

I remember reading after that, along in the course of history, of the alchemists, that wonderful set of men who were always striving for two things. One of these was to find out the elixir of life; to make it a practical thing for youth never to grow old and old age never to cause the serious accident of a departure from this world's existence. They were after the elixir of life—and the world would have been an awfully sorry world if ever they had found it and all of us were condemned to live forever on this sub-plane of existence. Then, they were after the philosopher's stone—the thing which, if I remember rightly, was to turn all the base metals into gold and to make its possessor, and ultimately all people, infinitely rich. Had they been successful I suppose that we should now have no iron, no steel, no other like metals; all would have been transmuted into gold. We would, in a literal sense, have been living in the golden age, but all of us would have been starved to death long ago had that been the case.

#### The Chemist's Family Tree.

Following the form of the old Biblical chronicle which gives the genealogy of people, I suppose I would not be far wrong if I said that the modern chemist is the son of the alchemist, who is the son of the old diviner or soothsayer, who is the son of the evil one. That is the line of descent from which you have come. Well, don't be discouraged by that. A great many philosophers have made us all out to be descendants of the monkey. Of the two I am not sure that I would not rather take the superior intelligence as an ancestor, even if he was a rather bad one.

Now, having given you your descent in the genealogical line, let me express the hope that you have abandoned the secrecy and the wickedness of the old diviner and necromancer; that you have abandoned the wild ideas and over optimism of the alchemists and that you have settled down at last on the plane of pure truth and scientific knowledge and their practical application. After all, however, I am not sure that all these classes that I have mentioned and all the intermediate classes which came between them did not, in their search for certain things that they never found, turn up a great many things which subsequently became useful to the world. They turned over the soil, did the first exploration, made the surface trenching which has resulted in bringing about an age of