limited. Quartz, orthoclase, felspar, mica, hornblende, leucite, nepheline, garnet, and all hydrous silicates are absent, whereas very few of the minerals which have been recognised in meteorites are not known in the earth.

In the latter part of this century, thin sections of meteorites have been examined microscopically, and it has been shown that there is more structural difference between the terrestrial and meteoric rock than had been supposed from macroscopic examination. Meteorites are in many cases composed of radiating spherical bodies (chondrites) or irregular fragments; the rent character, the paucity of steam vesicles, and the absence of liquid contents give to microscopic slides of meteorites an unfamiliar appearance, and seem to indicate that they have taken origin independently of the action of water and vapour.

The classification of meteorites is a very vexed question, some authorities placing more value upon chemical and mineralogical distinctions, and others upon structural distinctions. Partsch in 1843 distinguished two main groups-stone meteorites and iron meteorites. Reichenbach rejected these groups as too broad, and classified meteorites in nine groups according to physical character, especially the colour and the mineral contents. Gustav Rose, who was Professor of Mineralogy in Berlin University, supported the earlier classification of Partsch, but arranged sub-groups upon a mineralogical basis. Daubrée, the French physicist, in 1867 distinguished meteorites containing iron or Siderites, from Asiderites or meteorites without iron, and sub-divided these again. Meunier accepted Daubrée's main groups, but erected a very large number of sub-groups. In England, the meteorites represented in the Collection of the British Museum were arranged in three groups according to Story-Maskelyne's classification in 1870-71: (1) Siderites (meteoric iron), (2) Siderolites (meteoric stones containing iron), and (3) Aerolites (meteoric stones without iron).

The study of meteorites, as Daubrée remarks, touches several of the fundamental questions in the history of the universe. They are the only specimens of non-terrestrial or cosmic bodies which we have an opportunity of investigating, and which can yield an insight into the constitution of those masses occupying the vault of heaven. The number of accredited falls of meteorites does not exceed a thousand, and