemistry as the handmaid of all the sciences.

SERVICE TO ASTRONOMY

To the man in the street little connection is apparent between shaking the test-tube and star-gazing,

¹ Presented at the second annual meeting of The Minnesota Academy of Science, Rochester, Minn., April 21, 1934.

Science

80 (2082)

Science **80** (2082), 6-484.

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