

peculiarities of Symmetry, such, for instance, as that of the *plagihedral* faces of quartz, and other minerals.

The introduction of an arrangement of crystalline forms into systems, according to their degree of symmetry, was a step which was rather founded on a distinct and comprehensive perception of mathematical relations, than on an acquaintance with experimental facts, beyond what earlier mineralogists had possessed. This arrangement was, however, remarkably confirmed by some of the properties of minerals which attracted notice about the time now spoken of, as we shall see in the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER V.

### RECEPTION AND CONFIRMATION OF THE DISTINCTION OF SYSTEMS OF CRYSTALLIZATION.

**D**IFFUSION OF THE DISTINCTION OF SYSTEMS.—The distinction of systems of crystallization was so far founded on obviously true views, that it was speedily adopted by most mineralogists. I need not dwell on the steps by which this took place. Mr. Haidinger's translation of Mohs was a principal occasion of its introduction in England. As an indication of dates, bearing on this subject, perhaps I may be allowed to notice, that there appeared in the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1825, *A General Method of Calculating the Angles of Crystals*, which I had written, and in which I referred only to Häüy's views; but that in 1826,<sup>1</sup> I published a *Memoir On the Classification of Crystalline Combinations*, founded on the methods of Weiss and Mohs, especially the latter; with which I had in the mean time become acquainted, and which appeared to me to contain their own evidence and recommendation. General methods, such as was attempted in the *Memoir* just quoted, are part of that process in the history of sciences, by which, when the principles are once established, the mathematical operation of deducing their consequences is made more and more general and symmetrical: which we have seen already exemplified in the history of celestial mechanics after the time of Newton. It does not enter into our plan, to dwell upon the various steps in this way

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<sup>1</sup> *Camb. Trans.* vol. ii. p. 391.