



Fig. 89. Two Oil Wells.
a. A blowing well. b. A flowing well.

tinue, however, until the cavity is exhausted of its oil, after which pumping will be of no avail. If the confined gas attains its equilibrium before the oil has been completely forced from the cavity, it is evident that the remainder must be obtained by pumping. There is no cavity so large, however, as not to be destined to ultimate exhaustion. Every oil well, of whatever class, is destined to abandonment. It is true that Nature is constantly at work replenishing the exhausted reservoirs, but her accumulations are slow. Her working days are centuries.

Intermittent wells appear to act in some cases precisely after the manner of intermittent springs. More frequently, however, it is manifest that the combined action of gas and oil produces the phenomenon. In boring a well, suppose a stream of gas is struck one hundred feet from the surface of the rock, and a small stream of oil twenty feet below the gas. The entrance of oil fills twen-