PRINCIPLES OF CHEMICAL GEOLOGY: A REVIEW OF THE APPLICATION OF THE EQUILIBRIUM THEORY TO GEOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

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PREFACE

THE rapid progress of physical chemistry in recent years, especially in the conception of the conditions of equilibrium in solutions, has not failed to attract the attention of workers in the field of chemical geology. The importance of this branch of research is being almost daily emphasized by new developments, which promise to throw a much-needed light upon certain problems with which the geologist is confronted. At the same time, in this country, geologists have been slow to take up this line of research, possibly because a great deal of the work that has been done has been buried in the pages of foreign literature.

In the following pages I have endeavoured to indicate, as briefly as the subject permits, the main points of contact between recent chemical and physical researches and the various problems of geological chemistry.

To this end I have brought together a number of geological facts and problems which seem to fall under certain recognized principles of physical chemistry.

One of the main objects which I have endeavoured to keep in view has been to show that in all these

problems the key to the solution lies in the determination of the conditions of equilibrium.

The subject is so large that I have been compelled to be content in many cases with a bare allusion to work of the highest importance. I have also sacrificed to brevity a good deal of explanatory detail, the object being rather to stimulate interest in this branch of geology than to provide a complete exposition of the subject.

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