

Then, since animal organisms were never entombed in the rocks, and since vegetable life was quite insufficient before the Carboniferous Age, how can the organic theories of origin be adduced to explain all the oil and gas found below the carboniferous, and that means all the enormous quantities of oil and gas of the Lower Silurian limestone of Ohio and Indiana, and it also means almost all of the very large quantities of oil and gas developed in the last 40 years along the Appalachian belt which has been found under the coal in the lower and Sub-Carboniferous and in the Devonian and Silurian; and, much more in other fields. The fact often cited by the numerous exponents of the organic theories, as in the above quotation of the late Professor Edward Orton, that, by destructive distillation, petroleum and gas can be obtained from coal or carbonaceous matter, and also from fish oil, lard oil or linseed oil, etc.(1), will not serve here at all, for not only there was too little to distill in the rocks prior to the Carboniferous, but, what little there was, was not distilled and is to be found there to-day, undistilled, as the Paleozoic oil rocks of the oil regions of North America have, without the shadow of a doubt, remained unaffected by metamorphic agencies, and have never been subjected to the heat necessary to effect this distillation of organic matter. Nor have the rocks of the Texas section, and yet we have seen that petroleum, gas and asphalt are found in them from the Ordovician to the Quaternary. This destructive distillation of carbonaceous matter (and, we repeat, there is no other organic matter entombed in the sedimentary rocks but carbonaceous matter) could not possibly take place without leaving a residue of coke and of ash, and not only these residues have never been found under the oil and gas fields, but we know for certain that they do not exist.

In fact, if this distillation had taken place, there would be no coal fields anywhere as they would all have been changed into coke-beds.

We see, therefore, to what absurd deductions we are led by the organic theories of origin of petroleum, viz., 1st. Abundance of vegetable life before the Carboniferous. 2nd. No coal anywhere on the globe.

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(1) Prof. E. Orton, Bull. Geol. Soc. of Am., Vol. 9, pp. 88-89.