

explain how erroneous and unphilosophical such an opinion is. But we may notice that while such a temper prevails among us, our place in this science can never be found in advance of that position which we are now considering as exemplified in the period of Werner and Haüy. So long as we entertain such views respecting the objects of Mineralogy, we can have no share in the fortunes of the succeeding period of its history, to which I now proceed.

CHAPTER IX.

ATTEMPTS AT THE REFORM OF MINERALOGICAL SYSTEMS.—SEPARATION OF THE CHEMICAL AND NATURAL HISTORY METHODS.

Sect. 1.—Natural History System of Mohs.

THE chemical principle of classification, if pursued at random, as in the cases just spoken of, leads to results at which a philosophical spirit revolts; it separates widely substances which are not distinguishable; joins together bodies the most dissimilar; and in hardly any instance does it bring any truth into view. The vices of classifications like that of Haüy could not long be concealed; but even before time had exposed the weakness of his system, Haüy himself had pointed out, clearly and without reserve,¹ that a chemical system is only one side of the subject, and supposes, as its counterpart, a science of external characters. In the mean time, the Wernerians were becoming more and more in love with the form which they had given to such a science. Indeed, the expertness which Werner and his scholars acquired in the use of external characters, justified some partiality for them. It is related of him,² that, by looking at a piece of iron-ore, and poising it in his hand, he was able to tell, almost precisely, the proportion of pure metal which it contained. And in the last year of his life,³ he had marked out, as the employment of the ensuing winter, the study of the system of Berzelius, with a view to find out the laws of combination as disclosed by external characters. In the same spirit, his pupil Breit-

¹ See his *Disc. Prél.*

² Frisch. *Werner's Leben*, p. 78.

³ Frisch. 3.