

# SCIENCE

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## EDGAR FAHS SMITH, CHEMIST<sup>1</sup>

In turning the pages of that great final ledger wherein are recorded our life's endeavors and accomplishments, I find a noteworthy account which reads thus:

### AMERICAN CHEMISTRY

*Debtor to Edgar Fahs Smith, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. For services rendered from September, 1876, to May 3, 1928, 52 years, as follows:*

*Item 1.*—As educator, who with rare charm and power, portrayed to tens of thousands of his fellow Americans, both students and others, the multifarious and marvelous ways in which chemistry contributes to the advancement of civilization and to the prosperity and happiness of the individual, how its work is carried on, the splendid opportunities it offers for service to mankind and what it may reasonably expect to accomplish in the very near future; with the result that the public were given a better appreciation and a clearer understanding of its importance to their well-being, and that the many young people thereby induced to make chemistry their life's business received a training and an inspiration which made them more useful and more patriotic citizens of higher and nobler ideals.

*Item 2.*—As guide, counselor and loyal friend to all who were so fortunate as to know him and especially as older brother to all younger chemists. No one who approached him ever failed to receive a cordial welcome, a patient and sympathetic hearing of his problem, whether scientific or personal, and sound advice as to the proper line of action. In the laboratories he labored not merely shoulder to shoulder but heart to heart with his staff and students. Their sorrows and unhappiness brought grief to him. In their triumphs and happiness he rejoiced. Into their characters he built his own, and that memory will remain to these generations of students as a refining and ennobling influence which will continue until they too will have completed "life's great adventure." The world's tributes of honors and decorations are but as dross compared to these priceless riches of human lives. The alumni will read with pride the long list of his honors, but these honors will not cause the same tug at the heart-strings as the recollection of the touch of his hand, the sound of his friendly voice or the welcoming smile upon his well-beloved face.

*Item 3.*—As an example to all of the beauty and dignity of a life of simplicity, self-forgetfulness and devotion to all that is noblest and best, and the fact that a chemist is also an American citizen and as such owes to his country the discharge of those civic and patriotic duties for which his talents and training especially fit him

<sup>1</sup> Address delivered at the meeting in memory of Edgar Fahs Smith, in Philadelphia, on December 4, 1928.

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