PHYSICAL CHEMISTRY: RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT1

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The Kansas City meeting of the American Chemical Society happens to divide into two halves the expected professional life of one of the members devoting his major activities to the pursuit of knowledge in the field of physical chemistry. It is this fact which has prompted a retrospect of the subject over a period of twenty-two years and some thoughts on the prospects of the science in the subsequent two decades.

To gain a perspective of physical chemistry in those apparently far-off days prior to 1914 resort may be made to the most advanced text-book of physical chemistry of that time, the text-book by Nernst, which, fortunately for our purposes, was issued in a seventh edition in 1913. Whilst one turns its pages, the omis-

1 An address to the ninety-first meeting of the American Chemical Society at Kansas City, April 13, 1936.