

# SCIENCE

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IN these days of far-reaching specialization the would-be speaker upon any subject is between a new Scylla and a new Charybdis. In order that his production should be comprehensible to those outside of the specialty it must almost inevitably be made boresome to those within the fold; but, on the other hand, that which is new to the specialist in his own topic is apt to be quite too new to the layman. Either popularizing or specializing is likely to wreck the speaker's purpose by inducing at least a part of his audience to slumber; and this danger is especially imminent after dinner on a hot day which has been filled with mental effort. In this brief address, which Professor Smith has entrusted to my care, I shall probably run foul of both obstructions; but this irregular course will have the great concomitant advantage of permitting each class of hearers to obtain a few minutes of much needed repose.

We are rather accustomed to look upon physical chemistry as being a very modern invention, and in one sense we are not wrong in so doing. But after all, many of the fundamental generalizations of physical chemistry are by no means recent, and some of them are really old. Leaving out of account the probable discoveries in the

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