

laudable efforts of a few gentlemen," he says, "to excite some taste for mineralogy, so little had been effected in forming collections, in kindling curiosity and diffusing information, that only fifteen years since (1803), it was a matter of extreme difficulty to obtain among ourselves even the names of the most common stones and minerals; and one might inquire earnestly and long before he could find any one to identify even quartz, feldspar or hornblende among the simple minerals, or granite, porphyry or trap among the rocks. We speak from experience, and well remember with what impatient, but almost despairing curiosity we eyed the bleak, naked ridges which impended over the valleys and plains that were the scenes of our youthful excursions. In vain did we doubt that the glittering spangles of mica, and the still more alluring brilliancy of pyrites, gave assurance of the existence of the precious metals in those substances, or that the cutting of glass by the garnet and by quartz proved that these minerals were the diamond; but if they were not precious metals, and if they were not diamonds, we in vain inquired of our companions, and even of our teachers, what they were." Such, then, was the state of knowledge in mineralogy here at the commencement of the century. A few American minerals, collected by travellers from time to time, had before this been taken to Europe for identification, but among these were discovered only two minerals new to science. The Moravian missionaries found at St. Paul, in Labrador, the beautiful species of feldspar called by Werner *Labradorstein*, which in more modern times we know under the name of *Labradorite*. Klaporth, the most eminent analytical chemist of his time, discovered that the so-called fibrous barytes from Pennsylvania was the sulphate of the then newly discovered earth strontia. He thus, for the first time, identified the mineral species *celestite* which was subsequently found in various localities in Europe. Although little had been accomplished in America previous to 1800, the first quarter of the new century was destined to show great development here in the study of mineralogy. During the early years of this quarter several collections of European minerals were brought to this country by American gentlemen, who had availed themselves during a residence in Europe of the best opportunities for acquiring a knowledge of the science from the great masters of the subject in Germany and France. About this time also several colleges in the country had instituted chairs of chemistry and mineralogy, and a commence-