

part of those desiring to invest is advisable at present. The productive areas of the present asbestos district are very well known to those interested in the industry, and the really valuable areas now in the market can easily be counted on the fingers of one hand.

The methods of working are being radically changed. The old system of hand labor and horse derricks which has prevailed for years, and which in the face of a limited demand answered well enough so long as the depth and extent of the quarries were small, has now become entirely impracticable in the face of large pits and the urgent necessity for large production. Steam derricks, drills, and the most improved labor-saving appliances are now being rapidly introduced. All the new companies are putting in plant of the most approved pattern, with the result of much greater economy in labor and greater capacity of output, which in this case also means largely increased profit. Further improvements are, however, urgently called for, and that very speedily, if the mining of asbestos is to be carried on at the maximum of profit. Some simple appliances by which the mineral, especially the shorter and poorer grades, can be separated without the tedious process of cobbing by hand, should be the earnest study of all interested in the business of mining, and what is at present of quite as much importance, especially in the case of those companies who have been at work for some years, is the necessity of getting rid of the huge and unsightly dumps which now cumber the good ground and limit very seriously the extension of operations as well as the profitable working of some of the pits now carried on.

There is no doubt that in the case of the Thetford mines these dumps cover some very rich ground, and the same remarks apply also to certain areas at Black Lake. The mining of asbestos at either place has not been of a highly scientific character, and during the visit of the American Institute of Mining Engineers to this section in Octo-