AN INCLUSION OF PETROLEUM IN A FOSSIL CAST

Near the west edge of Bloomington, Indiana, at a point where the St. Louis limestone (Mitchell limestone of Indiana authors) is being quarried, there are many casts of gastropods which contain petroleum. The oil appears to be of fairly high gravity and has a green color. The fossil casts are about one-half inch in diameter and there are a few drops of oil in nearly every one. In some cases the oil is dispersed from the cast to the surrounding rock where it is most porous. The oil is believed to be indigenous to the fossil, as it does not appear to have come from any other source.

The St. Louis formation in this locality is a close-grained, hard, light-gray limestone of Mississippian (Meramecian) age about 200 feet thick. The basal St. Louis contains "showings" of oil in a number of localities in southern Indiana, though none of them are of such significant interest as this.

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AN AID TO THE STUDY OF FORAMINIFERA

In the study of Foraminifera, one of the tasks confronting the investigator involves the problem of isolating the various species discovered and filing them away for future reference. Various methods have been developed that range from the placing of the fossils loosely in a "depressed" slide to attaching each individual to the end of a needle and sealing the needle in a cell formed by boring a hole in a piece of wood. The first and simplest method is rather unsatisfactory from many standpoints, the two main objections being: (a) the bottom of the "depressed" slide is not flat, but concave, and (b) but one cell occurs on each slide. The complicated construction and the time-consuming effort involved in attaching a tiny foram to the point of a needle form the principal objections to the second method of mounting.

During a recent study of Foraminifera at the University of Chicago, Mr. A. W. Slocom and the writer devised a slide that is exceedingly simple and remarkably efficient in several ways.