

ELEMENTARY CHEMISTRY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

KNOWLEDGE. SCIENCE. THE SCIENCES. PHYSICS. CHEMISTRY.

What is Chemistry? Why should we study it? These two questions naturally arise in the minds of those who are just beginning the study of this subject, and a sort of half answer will be given in this chapter; a more satisfactory explanation will slowly grow as we get to know more and more about the subject.

Whenever we have a very large number of different objects, it is necessary that they should be arranged according to some definite system if they are to be of use; and the larger the number, the more indispensable the system becomes. A few books may be kept in almost any order on a shelf; but, in a large library—say of 100,000 volumes—unless classification is strictly followed, it is impossible to find some particular volume when wanted, and the library thus becomes more or less useless.

Exactly the same thing is true of what we have in our minds—our ideas. In the infancy of the race when ideas were few, when knowledge was very limited, arrangement was not very necessary; but to-day, when the sum of all human knowledge is vast beyond the imagination of any one individual, classification and arrangement become absolutely essential. Knowledge, then, must be carefully