

**CATALOGUE OF A SERIES  
OF SPECIMENS IN  
THE BRITISH MUSEUM  
(NATURAL HISTORY)**

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Catalogue of a Series of Specimens in the British Museum (Natural History) by John Ruskin

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**JOHN RUSKIN**

**CATALOGUE OF A SERIES  
OF SPECIMENS IN  
THE BRITISH MUSEUM  
(NATURAL HISTORY)**



CATALOGUE  
OF SELECTED EXAMPLES  
OF  
NATIVE SILICA.



CATALOGUE  
OF  
A SERIES OF SPECIMENS  
IN THE  
*BRITISH MUSEUM (NATURAL HISTORY)*  
ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE MORE COMMON FORMS OF  
NATIVE SILICA.

ARRANGED AND DESCRIBED BY  
JOHN RUSKIN, F.G.S.,  
HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, HONORARY FELLOW OF CORPUS CHRISTI  
COLLEGE, AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART, OXFORD.

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1884.

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## P R E F A C E .

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THIS series of specimens has been selected to illustrate the more frequent varieties of Native Silica. One of these, quartz, is the most common of minerals; it is almost the only component of most gravels, sands, and sandstones, while it enters largely into the composition of many of the metamorphic schists and crystalline rocks: others, as flint and jasper, though not so plentiful, are still important constituents of the earth's crust; while chalcedony, the principal substance of agates, from early periods has been an important material in the arts. These varieties are in most works on mineralogy treated as accidental conditions of one and the

same substance. But they are in this carefully chosen series exhibited in their essential distinctions, and their gradated phases of connecting state ; and they may be studied in these generally occurring forms with the greater facility, because all those siliceous minerals have been excluded which appear to have been produced by narrowly local circumstances. Thus chalcedony involved in bitumen found in Auvergne, and nearly all the forms of opal, including hyalite and cacholong, must be looked for in their proper places in the great gallery ; few minerals being shown in this selected series but those which, though here seen in their finest conditions, are in their less striking forms of frequent occurrence, and of extreme importance in the structure and economy of the world.

The authorities of the Museum are not responsible for any speculative statement or suggestion made in the following catalogue, but the description of each specimen has been submitted for modification or correction, and may, therefore, be received

with perfect confidence ; while, on my own part, the attention which I have given to this department of mineralogy for upwards of fifty years may, I think, justify me in claiming the reader's attention to statements which may at first seem to him, on the mere evidence presented in this single series, daring, or even indefensible. He may, at least, rest assured that they are in no case prompted by the desire of gaining credit for originality ; my conviction being that there is nothing in my views on the subject of siliceous construction which may not be found already formalized by mineralogists of the last century.

A considerable number of the specimens here described have been presented to the Museum out of my own chosen examples at Brantwood (or, in some instances, directly purchased by me for this series), in order to fill gaps in its order which could not be supplied from the National collection without loss to the beauty and completeness of the series in the great gallery. The pieces numbered 7, 20, 21, 24, 28, 38, 52,