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THE FUTURE OF MINERALOGY IN AMERICA¹

INTRODUCTION

THIS meeting is the culmination of repeated efforts extending over a period of more than one hundred years to band the mineralogists of America together and to maintain a journal devoted primarily to mineralogy and cognate sciences. Although our colleagues in England and France organized over forty years ago, in 1876 and 1878, respectively, we were unable to do so until a year ago. The past year has been primarily one of adjustment and development and of bringing the need of such an organization more strongly to the attention of those interested. It has also been a period during which our ideas of what the society should be have become somewhat clarified. The progress made has been most gratifying. We are now a going concern with some very tangible assets, and there are already strong assurances of a most influential future. As retiring president, I desire to discuss briefly some of the important phases in the development of mineralogy in America, and the various efforts made to organize a national society, and to found a journal; also to interpret, if possible, the function of mineralogy in our present-day educational and scientific programs and to indicate some probable lines of future development.

THE PERIOD OF EARLY DEVELOPMENT, 1785-1850

The earliest published papers dealing with the mineralogy of America were apparently those which appeared in the *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, in 1785. These were followed two years later by

¹ Address of the retiring president of the Mineralogical Society of America, Chicago, December 29, 1920.