obscure cleavage. This is probably olivine. Accompanying the silicate is a small amount (possibly 2 or 3 per cent) of metallic iron, which is also visible on the unbroken surfaces. The specific gravity of the whole specimen is approximately 3.4.

From this preliminary examination it is evident that the meteorite is an aerolite with a small amount of metallic iron and may possibly be classed as an olivine achondrite.

It is hoped that the specimen eventually may be acquired by the Carnegie Museum of Pittsburgh or some other public repository so that a detailed petrographic and chemical study of it may be made.

HENRY LEIGHTON
Department of Geology, University of Pittsburgh

Another Superior Pith for Free-hand Sections

Mention of a pith other than elder (*Science*, 1946, **103**, 112) prompts the writer to communicate further information in that respect.

Botanists or plant pathologists in tropical or equatorial regions will find an advantageous substitute to elder pith in cassava (*Manihot utilissima* Pohl). It is even the writer's view that the latter is decidedly superior to the former in several respects.

As in the case of *Tetrapanax papyriferum* Koch (above reference), cassava pith has no vascular bundles or hard tissues. Moreover, when used dry it cuts beautifully under the razor, leaving a sheeny surface very soft to the touch. It can be sectioned very thinly without disintegrating, as does that of elder, in like circumstances.

The reason for this can be found in comparing the texture of both piths. Dried cassava pith ready for use has, in cross-section, cells measuring 160–250 μ by 100–150 μ. The cells are larger in the center than outwards and gradually decrease in size in that direction. In longitudinal section the dimensions are contrariwise uniform and vary throughout from 25 to 60 μ. Thus, were it not that they are organized in a tissue, the cells would be lenticular in shape, whereas elder-pith cells are globular and of dimensions somewhat larger than the above.

Extraction of the pith is quite simple and offers no difficulty whatsoever. Cassava stalks should be chosen straight and when the plants are fully mature. They are cut in lengths of about 30–40 cm. A stick of the diameter of the pith is inserted at one end of the fragment. Pushing the stick forces the pith out at the other end in a contorted rod. When straightened out, the rods are left to dry and are then ready for use. The rods can be obtained of a diameter up to 1.5 cm., but they are more usually of 1–1.2 cm., which is quite sufficient for sectioning with a hand microtome.

For cutting small objects the pith can be carved, while in the hand microtome clamp, similarly to paraffin blocks.

The writer has had such satisfactory results with cassava pith that elder pith has been totally discarded.

R. L. STEYAERT
Bambesa, District Uele, Belgian Congo