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In 1880, the author of this little Manual published an extended series of Tables for the determination of all known minerals. In these Tables, an attempt was made to place together, as a rule, minerals of related composition only. During the four years that have elapsed since the publication of the Tables in question, the advantages of this plan have been fully proved in the author's laboratory by students of sufficiently advanced standing to work out readily the distinctive characters on which the Tables are based. But experience has also shown that something of a less elaborate description would be better adapted to the requirements of students just entering on the study of minerals. Hence, the publication of these simplified Tables, by which—as regards substances of ordinary occurrence—the name and nature of any mineral may be very easily and rapidly ascertained. All that is required for this purpose is a very slight acquaintance with mineral terminology, and a few hours' preliminary practice in the use of the blowpipe.

As regards general interest and frequency of occurrence, minerals may be referred to four series. To the first belong all minerals of common occurrence; to the second, minerals of more or less rare occurrence but of economic value or otherwise of importance; to the third, exceptionally occurring and comparatively unimportant minerals; and to the fourth, obscurely known and ill-defined or doubtful species. These Tables include all representatives of the first and second series, and consequently all minerals that are likely to come under the observation of the general student or practical explorer.

In determinative tables of this kind, a sub-division into two leading sections, based on the lustre or aspect of the substance, is commonly adopted; but, beyond this, the present Tables are entirely distinct in their construction from those of the larger work referred to above, and also from all other determinative tables hitherto published.—E. J. C.

School of Practical Science, Toronto,
February 17, 1884.