

The second step in top slicing is to begin at the farthest end of the drift and crosscut to both foot and hanging walls. These drifts are also 8' x 8' and are driven parallel, and one after another, until the whole area is excavated, that around the chute being taken out last. The same procedure is followed on the opposite side of the chute. The floor is then all lagged over to prevent mud, gravel, etc., from mixing with the ore when subsidence takes place. The legs of the sets are blasted out and the overlying burden is lowered, as a consequence, all over the area in question.

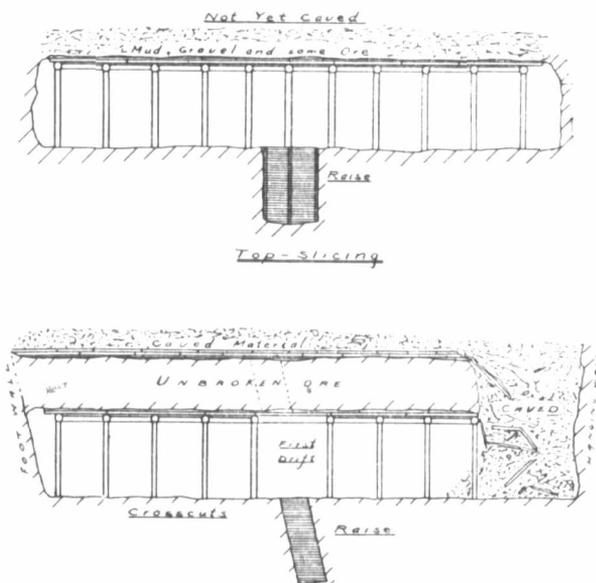


Fig. 20.

Caving System, Soft Ore.—No. 2 Hematite Mine.

Mining below this is now done by the real caving system. The miners drop down 12' or 15', depending on the hardness of the ore, and run a drift as before. Side rooms are run to foot and hanging also, and when these are reached the most remote sets are blasted, and the roof is caved in. By working as they retreat practically all the ore is removed from beneath the lagging above, only one set being usually blasted at a time. Sometimes several rooms are worked out before caving, but it is unsafe to leave them for any