

From the Editor

1997 in Review and What to Expect From *The Chemical Educator* in 1998

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Happy Holidays! This issue closes the second volume of *The Chemical Educator*. The release of Volume 2, Issue 5 in November and this, Issue 6, in December allows us to have a calendar-year schedule starting with Volume 3 (1998) and henceforth. We will have six bimonthly issues in 1998 and will move our release date to near the first of the month beginning in February 1998.

This year has seen exciting developments both for this journal and for electronic publishing in general. The new version of the Adobe PDF reader (Adobe Acrobat Reader 3.0) has been released and we are producing PDF files that can make use of it. Those of you who have installed it as your reader are able to read *Chemical Educator* articles within your browser on a page by page basis during the downloading of the article's PDF file. If you have not already installed this version, I urge you to do so.

This year our journal launched a new series "Classic Papers in Chemistry." In this issue, we present the second article in this

series, celebrating the 100th anniversary of J. J. Thomson's discovery of the electron. Included is an electronic reproduction of the original October 1897 paper in which Thomson presented his case that cathode rays are streams of subatomic "corpuscles." Two ensuing papers "On the Charge of Electricity carried by the Ions produced by Röntgen Rays" published in December 1898 and "On the Masses of the Ions in Gases at Low Pressures" published in December 1899 are also included, along with the published text of Thomson's talk of April 30, 1897, in which he first put the subatomic proposal forward and George Fitzgerald's commentary on this talk. These articles are introduced by George Smith, Professor of Philosophy at Tufts University. I'm sure you and your students will enjoy his introduction and these landmark papers. I found them fascinating and very readable.

This issue also begins the publication of media reviews in *The Chemical Educator*. This section contains reviews of many types of material of interest to chemists and chemistry students. This includes books, software, websites, videos, and films. The Section Editor is Dr. Hugh Cartwright (email: Hugh.Cartwright@chemistry.oxford.ac.uk). Please note that HTML, rather than PDF format, is used for reviews. Four book reviews are included in this issue and many more are in press for future issues.

We have also received and will reproduce the first book in a second series, "Antique Chemistry Books." This book, entitled *A Fourteen Weeks Course in Chemistry* and written by J. Dorman Steele, was originally published by A. S. Barnes and Company in 1874. Its 312 pages contain numerous figures, one in color. It is an interesting account of how chemistry and chemistry laboratory techniques were taught at a time that only 66 elements were known. Organic Chemistry is described as "dealing with those substances which have been produced by life—examples: flesh and wood."

The Chemical Educator website will get a new design during 1998. This redesign includes modernization of the site's graphics and user interface, revamping of the CHEDR Exchange, and exciting changes in the forums. But, there is one change we will not make: manuscripts submitted to *The Chemical Educator* will continue to receive quick, timely, personal attention. Our turnaround time from receipt to publication decision, including review by at least three referees, has averaged less than eight weeks. The quality of the comments from our referees has been superb and I extend them my sincere thanks and appreciation for their responses. Numerous authors have done so as well.

At the end of last year, we were one of only 14 electronically published journals abstracted by the Chemical Abstracts Service; however, this year the American Chemical Society (ACS) made the decision to produce online versions of all of its journals and most major journal publishers have or are soon to follow this lead. The ACS's decision to publish online certainly strengthens the Internet's credibility as a delivery medium for scholarly work. We are proud to be among the first online journals and a pioneer in the use of Adobe's PDF format for presentation.

Thank you for your support in 1997. Please accept my best wishes for the holiday season. Have a healthy, prosperous, and successful 1998.