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SOME DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES AS A RESULT OF WAR CONDITIONS¹

IN these passing days every branch of scientific activity has many striking illustrations of the fact that its fund of knowledge and experience is being vigorously drawn upon to meet the pressing needs of the hour. Where so many sciences are making notable war records it may seem invidious to select any single one for review. But my own personal apology must be that I have not the ability and certainly a single evening has not enough hours for presenting the activities and the accomplishments of the entire field of science. While, therefore, we are proposing to discuss matters having a more or less chemical tinge it should be emphasized at the outset that we are not unmindful of the wonderful service in manifold ways resulting from the activities of the physicist, the engineer, the geologist, the bacteriologist and botanist, the psychologist, the pathologist and sanitarian: All these and many other workers in related branches of science have achieved results which are quite as fundamentally important as anything the chemist may have to offer.

A further word of explanation or possibly of warning may also be in order. The field of the chemist is so wide and his activities touch so many interests that sometimes he must be not altogether certain himself when he is treading the paths that lie outside of his own borders. Indeed he must appear occasionally, in the mind of other people, at least, to have adopted as his own the

¹ Annual address delivered before the Society of Sigma Xi, University of Iowa, February 13, 1918.

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