

## FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

COMMUNICATED BY COUNT MARSCHALL.

*From the Proceedings of the Imperial Academy of Sciences, Vienna,  
October, 1858.*

1.—*Parasitic Algæ in Shells.*

Certain channels met with in the shells of several Acephalous and Gasteropod mollusca have generally been considered to be nutritive channels, and to stand in organic connection with the pores of these shells. Professor Wedl after close examination of a number of recent and fossil specimens, has proved them to be accidental deteriorations of the shells, owing their origin to parasitic algæ of most delicate structure. In the recent specimens these channels stand in communication with exiguous cavities, including pedunculated cellules, filling up the channels themselves, and emitting a great number of lateral ramifications. The presence of Amylum in the nucleus, and in the cellules connected with it, manifests itself by the vivid brown tints they assume when brought in contact with diluted tincture of Iodine. The algæ themselves have of course ceased to exist in fossil specimens, but the characters of the channels in them, their irregular distribution, their connection with minute cavities, &c., are such that the identity of origin with those observed in living individuals can hardly be doubted. As far as investigations have hitherto proceeded, it may be inferred that *fresh-water* shells suffer more from these vegetable parasites than those of marine species.

2.—*Native Platina.*

Prince B. Demidoff has lately presented to the Imperial Mineralogical Museum a pepite of native Platina, weighing  $11\frac{1}{4}$  lbs., found in his mines of Nishney Tagilsk, together with other large masses of the same metal, of which the most considerable have been very liberally offered by the noble owner to the museums of Berlin and St. Petersburg. The Vienna pepite measures 5 inches in length, 4 inches in breadth, and 3 inches in height. Its surface is covered with impressions similar to those on several pepites of native gold, indicating its origin within a fissure, and bearing some analogy (as the late P. Partch had remarked long ago) with the superficial impressions peculiar to meteoric iron. The impressions are partly filled with chromate of iron, which is generally associated with native Platina.