

found that the latter by distillation gave great quantities of oils identical with those from petroleum.

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The (Canadian) wells occur along the line of a low broad anticlinal axis which runs nearly east and west through the western peninsula of Canada, and brings to the surface in Enniskillen the shales and limestones of the Hamilton group, which are there covered with a few feet of clay. The oil doubtless rises from the Corniferous limestone, which as we have seen contains petroleum; this being lighter than the water which permeates at the same time the porous strata, rises to the higher portion of the formation, which is the crest of the anticlinal axis, where the petroleum of a considerable area accumulates and slowly finds its way to the surface through vertical fissures in the overlying Hamilton shales, giving rise to the oil springs of the region. The oil is met with at various depths; in some cases an abundant supply is obtained at forty feet, while near by it is only met with at three or four times that depth, and in sometimes only in small quantities. Everything points to the existence of separate fissures communicating with a deep-seated source. At Kelly's well however, it would appear that a reservoir has been formed much nearer the surface, where in a bed of gravel and boulders, underlying the superficial clays, the oil rising from the rocks beneath has accumulated. The inflammable gas which issues from the wells is not necessarily connected with the petroleum, inasmuch as it is an almost

constant product of the decomposition of organic matters, and is copiously evolved from rocks which are destitute of bitumen. It is similar to the gas of marshes and to the fire damp of coal mines. The question of the extent of the supply of petroleum is not easily answered; the oil now being wrought is the accumulated drainings of ages, concentrated along certain lines of elevation, and the experience of other regions has shown that the sources are sooner or later exhausted; but though the springs of Agrigentum, like those of Derbyshire, have nearly ceased to flow, those of Burmah and Persia still furnish, as they have for ages past, immense quantities of oil; nothing but experience can tell us the richness of the subterranean reservoirs. It is not probable that the Devonian limestone is equally rich in petroleum throughout its whole distribution, but the exposures of it in the west are too few to enable us as yet to say in what portions the petroleum predominates; as however this rock underlies more than one-half of the western peninsula, we may look for petroleum springs much farther east than Enniskillen. A well yielding considerable quantities of petroleum is said to occur in the township of Dereham, about a quarter of a mile S. W. of Tilsonburg, we may reasonably expect to find others along the line of the anticlinal, or of the folds which are subordinate to it.*

* [See the June Number of the Journal of the Board of Arts and Manufactures for a description of the Oil Districts in Enniskillen.—*Error, Jour. of Arts and Man.*]

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