

**AN INTRODUCTION TO  
CHEMICAL  
PHILOSOPHY ACCORDING  
TO THE MODERN THEORIES**

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An Introduction to Chemical Philosophy According to the Modern Theories by Dr. Adolphe C. Wurtz & William Crookes

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**DR. ADOLPHE C. WURTZ & WILLIAM CROOKES**

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AN INTRODUCTION

# CHEMICAL PHILOSOPHY

ACCORDING TO THE

## MODERN THEORIES.

BY

DR. ADOLPHE C. WURTZ, F.R.S.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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At a time when the philosophy of chemistry is becoming more and more clearly apprehended, we need to be reminded of its historical development. The more acute and profound our co-ordination and interpretation of phenomena, the more careful should be our scrutiny of the successive views regarding them, which have been previously held. Such a scrutiny will serve two useful purposes, for it will correct two common and erroneous modes of thought. Thus, the technical terms finally adopted in the expression of chemical facts will cease to be vague—they will acquire a constant as well as a definite meaning; and at the same time, that narrowness of vision, which sees everything in one aspect only, will be duly enlarged.

For these reasons the appearance in an English dress, and in a separate volume of Professor Wurtz's "Introduction to Chemical Philosophy," must be regarded as peculiarly seasonable. Many other chemical books have, indeed, been published within the last year or two—in some cases, original

works of great merit and usefulness—but the progress of the science has not been recorded lately in a systematic form. Dr. Hofmann's "Modern Chemistry," for example, enounces in the fullest terms the laws of combination by volume, the functions of radicals, and the dependence of chemical types upon the different equivalencies of the elements. Dr. Frankland's "Lecture Notes," on the other hand, developes very amply the equations of chemical changes, and, more especially, the constitution of compounds as made up of atoms bonded together in diverse but systematic modes. But Dr. Wurtz's compact volume fulfils most of the intentions of the works just named, and yet does something more. It traces in sufficient detail the varying opinions of chemical philosophers as to the laws of chemical combination, and the nature of chemical structures. Thus the reader is led gradually to the study of the newest system, while on his way the errors and the glimpses of truth in the older systems are clearly pointed out.

For breadth of view, lucidity of expression, orderly arrangement of facts, shrewdness and fairness in reasoning, Dr. Wurtz's treatise appears to be singularly distinguished. The dates and references will be found of the utmost value, while the justice which marks his attribution of discoveries to their true originators is not the least agreeable feature of the work.



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