

Dr. Norman L. Bowen has resigned from the Geophysical Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution to accept the Professorship of Mineralogy in Queens University, Kingston, Canada.

At the meeting of the Geological Society of America in Baltimore, December 27-28, 1918, the question of the formation of a Mineralogical Society of America was informally discussed by mineralogists present. A full report of the conclusions reached will be published later. Several papers of mineralogic interest were presented at the meeting.

All measurements given in this magazine will hereafter be stated in metric units; authors of papers are requested to observe this, altho the equivalents in other units may be added in parentheses if desired.

PROCEEDINGS OF SOCIETIES

PHILADELPHIA MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY

Wagner Free Institute of Science, December 12, 1918

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

Mr. Samuel G. Gordon presented a communication on "*The History of Mineralogy in Pennsylvania.*" The American Philosophical Society, founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1743 devoted some attention to mineralogy, but the first mineralogical society was initiated as the "Chemical Society of Philadelphia" (1792-1809). Its chief purpose was to acquire information relative to the minerals of the United States. A standing committee of five was charged with the duty of analyzing (without charge) minerals submitted to it.¹

The earliest mineralogists were Adam Seybert (1773-1825), Thomas P. Smith (died 1802), Silvanus Godon (died 1812?), James Woodhouse (1772-1809), Gerard Troost (1776-1850), Lardner Vanuxem (1792-1848), Isaac Lea (1792-1886), William Keating (1799-1848), and Thomas Nuttall (1786-1859). Seybert was the first scientifically trained mineralogist, and Troost, who studied under Abbé Haüy, the first crystallographer in America. His early contributions to this subject have been entirely overlooked by some writers on the history of mineralogic science in America. Seybert's cabinet was the second brought to America (1795-1800), and is kept intact in the original condition, arranged according to Cleaveland's Mineralogy (1816). It is probably the oldest American collection of minerals extant.²

The Academy of Natural Sciences was instituted in 1812, with Troost as the first president. It contains the cabinets of Adam Seybert (purchased in 1812,—its first mineral collection); Silvanus Godon (1814), Thomas M'Euen

¹ This was followed in 1798 by the American Mineralogical Society, founded in New York by Samuel Latham Mitchill.

² This collection was preceded by a cabinet brought from Europe in 1794 by David Hosack, exhibited in New York, and presented to Princeton University in 1821; but the identity of this cabinet has been lost.

(1799-1873), Samuel Ashmead (d. 1864), George W. Carpenter (1802-1860), and William S. Vaux (1811-1882). The Vaux collection, one of the finest in America, is kept intact, and is on exhibition. Deposited in the Academy are the collections of the American Philosophical Society which includes the cabinets of Thomas P. Smith and James Woodhouse; and the collections of the Franklin Institute.

A later mineralogist was Henry Seybert (d. 1884), one of the most brilliant American chemists, who discovered fluorine in chondrodite and beryllium in chrysoberyl.¹

Chester County mineralogists were numerous; Joel Baily (1791-1894) who made the first Chester County collection, now at Swarthmore College, which contains also the cabinet of Joseph Leidy; Lewis White Williams, (1804-1873); William W. Jefferis, (1821-1906) whose collection is exhibited at the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh; Charles W. Pennypacker (1845-1911); S. S. Haldeman, Chickies, Lancaster County, made a collection, while Berks County was represented by John Schoenfeld.

Other Philadelphia collectors were Theodore D. Rand (1836-1903) whose collection is at Bryn Mawr College; Col. Joseph Willcox, (1829-1918). Mr. Clarence S. Bement's collection, one of the finest in America, is exhibited in the American Museum of Natural History, N. Y. Mr. George W. Fiss has undoubtedly the largest and finest microscopic collection in the world; and Mr. George Vaux, Jr., of Bryn Mawr, possesses one of the finest private collections of minerals.

The Media Institute of Science contains the collections of Lewis Palmer and of George Smith, early Delaware County collectors. The Wagner Institute museum contains the mineral collection made by William Wagner (1796-1885). Lehigh University contains the collection of Theodore W. Roepper, while the Francis Alger collection is in possession of Allegheny College at Meadville.

Scientifically, Philadelphia became a center of interest in 1870-1880, due to the analytical work of Frederick A. Genth and George Augustus Koenig, professors of chemistry and mineralogy at the University of Pennsylvania. One of Genth's collections became the property of the University, which was also enriched by the Cardeza and Clay cabinets. In 1880 the Mineralogical and Geological Section of the Academy was organized, followed by the Philadelphia Mineralogical Society in 1892.

Sketches of the lives of these men were given. Specimens from the Adam Seybert Collection, and some chemical ware of Henry Seybert were exhibited.

The paper was discussed by Doctors Burgin and Leffmann, and Messrs. Koch and Hagey. Dr. Burgin called attention to the Charles Wistar collection, preserved intact in Germantown.

Mr. Warford presented a report of the condition of the treasury. Upon motion of the treasurer, an appropriation was made to buy stationery for THE AMERICAN MINERALOGIST. The Society then adjourned to examine the exhibits.

SAMUEL G. GORDON, *Secretary*.

¹ Wells and Foote, *Am. J. Sci.* [4] 46, 265, 1918, state that Seybert also discovered boric acid in tourmaline, but this should be credited to Lampadius, *Gilbert's Annalen*, 37, 363, 1818, four years prior to Seybert.