

by the officials at Freiberg, and before he had been long there he was offered a place in the Saxon Corps of Mines. He was not unwilling to accept the appointment, but determined first of all to prosecute a wider range of study for a few years at the University of Leipzig.

Accordingly, after some two years spent in mining pursuits, Werner went to Leipzig in the spring of the year 1771, and for the next two years devoted himself almost entirely to the study of law. In his third and last year at the University, he seems to have taken up a miscellaneous series of subjects, especially modern languages, but he settled down at last to the prosecution of his first love—mineralogy; and with such industry and enthusiasm did he pursue his study, that while in his twenty-fifth year, and still a “student of the science and law of mining,” he published his first essay—a little duodecimo of 300 pages, on the external characters of minerals.¹ We can imagine the astonishment and delight of the lovers of mineralogy when they first got hold of this treatise, and found there, instead of the miscellaneous, isolated, and heterogeneous observations to which they were accustomed, an admirably ordered method and a clear marshalling and co-ordination of facts, such as had never before been seen in mineralogical literature.

On leaving the University of Leipzig, Werner went back to his home by the Queiss. It seemed as though the authorities at Freiberg, who at one time were so

¹ “Von den äusserlichen Kennzeichen der Fossilien, abgefasst von Abraham Gottlob Werner, Der Bergwerks-Wissenschaften und Rechte Beflissenen,” Leipzig, 1774.