



***JOSEPH
BLACK***

***EXPERIMENTS UPON
MAGNESIA ALBA,
QUICKLIME, AND
SOME OTHER
ALCALINE
SUBSTANCES***



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PREFACE.

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BLACK'S Paper entitled "Experiments upon Magnesia Alba, Quicklime, and some other Alcaline Substances" was read in June 1755, and was first published in "Essays and Observations, Physical and Literary. Read before a Society in Edinburgh, and Published by them," Volume II., Edinburgh, 1756; pp. 157-225. It was subsequently reprinted several times during the life of the author, not only in later editions of these Essays, but also in a separate form. Copies of the original Paper are now very difficult to obtain, and the later reprints have also become scarce.

The present reprint is a faithful copy of the Paper as it first appeared in 1756, the spelling, &c., of the original having been carefully reproduced.

The Paper constitutes a highly important step in the laying of the foundations of chemistry as an exact science, and furnishes a model of carefully planned experimental investigation, and of clear reasoning upon the results of experiment. It is neither so widely read by the younger chemists nor is it so readily accessible as it ought to be, and the object of the Alembic Club in issuing it as the first volume of a series of Reprints of historically important contributions to Chemistry, is to place it within easy reach of every student of Chemistry and of the History of Chemistry.

The student's attention may be particularly called to Black's tacit adoption of the quantitative method in a large number of his experiments, and to the way in which he