SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE ON METEORITIC IRON PHOSPHIDE

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SINCE the publication of the previous note on iron phosphide in the Ruff's Mountain meteorite,[1] Dr. Merrill has worked up more of this material, and obtained an additional crystal possessing fairly well developed faces, which was submitted to the writer for examination. It proved to show the forms previously observed, 100, 110, and 111, and in addition the base, 001, and a form 362, represented by two well-marked tho irregular faces. The following additions to the angle-table (page 80) should accordingly be made:

Preceding No. 1; in the successive columns:

0, *c*, 001, 1, 1, blank, 0°00′, blank, 0°00′.

Following No. 3, similarly:

4, *x*, 362, 1, 2, 26°00′ ± 60′, 49°00′ ± 60′, 26°34′, 49°15′.

In addition to the corrections previously noted, on page 81 after the word class may be added: The class may well be scalenohedral or bisphenoidal.

SIDERITE NODULES—INFORMATION WANTED

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AMONG the accumulations of our older museums are not infrequently to be found peculiar forms, suggestive, so far as shape is concerned, of nothing more than the excretions of small animals like the domestic fowls. They are somewhat rugose and cracked on the outer surface, twisted and convoluted, usually not more than an inch or two in length, tapering to one or both ends and of a gray color, tho often oxidized to red or brown on the outside. Such are labelled sometimes simply "coprolites" or, in the case of one in the Shepard collection, "*Siderite album groecum from the tortoise.*" Within the past few years there has been received at the National Museum from Lewis County, Washington, specimens of precisely similar nature but much larger, sundry individuals weighing a pound or more and having such suggestive

[1] *Am. Min.*, **2**, (6), 80–81, June, 1917; corrections, **2**, (12), ii, Dec., 1917.

form that it has not been found advisable to display them in the exhibition cases. Recalling the identification of the smaller forms in the old collection, these were tested and found to consist almost entirely of carbonate of iron (siderite) without a trace of phosphoric acid. Under the microscope in thin section they show no concretionary or other structure than densely cryptocrystalline.

The question is: how do these peculiar forms occur and what is their origin? Their composition is certainly not what would be expected of coprolites. Do any readers of this magazine have information on the subject?

ABSTRACTS OF MINERALOGIC LITERATURE

ORIGIN OF FLINTS. FREDK. CHAPMAN. National Museum, Melbourne. *Nature*, No. 2501, 85, 1917.

Black flints with the characteristic white coating, indistinguishable from the English flints, occur in nodular and tabular form, with chalky Miocene limestone, in South Australia and Victoria. The flints are often crowded with silicified remains of organisms, representing a more or less complete replacement of chalky ooze. Below these Tertiary flint layers is an impervious bed, a factor which induced the deposition of diffused silica. S. G. C

GENESIS OF ASBESTOS AND ASBESTIFORM MINERALS. Discussion by J. C. BRANNER, J. A. DRESSER, R. P. D. GRAHAM, and G. P. MERRILL. *Bull. Am. Inst. Mining Eng.*, **1917**, 397–405.

Many objections to the conclusions of Taber (abstd. in *Am. Min.*, **2**, 69, May, 1917) are raised. In particular it is pointed out that vein-cavities are more likely due to shrinkage than to expansion, that instead of fibrous minerals pushing the walls apart it is more likely that they are replacements of the wall rock, and that serpentine is a deep-seated rather than superficially-formed mineral. E. T. W.

SPECTROGRAPHIC STUDY OF PORTUGUESE URANIUM AND ZIRCONIUM MINERALS. A. PEREIRA-FORJAZ. *Compt. rend.*, **164**, 102–103, 1917.

The minerals noted are autunite, torbernite, carnotite, walpurgite, troegerite, zeunerite, and zircon. On spectroscopic examination many elements were found in addition to those required by the formulas. E. T. W.

THE COLORS OF MOTHER-OF-PEARL. A. H. PFUND. *J. Franklin Inst.*, **183**, 453–464, 1917.

The colors are found to be due diffraction of light by edges of laminas and interference of light by reflection from parallel laminas. The thickness of the laminas ranges from 0.4 to 0.6 microns. E. T. W.