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PROSPECTS AND RETROSPECTS¹

It is a time-honored custom that, once a year, the president of the American Chemical Society should deliver a "presidential address." As the years roll by, the list of these addresses has become quite formidable and various subjects have been touched upon by my distinguished predecessors. But through many of them runs an ever recurring trend of thought relating to the problems and scope of chemistry in America, from the standpoint of each period at which the different addresses were delivered.

In masterly presentation, in broadness of view, or in confidence in the future of our science, I doubt if any of these addresses have surpassed the first of them all, delivered in 1876 ("Science in America," *J. A. C. S.*, Vol. 1, 1877) by our earliest president, John W. Draper.

In some of these addresses, difficulties were pointed out or doubts were expressed as well as optimistic wishes. To-day, after I have reread every one of them, I find comfort in the fact that the most cherished hopes of earlier years have already become a solid reality.

We may well devote a few minutes to this subject before we touch upon other matters. Our growth has been enormous, nevertheless it was gradual. Even in 1890, after fourteen years of existence, we counted only 256 members. At that time we printed a modest journal, hardly known then outside of the United States. To-day, our membership, approaching 15,000, exceeds by far that of any other chemical society in the world.

The scope and variety of our publications have increased in the same way. Besides our older journal, which now mainly prints subjects concerning purely theoretical research, we have our *Journal of Chemical Abstracts* which since 1906 has made us the only country independent of the heretofore indispensable German *Chemisches Centralblatt*. Then in 1909 we launched our *Industrial and Engineering Chemistry*, particularly devoted to applied chemistry or scientific research related thereto and which lately has been reinforced by its semi-monthly supplement, the "News edition." Nor should we fail to mention the *Chemical Monographs*, published in book form, and the more recent *Chemical Review*; truly a handsome list of publications covering every department of chemistry—and which have acquired such interna-

¹ An address delivered by the president to the members of the American Chemical Society at the September, 1924, meeting, held at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.