

SWARTS, Frédéric J.S.

Born: Elsene, Belgium (1866)

Died: Ghent, Belgium (1940)

Frédéric Swarts, son of and later on successor to his father professor Théodore Swarts (1839-1911) at the University of Ghent, graduates as a chemist and two years later as a physician. His main interests however go out to chemistry. As professor he introduces for the first time the theory of electrolytes in his curriculum and plays a prominent role in the IUPAC. The discovery by Moissan of the element fluorine and some of its compounds stimulate Swarts to undertake further research into this subject. He experiences with a number of catalysts to substitute hydrogen by fluorine in alkanes and alkenes, which lead to a study of the pattern of intramolecular forces between carbon and fluorine. He studies the physico-chemical properties of fluorine compounds (thermochemistry, viscosity).