

# THE REWARDS OF CHEMISTRY

**T**HE year was 1884. Professor Frank M. Jewett of Oberlin College, standing before his class in Chemistry, declared:

“The man who makes aluminum available for commercial use will be a benefactor to the world. He will also be able to lay up for himself a great fortune.”

Charles Martin Hall, one of the class who heard Professor Jewett’s statement, took up the challenge.

In less than a year after his graduation in 1885 he hit upon a method of passing a current from a weak battery through molten cryolite in which aluminum oxide had been dissolved. Expectant, but fearful, he dipped an iron spoon into the cooling solution. When he drew it out, a dozen globules of aluminum glistened on its surface.

The experiment was a success. Rushing over to the college from the laboratory, he shouted, “Professor, I’ve got it!” On that day, February 23, 1886, just fifty years ago, the aluminum industry was born.

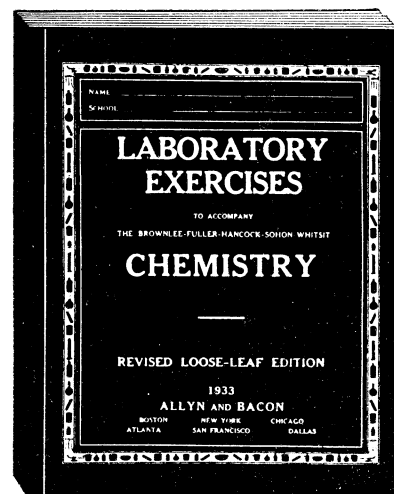
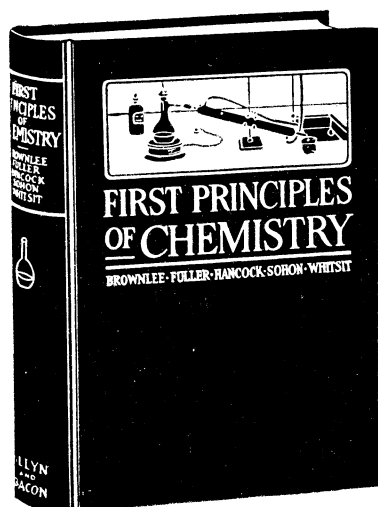
Hall’s Electrolytic Process, which has long outlived its patents, is still used today for the large scale production of aluminum. It makes possible

the manufacture of thousands of articles, from new pans to airplanes. By it aluminum can be produced from bauxite ore at twenty cents a pound. It cost eight dollars a pound when Hall began his research.

The process brought fame and fortune to its discoverer and great benefit to mankind. Thus was Professor Jewett’s prophecy fulfilled. Charles Martin Hall left a great fortune to his alma mater when he died.

Chemistry will continue to hold out new challenges and new rewards to the inquiring mind.

The ideal textbook in Chemistry tells the stories of great discoveries, gives accounts of the lives of great chemists, and points the way to new and even greater achievements.



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