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A handbook of chemical manipulation

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Vorwort

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P R E F A C E.

THE only work in our language specially devoted to Chemical Manipulation has long been out of print, while probably at no time has a guide to the Student in his experiments been more needed.

Within the last few years modes of manipulating have undergone many changes, and a vast number of processes, involving the use of complex apparatus, have been invented. Chemistry is doubtless in a transition state; eventually, and, as it approaches perfection, processes will be simplified, and we shall obtain reactions by more simple and direct methods. Possibly, although we dare scarcely hope it, we may eventually rival the fabled simplicity of the Rosicrucian, and, by the aid of a few simple vessels, obtain far more beautiful compounds than we now procure with all our elaborate appliances.

Manipulation is to chemistry what Bacon conceived mathematics to be to science, and as such "should know her place;" nevertheless the importance of manipulation cannot be over-rated. The good, and therefore successful manipulator, will do far more work than he who is deficient in that respect, and his researches will be of a higher order. The time expended by an awkward or clumsy operator in merely attaining accuracy, will be devoted by the skilful chemist to the exploration of new fields.

It often happens that the Student, earnestly desirous of pursuing chemical researches, is prevented from attending

a laboratory or school of chemistry ; the following pages are especially intended for persons so situated. To those who are so fortunate as to have the advantage of regular instruction, the work will still be found a useful companion in the laboratory.

On several occasions descriptions have been quoted at length (*vide* pp. 60, 324, 332 and 448). The author of a process is generally best able to describe it accurately and clearly.

Considerable space is devoted to certain reactions employed in researches ; a careful perusal of that portion of the work will be to the Student's advantage, more especially to those undertaking investigations.

The illustrations have been engraved by Mr. George Pearson from original drawings, made in most cases from the instruments themselves. For a few of them the Author is indebted to his friend, Mr. Galletly, and one or two were copied from photographs.

It has been the Author's earnest desire to give every chemist his due ; if, therefore, the names of inventors of apparatus or processes have anywhere been omitted, such omission has been accidental.

The numerous Tables which have been added will, it is hoped, be found to increase the usefulness of the work.

Laboratory, Normal College, Swansea,
September 22, 1857.