

Municipal Chemistry. A series of thirty lectures by experts on the applications of the principles of chemistry to the city, delivered at the College of the City of New York, 1910. Edited by CHARLES BASKERVILLE, Ph.D., F.C.S. New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company. 1911. Pp. 526. \$5.00 net.

The title of this book is sufficiently suggestive of its intended scope. The lectures here brought together in printed form were given before the student body of the College of the City of New York in the spring of 1910 and were open to the public. The interest they aroused was taken as sufficient to warrant the publication for a larger audience.

Chemistry plays a very important and ever-widening part in the affairs of life, and especially of the life as it is lived in a great city. Problems of food supply and preservation, of pure water and disposal of sewage, of garbage cremation and smoke prevention, and a dozen more which might be easily mentioned, call for the aid of the chemist in some direction. It is proper to present to young people in college the conception of the chemist as a man who can do things which the city needs, and on a broad scale. The chemical problems of the city are not merely those of routine analysis, although many analyses may be necessary in their solution.

The men selected by Professor Baskerville to deliver the course of lectures are, for the greater part, well known authorities in their several specialties, and while some of the topics discussed bear but a remote relation to questions of municipal chemistry, in the narrower sense, it must be admitted that they are all of interest at the present time. The editor contributes a good introductory lecture. The papers by Professor Mason on the relations of drinking water to disease and on the purification of water; by Mr. Flinn, of the New York Board of Water Supply, on the water problem in that city and the work in the Catskill Mountains; and by Professor Winslow on the disposal of sewage are perhaps the most interesting in the book. The discussion of the city milk supply problem by Dr. Darlington is also timely and quite worth reading.

In addition to these topics there are lectures on food and drug adulteration, on illuminating gas, smoke prevention, ventilation, explosives, paints, corrosion of metals, cements, road building, textiles, parks and playgrounds. It will be seen that a wide range of topics is covered, and in general in a way to interest young people. The whole presentation is naturally elementary and not of a character to appeal to specialists. In fact, the moderately informed man will recognize most of the discussions as old friends with which he is already familiar. But the book is not intended for the well informed but for those who need and are seeking general practical information. From this point of view it merits a cordial reception.

J. H. LONG

SPECIAL ARTICLES

EXPERIENCES WITH THE GRADING SYSTEM OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI¹

WHY should there be uniformity of grading in an educational institution? somebody might ask. If different grades were simply means of giving some students notoriety above others, the question would be immaterial, for a gentleman does not seek notoriety. But the grade has in more than one sense a cash value, and if there is no uniformity of grading in an institution, this means directly that values are stolen from some and undeservedly presented to others.

The result is that, among the members of the faculty as well as among the students, men look at each other with suspicion. That this attitude is detrimental to the feeling of unity, to the development of a college spirit, is clear to even the most superficial observer. Whatever contributes to a greater uniformity of grading, contributes directly towards more peace, a better mutual understanding, a greater community of purpose among all the members of the institution.

Whoever admits the fact just stated will find much encouragement in the present

¹ Read before Section L of the American Association for the Advancement of Science at the Minneapolis meeting.