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CANADA'S ASBESTOS INDUSTRY.

There has just been issued by the Mines Branch of the Department of Mines, Ottawa, a 300-page illustrated monograph on the asbestos industry. This is a second and much more complete edition of a former volume issued in 1905. Mr. Fritz Cirkel is the author of both.

Under title, "Chrysotile-Asbestos—Its Occurrence, Exploitation, Milling, and Uses," Mr. Cirkel has endeavoured to review the whole Canadian industry in all its economic aspects, and to touch upon the production of the mineral in other countries.

In the first two chapters the reader is told of the general historical, physical, and geological facts relating to the Canadian mineral. The third chapter discusses the quarrying of asbestos. Here we note with approval the substitution of the word "quarrying," in place of "mining." Only one MINE of asbestos is worked. That is the well-known Bell mine at Thetford. All other workings are quarries. Mr. Cirkel predicts the continued use of both quarrying and mining, and expresses the belief that only the richer properties will employ mining methods. He asserts further, that mining will be conducted on approved rich ground. The chapter presents an interesting resume of general ore winning practice.

A very useful synopsis of milling practice is contained in the fourth chapter. Probably some of the illustrations could have been omitted with advantage. However, there is much important information given. The costs of construction, labour, and operation are set forth. Particularly noticeable is the marked diversity in the flow sheets of various mills. Standardization has not yet been nearly attained.

A conspectus of mining, milling, and marketing costs follows. Certain advantageous features of the Quebec asbestos regions are touched upon. The remarkable fact that there is no working quarry situated farther than 1½ miles from the railway line, is mentioned. As to the future of the industry, Mr. Cirkel believes that, although geographically the field is strictly limited, yet there are such enormous indicated reserves that there is little need of worrying. He quotes one instance to which we must take exception. In one Black Lake quarry, he asserts, there are 44,377,500 tons of asbestos rock in sight. Deducting 50 per cent. from this as waste rock, we have roughly 22,000,000 tons of mill rock left, or a supply sufficient to keep a plant of 4,000 tons daily capacity running for