

SCIENCE

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MICHEL EUGENE CHEVREUL.

MICHEL EUGENE CHEVREUL, the distinguished French chemist, died in Paris, April 9. He was born Aug. 31, 1786, in Angers. His father was a well-to-do physician in Angers, professor in the medical faculty, and a talented writer. Old age seems to be hereditary in the family; Chevreul's father having died at ninety-one, and his mother at ninety-three years.

After the revolution the University of Angers was disestablished, a school for chemical and physical studies being put in its place; which school Chevreul attended between the ages of eleven and seventeen. In 1803, Chevreul went to Paris, where his aptitudes were quickly noticed. In 1806 he was appointed director of Vauquelin's laboratory, and professor in the Lycée Charlemagne, and during the same year he published the results of his first experiments. In 1806 seven papers came from his pen, of which three were on coloring-matters (indigo and Brazilian wood). Four years later he was appointed *aide-naturaliste* in the Museum of Natural History, then examiner for the Ecole Polytechnique; and at thirty he was professor of chemistry in the Gobelins, the world-known manufactory of tapestry, and director of the department of tinctorial baths. In 1826, after the death of Proust, Chevreul was appointed member of the Academy of Sciences. Not one of his colleagues of that time is now living. In 1830 he became professor in the museum, and some time after director. He never missed a meeting of the Academy of Sciences up to his one hundredth birthday, and it is not long since one could meet him in the Rue des Ecoles, walking to the Institute, hat in hand, and hands behind the back. He seemed to have an aversion to hats, and dispensed with them a great deal.

During the war of 1870 he remained in Paris. It was in a letter

written during January, 1871, to Abbé Lamazon, in answer to a note of the latter, that Chevreul used for the first time the expression he preferred when speaking of himself, — "the dean of French students."

Chevreul married early, but his wife died more than twenty years ago. His conjugal life was a very quiet and happy one. Chevreul had only one son, a retired magistrate, who died recently. He

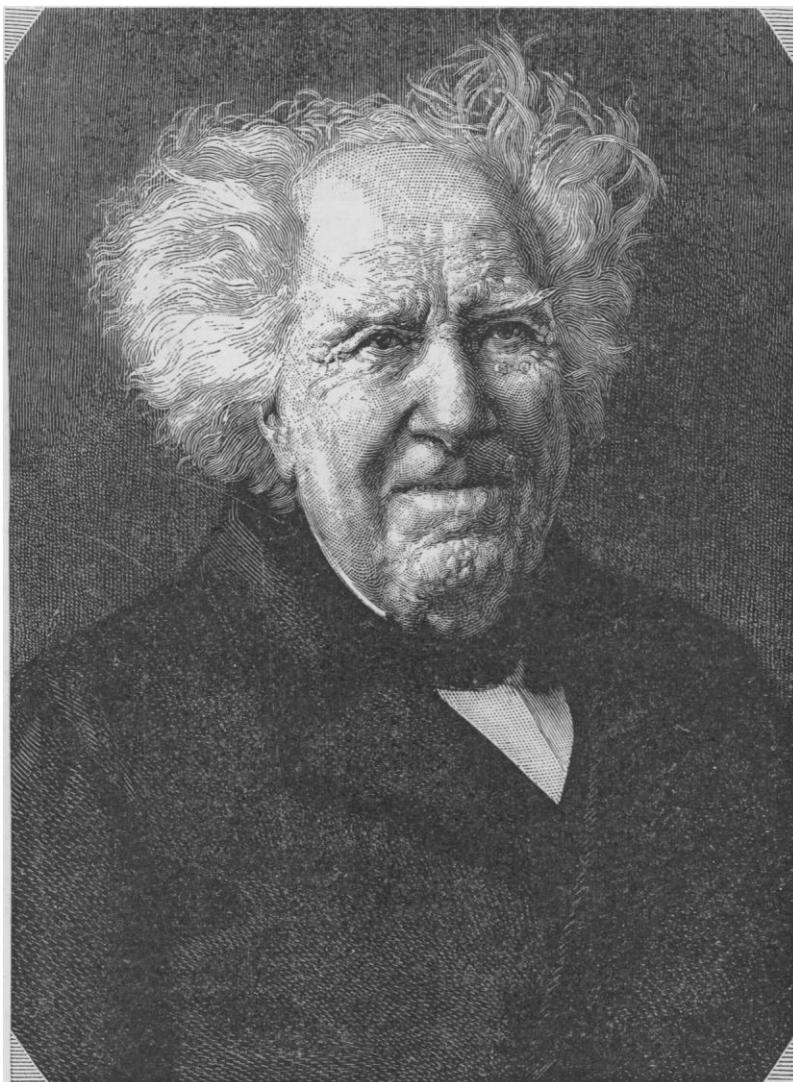
himself lived alone in Paris.

As a man, Chevreul had a very pleasant expression, and always greeted strangers or friends in a very hearty fashion. His life was a quiet one, devoted wholly to work and study. He was a rich man, as he spent little, and his income exceeded by a great deal his expenses. A few years ago he sometimes went to balls, and was a favorite with many ladies. He had a humorous turn of mind. Recently, when accepting a new assistant, he exclaimed, "Well, you must be plucky to become my assistant: I have already killed four!" "Killed" is a metaphor, but no more so than it is when used in speaking of a commander who has killed two or three horses; that is, has had them killed under him.

Chevreul's material life was simple; he eat little. Two eggs and a slice of patty were enough for the morning, with some milk and coffee; in the evening, a full plate of soup, a cutlet, and some fruit, some cheese, and only water or beer, no wine at all.

A catalogue of Chevreul's works would be a work in itself. The two most important branches of science studied and developed by Chevreul are the chemistry of fatty sub-

stances, and the theory of complementary colors. By his researches in the former of these, Chevreul gave methods for obtaining a number of very important and useful substances, such as stearine, glycerine, etc. Millions have been earned by the application of his methods. A statue of Chevreul was unveiled at the Paris Museum on his hundredth birthday.



M. CHEVREUL, THE FAMOUS FRENCH CHEMIST.

(Died at Paris, April 9, aged 102 years.)