

writer obtained one which was fairly plastic and which removed the coloring matter from methylene-blue solution. After digesting with the dye the clayey matter was examined under the microscope and some flaky sericite particles it contained were seen to have taken up the dyestuff between fine cleavage plates. This would tend to cast some doubt upon the results Ashley<sup>15</sup> obtained for the determination of the plasticity in clays from their adsorptive power, regarded by him as due entirely to colloidal matter.

*Bibliography.*—An elaborate summary of the older literature of gel minerals has been compiled by Himmelbauer;<sup>16</sup> space will not permit its reproduction here. More recent articles are abstracted in *Chemical Abstracts* and in various mineralogical publications.

*Conclusion.*—The original object of this paper was to secure some method for the certain identification of minerals as gel minerals. However, few new facts of a positive nature have been obtained. This is due mainly to the fact that much more experimental data is necessary, and any conclusions which may be drawn from present results are merely tentative and subject to revision.

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## PROCEEDINGS OF SOCIETIES

### PHILADELPHIA MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY

#### The Wagner Free Institute of Science

The Philadelphia Mineralogical Society held its twenty-fifth anniversary meeting on October 11, 1917, with President Leffmann in the chair.

Messrs. Leffmann, Rothermel, Allen, M. Bernstein, Bradford, Egee, Flack, Gordon, Geist, Groth, Herwegh, Jones, Knabe, Koch, Munson, Oldach, Trudell, Warford, Wherry and eight visitors, were present.

Dr. Leffmann made a brief address on the modern development of mineralogy.

Dr. Wherry outlined how he had become acquainted with the P. M. S. and how he came to make his first contribution to mineralogy. He then described his new work in the Bureau of Chemistry, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture. A thoro study of the optical-crystallographic properties of materials entering into foods and drugs is contemplated, along similar lines to past work in mineralogy. Heretofore the possibilities of the petrographic microscope in the quick and accurate determination of chemical substances outside of minerals have been little appreciated.

<sup>15</sup> *Bull.* 388, U. S. Geol. Survey, 1909.

<sup>16</sup> *Fortschritte Mineralogie, etc.*, 3, 1913.

Mr. Howard Goodwin presented some reminiscences of past collecting experiences, touching on comic incidents of these excursions and peculiarities of certain participants.

A telegram from Dr. George F. Kunz, and a letter from Mr. John Eyerman congratulating the society on the twenty-five years' work were read.

Dr. Wherry announced the death of Prof. Amos P. Brown, one of the honorary members of the society.

A letter from Mr. Elmer Bengé, past president and active member of the Society was read regretting his absence, and remarking that:

"A quarter century mark reached by an organization certainly shows a stability of purpose, worthiness of cause, steadfastness of interests by its officers, and a live necessity for its objects and work."

Col. Washington A. Roebing, nominated by Dr. Wherry, and Mr. Elmer Bengé, nominated by Mr. Gordon, were elected to honorary membership.

The society then adjourned for a smoker and an exhibition of minerals by Messrs. Warford, Trudell, Gordon, and Geist.

SAMUEL G. GORDON, *Secretary*.

#### HISTORY OF THE PHILADELPHIA MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY

The Philadelphia Mineralogical Society was founded, as "The Students Mineralogical Club," by Henry Goodson Ives, James E. Richardson, and Henry Clay Borden, in October, 1892, at the house of Mr. Ives. Mr. Ives was elected chairman, and Mr. Richardson the first secretary. The purpose of the society was to provide a common meeting ground where young enthusiasts could meet to discuss minerals.

The first meetings were held bi-weekly at the homes of the various members, later ones at the Academy of Natural Sciences, and since 1905 the Wagner Free Institute of Science has been the regular meeting place.

The first paper was presented by Mr. Ives, on "Frankford Minerals"; and many of those that followed have been also on local mineralogy, with reports of field-work, of analyses, or of the determination of doubtful local species. Many important contributions to local mineralogy have been made, most of them having appeared in the "The Mineral Collector," which was the official organ of the Society until its discontinuance in 1909.

The Society has never formed a regular cabinet, its work in this line having been confined largely to adding to the local collections of the Wagner Institute and of the Academy of Natural Sciences. But two special collections have been made and donated, one of minerals exhibiting characteristic taste, smell, touch and form, to the Pennsylvania Blind Asylum; and the other of an extensive educational series of minerals, to the Northeast Manual Training High School.