Foster failed to read and consequently does not cite along with the other theories advanced as to the origin of the polyradiate cestodes, the theory offered by us in the article previously cited, namely that the polyradiate cestodes do not represent distinct species or genera which necessarily originate from and in turn give rise to onchospheres with supernumerary hooks and cysticerci with an excessive number of suckers but may arise from double embryos produced by the partial *separation* of early blastomeres and not by the *fusion* of normal embryos.

In the light of a large amount of data both in the case of natural and experimentally produced twin embryos and adults of a large number of animals which shows that the individuals may be joined in various ways and degrees, our theory as to the origin of the polyradiate cestodes seems the most logical of those offered.

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## AN ORGANIC OOLITE FROM THE ORDOVICIAN

MICROSCOPIC examination of a siliceous oolite from the so-called transition bed between the Prairie du Chien dolomite and St. Croix sandstone at McGregor, Iowa, shows the oolite grains to possess undoubted organic structures of the algal type. The matrix of the oolite grains is dolomitic, and many of the original grains themselves have been partly or wholly changed to dolomite with obliteration of structure, prior to silification.

The grains range from .1 mm. to 1.13 mm. in diameter, and, when well preserved, show good concentric and radial structure in addition to the minute sinuous fibers similar to those which characterize the *Girvanella* type of calcareous algæ. These fibers have an average diameter of about .015 mm. Typically the well-preserved grains consist of an inner structureless nucleus, followed by an intermediate band showing radial structure, and this again by an outer band bearing the sinuous fibers. In some instances, however, the two outer bands grade gradually into each other without any distinct line of demarcation.

In view of the present controversy regarding the origin of oolite, it is believed that this occurrence merits more than passing notice.

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## USE OF C.G.S. UNITS

IN SCIENCE of December 24, page 904, Professor Kent has been good enough to review the various points raised in the discussion concerning the fundamental equation of dynamics. As space is limited and the discussion has been prolonged, the pedagogic difficulty in the definition of the dyne may be passed over for the present. Whether there is real difficulty in expressing certain derived units because of the use of exponents is open to argument. The cent is a serviceable unit notwithstanding that some financial transactions run up to the millions.

Of more importance however is Professor Kent's statement:

> Of course it is not difficult for *one* who is engaged constantly in the use of the C.G.S. system and who during that year has had no occasion to use the old units, to break away from them, but it is not only difficult but impossible, for a hundred million people who are constantly using the old units to break away from them.

Has he not here overlooked the fact that of the three fundamental units, centimeter, gram and second, one at least, the unit of time, *is* constantly used by more than a hundred million people; and of the three concepts, it is perhaps the most difficult. Are not most scientific men to-day in all countries using C.G.S. units and their derivatives? Is not the kilometer more widely used than the mile; and has not the kilogram come into very general use?

ALEXANDER MCADIE

## THE FIRST SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: I wish to correct a misstatement which occurred in my article on "Botany in Relation to American Agriculture," published in SCIENCE, January 7. In this article I stated that J. M. Rusk was the