REMOVAL OF BUBBLES FROM OLD THIN-SECTIONS OF ROCKS

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During a recent examination of a number of thin-sections of sedimentary rocks some were found to contain so many bubbles that the sections could not be studied effectively or photographed satisfactorily. Their removal presented a serious problem. It was impossible to melt the cement or transfer the rock-slice without losing the section because the sediments were so poorly indurated that they would "wash away" as soon as the cement was melted or moved.

Whether the bubbles developed through age or faulty technique in preparation is not known, but they were present in both Canada balsam and kollolith mounts. They occurred either above or below (or both) the rock-slice.

The following treatment was successfully used, however, in removing about ninety per cent of the bubbles—enough to save the sections.

The cover glass was taken off the section, starting with a gentle prying action at a place appearing most favorable.

Commonly the cover could be lifted off intact, made possible probably because of the abundance of bubbles and poor adherence. Then a few drops of xylol were run onto the slice and cement, and after standing a few minutes were allowed to drip off. By repeating this process several times the excess cement was dissolved and under-slice bubbles probably filled. At any rate, they disappeared. The section was laid away to dry thoroughly after which the clean cover glass was remounted using the kollolith in xylol[1] solution for that purpose and allowed to harden. Apparently the section was as good as new.

[1] Sold by Voigt and Hochgesang, Göttingen, Germany.