

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF CHEMISTRY—COMBUSTION

ELEMENTS. COMPOUNDS. ANALYSIS. SYNTHESIS.

As we saw in Chapter I, Chemistry is the science that makes a study of the composition of bodies and the changes in composition which these bodies undergo. We shall learn that it is a very large science. Now all the classified knowledge that we have to do with under this head did not suddenly come into existence ready arranged: men have been collecting the facts, little by little, for thousands of years, often accidentally, sometimes intentionally, and carefully comparing them; and many different classifications of these facts have been tried—much as the objects in a great museum are slowly collected and then arranged and rearranged as the collection grows. The story of how all this happened is the history of chemistry. It is a long story—far too long to be told here; but some of it is so interesting that we must briefly refer to it.

The history of chemistry is generally divided into the following periods:

The Ancient period	— 300, A.D.
The Alchemistic period	300 — 1550, “
The Iatro-chemical period	1550 — 1650, “
The Phlogistic period	1650 — 1775, “
The Quantitative, or modern period	1775 — “

Long, long ago, people began to take an interest in those changes that to-day we call chemical. From the very birth of the race, fire seems to have had a fascination for human