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I. THE CLASSIFICATION OF NATURAL SILICATES. \*

(Abstract.)

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The author in this paper reviewed the history of mineralogy, and noticed the method of classification of mineral species based solely on physical characters, which makes mineralogy a division of natural history. He then proceeded to consider the method of those who have arranged mineral species in accordance with the results of chemical analysis, while disregarding or giving a subordinate place to physical characters. A true philosophy, it was contended, should keep in view both of these methods: the chemical cannot be separated from the physical study of species, and a thorough knowledge of the chemical constitution of these will show that their physical characters are intimately related thereto, and will lead to a natural system in mineralogy.

The author in attempting the elaboration of such a system, the importance of which is evident, begins by showing in the present paper its application to natural silicates. These he regards as polysilicates of high equivalent weight, in accordance with the view

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\* The paper of which this is an abstract was presented to the National Academy of Sciences at Washington, April 23, and to the Royal Society of Canada at Ottawa, May 27, 1885. It will be published at length in the Transactions of the last named Society for 1885.