THE TECHNIQUE OF MICROCHEMISTRY

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Micro methods in analytical chemistry were first developed as a separate art by Behrends in 1880 at the University of Delft, in Holland. Since then it has grown rapidly, and has been differentiated into specialized forms, as the micro methods of Emich, the spot tests of Feigl, the quantitative procedures of Pregl, and the microscopical procedures of Chamot.

Qualitative procedures may be roughly classified as (1) test tube methods, using approximately one cubic centimeter of solution, and (2) spot methods, using drops placed on slides, plates, or filter paper. Microanalysis requires special technique in such operations as heating, evaporation, precipitation, washing of precipitates, sublimation, and so forth.

The substitution of micro methods for the usual macro methods of qualitative analysis is not desirable in elementary classes, since the reactions employed are too largely organic. Furthermore, there would be a tendency to stress technique instead of the fundamental chemistry.