

ty feet of the hole, and begins to submerge the fissure at which the gas is escaping. The gas forces its way through the oil with a sputtering sound, bubble after bubble rising to the surface. As the oil ascends, the gas makes louder and louder complaints, till finally, summoning all its accumulated energies, it hoists the superincumbent column of oil to the surface, and pours it out in a stream of a few seconds' duration. The flow then ceases, and the same operation begins to be repeated. After a minute or more of renewed grumbling and sputtering, the pent-up gas again relieves itself, and thus the work continues. The same results would ensue if oil and gas found entrance at the same fissure, or even if the gas were admitted at any distance beneath the entrance of a small supply of oil.

The amount of oil that has been ejected from certain wells is marvelous to relate. Though Western Pennsylvania has produced numerous flowing wells of wonderful capacity, there is no quarter of the world where the production has attained such prodigious dimensions as in 1862 upon Oil Creek, in the township of Enniskillen, Ontario. The first flowing well was struck there January 11, 1862, and before October not less than thirty-five wells had commenced to drain a store-house which provident Nature had occupied untold thousands of years in filling for the uses—not for the amusement—of man. There was no use for the oil at that time. The price had fallen to ten cents per barrel. The unsophisticated settlers of that wild and wooded region seemed inspired by an infatuation. Without an object save the gratification of their curiosity at the unwonted sight of a combustible fluid pouring out of the bosom of the earth, they seemed to vie with each other in plying their hastily and rudely erected “spring-poles” to work the drill that was almost sure to burst, at the depth of a hundred feet, into a prison of petroleum. Some of these wells