

the more thoughtful minds before it was developed into a system by Bacon. Even as far back as the latter half of the sixteenth century, the method of practical research, as opposed to mere book-knowledge and theory, had been advocated even for the investigation of the rocky part of the earth. It was proclaimed, in no uncertain voice, by the learned and versatile Dane, Peter Severinus, who counselled his readers thus: "Go, my sons, sell your lands, your houses, your garments and your jewelry; burn up your books. On the other hand, buy yourselves stout shoes, get away to the mountains, search the valleys, the deserts, the shores of the sea, and the deepest recesses of the earth; mark well the distinctions between animals, the differences among plants, the various kinds of minerals, the properties and mode of origin of everything that exists. Be not ashamed to learn by heart the astronomy and terrestrial philosophy of the peasantry. Lastly, purchase coals, build furnaces, watch and experiment without wearying. In this way, and no other, will you arrive at a knowledge of things and of their properties."¹ The modern spirit of investigation in natural science could not be more clearly or cogently enforced than it was by this professor of literature and poetry, of meteorology and of medicine, in the year 1571.²

¹ Petrus Severinus, *Idea Medecinae Philosophicae*, 1571, p. 73, cap. vii. De principiis corporum (cited by D'Aubuisson).

² It is curious to find a parallel passage to this extract written a hundred years later by Robert Hooke. He declared that, in spite of all the knowledge that had been acquired respecting the