# PROCEEDINGS OF SOCIETIES

## PHILADELPHIA MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY

WAGNER FREE INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, JANUARY 9, 1919

A stated meeting of the Philadelphia Mineralogical Society was held on the above date with the president, Dr. Leffmann, in the chair. Fourteen members and eight visitors were present.

Dr. Leffmann exhibited a piece of Shenandoah limestone from the vicinity of Conshohocken, and used in the foundation of the City Hall; also a Lumiere plate of a section of dolerite. Dr. Burgin exhibited a specimen of wulfenite obtained at Phoenixville in 1916.

Mr. Gordon reported a trip with Messrs. Trudell and Frankenfield to Lenni, where colorless chabazite was found.

Mr. Ford exhibited a fine California rubellite, and Mr. Oldach native silver from Cobalt, Ontario. Mr. Koch described a holder for box mounts under the microscope.

Messrs. J. C. Boyle and William Lee were nominated for membership.

The society then adjourned, for an exhibition of microscopic minerals.

SAMUEL G. GORDON, *Secretary*

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# BOOK REVIEW

A TEXT BOOK OF PRECIOUS STONES. FRANK B. WADE. G. P. Putnam's Sons, *New York*, 1918. 8vo, 318 pp. + 16 figs.

This book is addressed to jewelers and the gem-loving public. In directing his efforts to the first, the author undertakes a mission that has the approval of many.

Due to the novel treatment, and the emphasis laid on a knowledge of the fundamental physical characters of gems, it is believed that this book, well termed a text book, will fulfill its purpose of giving a basic knowledge of gem technology. Characterized by directness, and simplicity of description, the book will appeal especially to those without previous scientific training, and those limited by time—who must read as they run.

The use of expensive apparatus is avoided, all that is necessary being a specific gravity bottle, balance and a dichroscope. This is made possible by the simplicity of the tests, as illustrated by the method of determining if a mineral is doubly refracting where this is not apparent to the eye, or with a lens, by the doubling of the lines of the facets, as is the case with olivine, zircon, sphene, and epidote. The stone is exposed to direct sunlight, and the light reflected onto a white card; or the light may be passed thru the stone onto a card; if the gem is doubly refracting double images will appear of the facets, and the amount of refraction may be roughly determined by the relative displacement of the images, slight in aquamarine, and wide in zircon.

The text is divided into lessons describing the physical characters of stones: refraction, absorption, dichroism, specific gravity, luster, reflection, hardness,

dispersion, and color; emphasis being laid on specific distinctions; the whole described in untechnical language, with tables of the gems and their properties.

Following this come a number of lessons on the distinction of "scientific" from natural stones; how to test an unknown gem; the suitability of the gems for various types of jewelry; the mineral species to which gems belong; the naming of precious stones; how rough stones are cut; forms given to precious stones; imitations; artificial alteration of the color of precious stones; pearls: natural, cultured, and imitations; the use of the balance, and the unit of weight; tariff laws; an annotated bibliography and an index. S. G. G.

## NOTES AND NEWS

On Saturday, December 21, the Anderson Galleries, of New York City, disposed by auction of a collection of minerals, numbering about 2,000 specimens, made by the late Thomas E. H. Curtis, of Plainfield, N. J. Mr. George S. Scott has kindly sent us the following account of this sale: "The collection was a large assortment of miscellaneous stuff, gathered in a haphazard manner, and in the whole collection there were probably less than one hundred specimens that were worth while. There may have been a couple of hundred more that were interesting. There were thirty or more bidders at the sale. If there had been sixty, the Curtis sale might have gone into history as the most successful sale of mineral specimens of the age. The bidding was robust, whether the specimen was good, fairly so or poor. Some claimed to have secured bargains, but there were very few bargains indeed in the better grade specimens, as the bidding on these got almost beyond control. The best purchase of the collection was a beautiful pyromorphite from Ems, bought by Mr. Whitlock for the American Museum of Natural History. Another worthwhile specimen was a pyrargyrite from Guanajuato, which was bought by Mr. English. A rhodochrosite and proustite represented item 331, on the Catalog list, as two vanadinites (from nowhere). The rhodochrosite was one of the Colorado kind, with large showy rhombohedrons. The proustite was a gem, a beautiful transparent crystal from Chili. The writer purchased these, also a stolzite from Broken Hill. The most active bidding of the sale was on some showy chalcotrichites, which brought double their actual specimen value. The following well-known mineralogists took part in the sale: F. J. Allen, G. E. Ashby, E. C. Dean, W. H. Broadwell, G. L. English, H. F. Gardner, J. C. Grenzi, C. W. Hoadley, J. Holzmann, O. T. Lee, W. G. Levison, J. G. Manchester, E. A. Maynard, E. Sampson, G. S. Scott, G. S. Stanton, J. Ulrich, J. P. Wintringham, and H. J. Young."

One of the positions mentioned in the January number of this magazine, which was that for a crystallographer with the Du Pont de Nemours Co., Wilmington, Del., has been filled by the appointment of Dr. Alfred C. Hawkins, recently Sergeant, First Class, in the Meteorological Section, Signal Corps, U. S. Army, the author of several contributions to this magazine. Other positions are still open.

Thru a misunderstanding the frontispiece of the January number was labeled at the bottom instead of at the side. The views will be found to stand out better if viewed with what is now the right-hand side made the bottom.