

nately prospectors as a class, not only of asbestos properties but of other minerals as well, are not sufficiently well informed as to such conditions. Many are led by what they have observed in connection with mines in certain other areas, such as for instance in the case of the Cornish miner, who measures everything in a Cornish half bushel. Whereas the truth is that the profitable or economical development of minerals very frequently depends upon the presence of local phenomena or conditions which have affected certain limited areas only of the earth's surface or crust. Just what the conditions have been in the past by which the serpentine areas of Thetford and Black Lake have become so impregnated with asbestos veins of great purity and large size, while the areas a short distance to the east or west should be almost devoid of asbestiform mineral, cannot yet be conclusively settled. It is possible that the presence of the large intrusive masses of granite, which are of more recent date than the serpentine, may have had some effect in this direction, but in that case we should expect to find at Black Lake, where these granitic masses are the most abundant, the richest deposits of asbestos. On the contrary, however, it is found that the largest and most important veins are found at Thetford where the granitic masses are comparatively small and generally confined to narrow dykes; for while the serpentine of this area is, according to the best testimony on the subject, due to an alteration of igneous or dioritic rocks, we can scarcely suppose that the asbestos itself is of igneous origin. While, therefore, the reason why the Thetford areas are the most productive of fine asbestos fibre has not yet been satisfactorily ascertained, we have been able to learn some facts from the study of these Thetford mines, which are of value to guide the prospector or the scientific explorer in the search for other deposits.

Since the asbestos veins occur throughout the mass of the rock and come directly to the surface where exposed, as in the hill at Thetford mines and the great escarpment to the south east of Black Lake station, the mining of the mineral does not follow the methods which are usually employed in the working of other mines, viz., by underground slopes and levels connected with the surface by shafts, but is simply open quarry work, the entire rock being removed, broken up and the veins of asbestos separated by hand cobbing, in so far as the size of the