Craver

The Crucible

Published Monthly
by the
PITTSBURGH SECTION OF THE
AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME III. JANUARY, 1920. NUMBER 1.

THE 161st MEETING

Pittsburgh Section

AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 1920, at 8:15 P. M.

—AT—

MELLON INSTITUTE, Thackeray Avenue and O'Hara Street

STEEL WORKS LABORATORIES:
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AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

The Paper with the Triple Linkage
Goodfellowship Co-operation Loyalty

Volume III, No. 1 JANUARY, 1920 5 cents per copy

SHALL WE CONTINUE THE CRUCIBLE?

For two years this small publication has appeared as the announcer and bulletin for the Local Section, and the vehicle for the ideas and opinions of the very few who coupled the time and inclination to write for its pages.

Realizing that such a state of affairs is not indicative of great interest in "the Crucible" and feeling no such confidence in our own journalistic ability as would warrant us in going on without support, we pause at this jump-off of Vol. III to ask:

1. Do you like "The Crucible", or will a mere announcement card do as well?

2. Will you contribute to its pages?

To be importuned is annoying, but we ask the indulgence of the Section in making this final appeal for assistance. In our minds, the principal argument against this bulletin is the work involved in getting it out. If its contents are of no value, it needn't be read—the cover carries the big news each month. It costs the Section nothing, for advertising makes it self-supporting.

The main point is, "The Crucible" can be, with your help, a real journal, taking rank with "The Percolator", "The Catalyst", and similar local chemical bulletins. The Pittsburgh Section of the A. C. S. is one of the big ones, and we must do things in a big way.

Are you with us? Thank you!

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of the
American Chemical Society

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THE CRUCIBLE
published monthly
by
The Local Section

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THE SECRETARYSHIP.

Dr. Palmer having found it impossible to accept election as secretary, it becomes necessary for the Section to elect a secretary at the January meeting.

It is hoped that careful thought will be given this matter, and the very best man found who can give his time to this important office.

During the past year, the detail work of publishing the Crucible has fallen upon the secretary, and much credit is due Mr. Jones for his efficient handling of the paper. However, the incoming secretary will be relieved of this duty by the appointment of a managing editor, leaving him free to handle only the matters of membership and reports of meetings.

SITTING UP AND SITTING DOWN.

There's a vast difference, said the Laboratory Philosopher, between these two sedentary attitudes. One suggests taking notice, the other, taking a rest. One is coming, the other going; one on the road to recovery, the other about to succumb to weariness or worse. When you find a man sitting up, talk to him, for he can reply with something worth while. When you find him sitting down, just say something about the weather and tip-toe out.

—Lycurgna.

DRAWBACKS TO ADOPTING THE METRIC SYSTEM.

Although many excellent reasons can be advanced for the adoption of metric units, the question arises in my mind, as it must in the minds of all who care for the sage and valuable maxims of our forefathers—what shall we do with those ever-quotable and timely proverbs involving units of distance and weight?

For instance, "Many a mickle makes a muckle." Now who would care to abandon the well-known and established mickle and muckle, and substitute these hard-and-fast, cold-blooded units, saying, "Many a milligram makes a gram?" Euphony and alliteration are lost, and the breadth of application of the wise saw is quite curtailed.

Suppose our reverend mile becomes obsolete along the cubit; what of that blithesome quip, "A miss is as good as a mile?" Must it carry an asterisk after "mile", and a foot-note explaining, "about 1.6 kilometers?"

And consider that excellent rule, so useful when the family scales are out of order and neighbor Jones is returning the bird-shot he borrowed: "A pint's a pound, the world around." In its place we would be obliged to memorize the polysyllabic and circumlocutory substitute, "A liter's a kilogram, from Egypt to Michigan!"

—Leumas.

EDITORIAL NOTE ON METRIC UNITS.

Although a policy of fair-play compels us to print the contribution on "Drawbacks" in this number, we are heartily in accord with the suggestion of Mr. Farr, and ready to argue for the Metric System with the last erg of our energy and to the last tenth-milliliter of ink.

Plans are afoot to sell advertising space by the centimeter, and after a few lessons in the manly art (with 250 gram gloves) we shall approach our printers with suggestions that they order type in tenth-millimeter sizes instead of by the point system.

By team-work of this sort, scientific men can keep kilogramming away toward the goal of decimal deliverance from quaint calculations. And although this goal now seems many kilometers distant, the time of our arrival will draw nigh a-meter.*

*Formerly apace.

—S. R. S.

Orthoepic Analogies.

Although we say **perimeter**
'Twould surely be the limit o'
Bad taste to say **centimeter.**
And yet because **thermometer**
Is right, and **refractometer,**
The President says, **kilometer.**

—S. R. S.

TO AID THE INTRODUCTION OF THE METRIC SYSTEM.

There has been more or less agitation for the adoption of the metric system in the United States, but the subject seldom, if ever, got beyond the scientific societies. Until 1914 the great mass of the people were entirely ignorant of the fact that there is such a system of

weights and measures. At this time the press reports began to contain such phrases as "75-millimeter guns" "a gain or loss of so many kilometers" always accompanied by the English equivalent. Thus the country has become cognizant of the metric system.

With this gain made should we let the matter rest or should we follow it up? As we all are aware it is greatly to the advantage of the chemist that the metric system be adopted as it is these units that he uses in all of his laboratory work and to a great extent in his semi-commercial scale work. It is therefore up to the chemist primarily to educate this country to the advantages of his system.

According to the old saying, "Physician, heal thyself," the chemist must first introduce this system into the chemical industries. As a start the purchase of laboratory chemicals seems to offer the most fertile field. Chemists in the laboratory think and work by the metric system but when they order or requisition supplies do so in the old English system. The reason for this is that practically without exception these goods are priced on this basis. However if orders were continually placed in metric units the companies manufacturing laboratory supplies would soon see the advisability of revising their system of pricing and gradually fall into the use of metric units.

As a great many of these companies manufacture bulk chemicals as well as laboratory chemicals they would, on discovering the merits of the new system, try to educate their other trade to its use.

This will no doubt take years to accomplish but it is up to the chemists of the country to start to educate the people with whom they do business into the use of the simpler and better method. The education of our own industries should come first, and the best way to start is by placing all your orders in the units of the metric system.

—James A. Farr.

THE DETERMINATION OF CORN IN SUCCOTASH.

A Monograph by O. Gess Hoo.

The author wishes to begin by stating, that a careful searth of all the available literature as far back as 1830 has failed to reveal to him any reliable method for this puzzling bit of quantitative analysis. Questioning several contemporaries at Morse Hall, revealed the fact that most of them relied entirely on the sense of taste. Testing out this method on several samples of C. P.* succotash obtained from Sibley Dog, Georgia's Hound, and three or four other of our most popular canine purveyors, laid bare the startling fact that in most cases such a test is not even failure because the samples obtained qualitative. Being an ardent admirer of Doc. Chamot the writer tried the microscope, but although persistent and enthusiastic, he was foredoomed to failure because the samples obtained for twenty-five cents from the above sources were entirely too minute, to permit of this coarse method of analysis. One of our best-known Professors suggested plating out on a Petri dish and subsequently counting the cornfields as one does in an aeroplane photograph. Due to the extreme despondency of most of the corn encountered, however, it refused absolutely to grow

on any of the standard culture media, the method resulting in complete failure. The problem was finally solved by splitting up the CORN into its components, carbon monoxide and rubidium nitride. A microtome is a very convenient instrument for this separation. The carbon monoxide may now be determined by introducing it into a cage full of guinea pigs and counting the number asphyxiated. Knowing the amount necessary to asphyxiate one guinea pig the rest of the analysis is as simple as the foregoing—one merely has to figure back to CORN, using logarithms as in Course fourteen.

*Confoundedly Poor.

—Cornell Chemist.

ANSWERS TO ELEMENTARY CONUNDRUMS:

1. Dad's car-fare?—Nickel.

2. What is Socialism?—Silicon.

3. What must the Kaiser's hopes do?—Zinc.

4. What would you do if you were hungry?—Sodine.

5. Which is Boston's favorite?—Copper. (Palladium is also suggested.)

6. Which one stands at Craft Avenue?—Carbon.

7. How does one catch Western cattle?—Europium.

8. How do they get the McKeesport gas wells?—Boron.

9. Where are the buffalo?—Argon.

10. What funds work against equal suffrage?—Antimony.

11. How shall a doctor get rid of his mistakes?—Barium.

12. What is 1999 lbs.?—Niton.

—Sam Void.

PERSONAL NEWS

New Members

Anderson, W. C., c/o The Grasselli Powder Co., New Castle, Pa.

Brackett, J. Herbert, General Chemical Co., Newell, Pa.

Caplan, Samuel J., 3210 Elsinore Sq., Pittsburgh, Pa.

Chen, T. Y., Box 105, Washington, Pa.

Cole, J. Bishop, 807 Southern Ave., Mt. Washington, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Culp, J. Wade, 210 Semple St., Oakland, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Eaton, Carl H., 67 Murdock St., Youngstown, Ohio.

Elder, Robert R., Wilson, Pa.

Faust, J. Frank, 355 N. Craig St., Pittsburgh, Pa.

Garman, Frederick, 212 12th Ave., Juniata Station, Altoona, Pa.

Gorzo, Julius V., 413 Shaw Ave., McKeesport, Pa.

Grennan, Joseph P., St. Francis College, Loretto, Pa.

Herr, Richard F., c/o Y. M. C. A., Youngstown, Ohio.

Hooker, Edwin S., Tyrone, Pa.

Hurtt, Markle A., Sexton St., Box 812, Struthers, Ohio.

Karns, Charles B., Franklin, Pa.

King, Charles G., 4613 Center Ave., Oakland Station, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Kirst, William E., 302 East High St., Salem, Ohio.

Lantz, Homer B., 425 Spruce St., Morgantown, W. Va.

Scholl, William A., 1423 18th Ave., Altoona, Pa.

Shaffer, Oscar N., National Lead & Oil Co., New Kensington, Pa.

Sivitz, William I., Aluminum Co., of America, New Kensington, Pa.

Stewart, S. T., 6 Philadelphia Ave., Natrona, Pa.

Thomas, Theodore, 717 Forbes St., Pittsburgh, Pa.

New Members by Transfer

Bauer, Otto H., 1235 Victoria Ave., New Kensington, Pa.

Cude, Harold E., 1417 Chapline Ave., Wheeling, W. Va.

Norcom, George D., 612 Grant St., Pittsburgh, Pa.

Snow, Louis F., New Kensington, Pa.

Changes of Address in Section.

Acheson, John L., 6640 Dalzell Place, Squirrel Hill Station, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Darrin, Marc, To Koppers Products Corp., Union Arcade, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Cramer, Chas. H., 107 East Adams Ave., Vandergrift, Pa.

Faragher, Paul V., To Aluminum Co. of America, New Kensington, Pa.

Morris, Paul R., Charleroi, Pa.

Parthum, Alfred H., To 196 St. Louis Ave., Youngstown, Ohio.

Peregrine, C. R., To 5555 Forbes St., Pittsburgh, Pa.

Smith, Oscar R., To Engineer of Tests, B. R. & P. Railway Co., Du Bois, Pa.

Thompson, Kenworthy J., To Mansfield Tire and Rubber Co., Mansfield, Ohio.

Thornton, Henry C., To 5442 Black St., Pittsburgh, Pa.

Wingert, J M., To 1210 13th St., Altoona, Pa.

Members lost by Transfer

Curme, Henry R., To the American Borvisk Co., Cleveland, Ohio.

Davis, Albert G., To Central Mercedita, Cuba.

Pratt, David S., To 38 Portland Place, St. Louis, Mo.

Members resigned or dropped from list.

Hogg, Charles W., 2324 Tilbury St., Pittsburgh, Pa. Cut off on P. O. notice.

Todd, George C., Aetna Chemical Co., Oakdale, Pa., Delinquent.

Coleman, Thomas H., 1200 So. Evans Ave., McKeesport, Pa., Delinquent.

Waxman, Harold M., La Belle Iron Works, Steubenville, Ohio, Delinquent.

Baldwin, Ralph W., Republic Rubber Co., Youngstown, Ohio, Delinquent.

Ferguson, James W., 364 Becks Run Road, Carrick, Pa., Delinquent.

Amon, Frank O., 305 Oakland Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa., Delinquent.

Hill, Harry H., U. S. Bureau of Mines, Pittsburgh, Pa., Delinquent.

Galanty, A. D., H. Koppers Co., Mellon Institute, Pittsburgh, Pa., Delinquent.

Howell, Spencer P., 4218 Saline Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa., Delinquent.

Grant, Dwight A., Bureau of Tests Center & Dithridge Sts., Pittsburgh Pa., Delinquent.

Struntz, Stephen C., 708 Bingham St Pittsburgh, Pa., Delinquent.

Grobstein, Albert, 233 Dunseith St., Pittsburgh, Pa., Delinquent.

Betz, C. E., 433 Ross Ave., Wilkinsburg, Pa., Delinquent.

Bomberger, Guy D., 1123 Seventh Ave., Altoona, Pa., Resigned.

Davies, R. V., Box 311, New Kensington, Pa., Resigned.

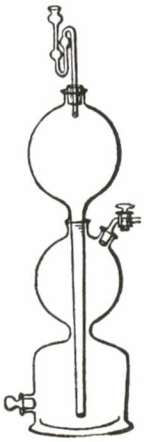
Jacobs, Homer R., Emlenton, Pa., Resigned.

Lowrey, S. C. Jr., 225 Hone Ave., Oil City, Pa., Delinquent.

Wallace, John C., Langeloth, Pa., Resigned.

Yonge, William K., 225 N. Craig St., Pittsburgh, Pa.

THE CHEMIST'S RELIABLE SUPPLY HOUSE



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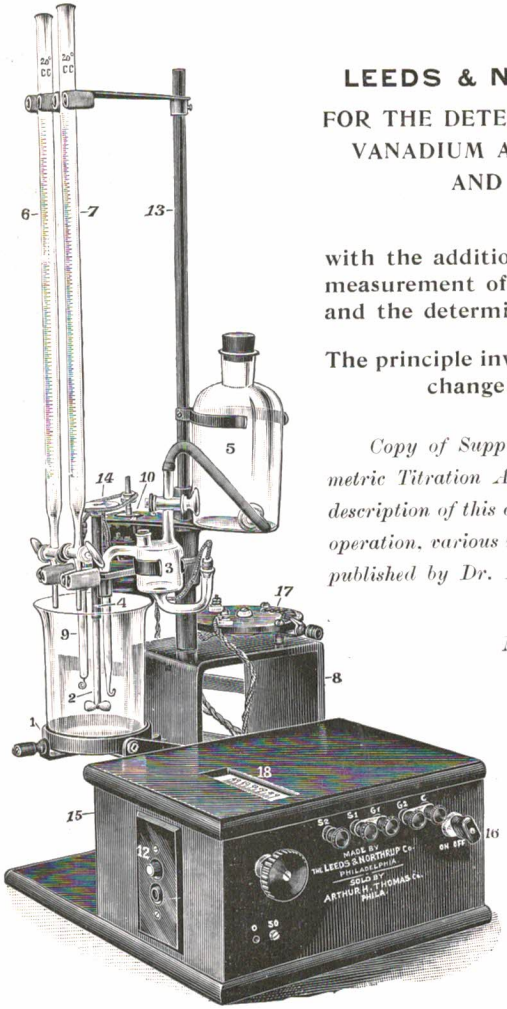

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Copy of Supplement No. 60, "The Kelley Electrometric Titration Apparatus," which contains a detailed description of this apparatus, together with directions for operation, various methods of analysis, and list of articles published by Dr. Kelley, sent upon request.

NOTE— Our first lot of Kelley Electrometric Titration Apparatus has all been sold and we expect completion of a second lot on or about Feb. 15th, 1920. We solicit orders for shipment in turn on completion of this second lot, after which we hope to maintain a stock on hand for immediate shipment. The demand for this apparatus has exceeded our expectation and the indications now are that the February lot will all have been sold in advance of completion.

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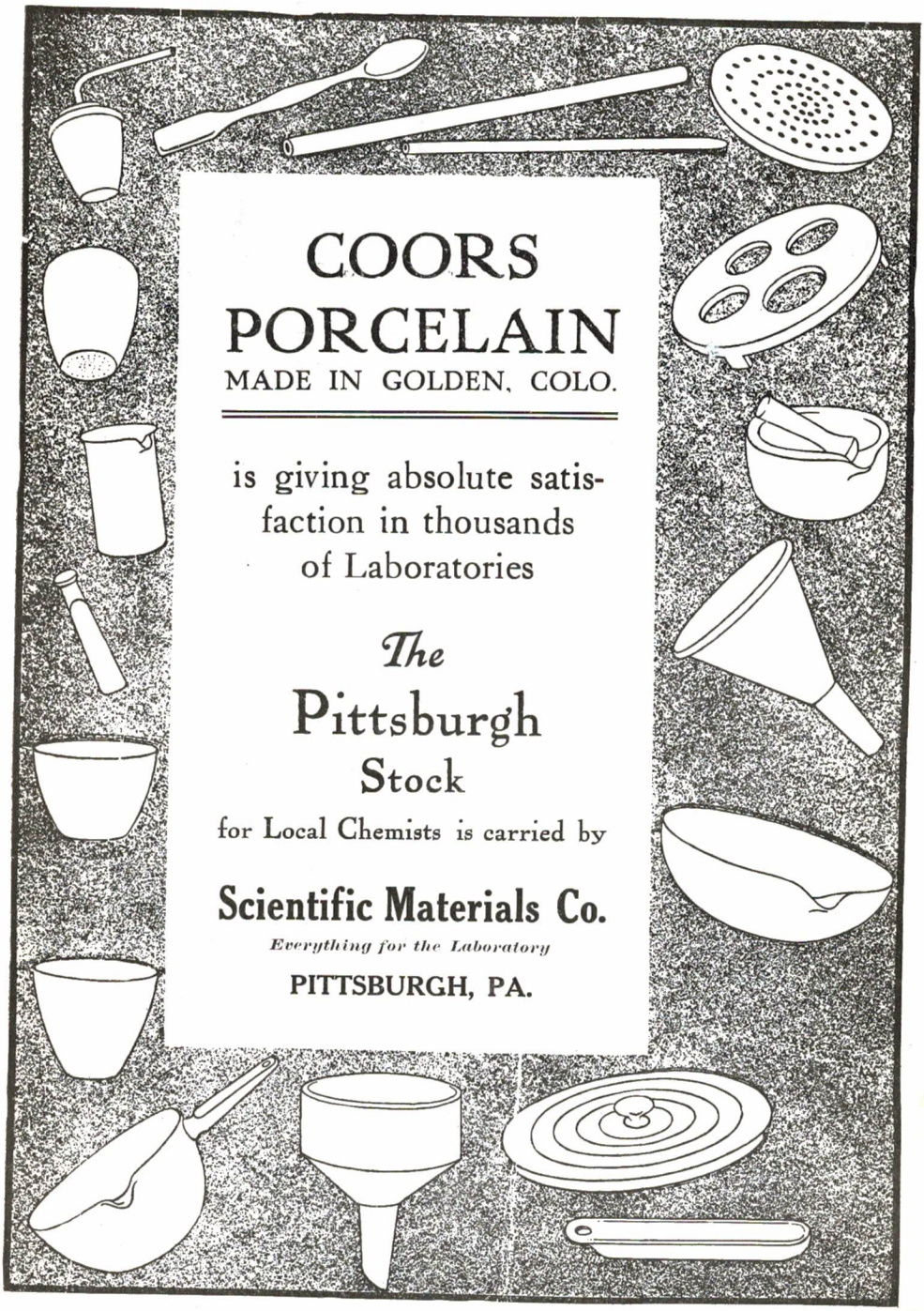
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The Faculty and ACS Student Affiliates of the Department of Chemistry
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The American Chemical Society - Pittsburgh Local Section

Spring, 2017

Dr. David Gallaher, Department Chairperson (project lead)
Dr. Monique Hockman, Professor of Chemistry
Dr. William Kowallis, Assistant Professor of Chemistry
Mr. Michael Martucci, M.S., Assistant Professor of Chemistry

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