

ting each other for the largest share of their master's allowance.

At first it was generally supposed that one locality was as likely as another to yield the oleaginous fluid, and experiments innumerable were instituted wherever men could be found whom the infectious fever had reached. We now know that not one neighborhood in a thousand affords the geological conditions requisite to success. Another precipitate and erroneous conclusion was that which assumed the surface configuration of the earth to be the only essential condition of oil accumulation. Wherever a region could be found with a physical geography like that of Venango County—wherever a creek like Oil Creek had scored a country underlaid by sandstone like Northwestern Pennsylvania—there might have been seen the men whose experienced olfactories were employed to test the odor of every bog, and stain, and film which prying eyes could bring to light. Especially if such a creek were bordered by a flat walled in by rocky bluffs—but most especially if such a flat could be found at the fork of two streams, environed by rocks and hills of Pennsylvania sandstone, were the “oil-smellers” in high ecstasies. Happy the squatter whose steep and rugged hill-sides and narrow intervalles afforded these first-class evidences of “productive property.” I know of many an instance in which his land was tripled in market value by the magic touch of the magician of the hazel wand. The same kind of sandstone was essential; and it is marvelous that Nature had so disposed it that the oil-seeker could in every instance detect also the “first,” “second,” and “third” sandstones after the Venango style. No matter upon what formation the exploration might be progressing—perhaps a thousand feet below or above the geological horizon of Venango County—these oil-hunters, who had a wisdom above geology, could infal-