

for other purposes. Considering that year by year the native forests of the colony are being cut down and comparatively little tree-planting is being done, the time does not appear far distant when timber will be a much more costly article than it is now. It is, of course, fully recognised that in some districts the felling of the native bush is followed by one branch or other of the farming industry, and that under these conditions replanting of the forests *in situ* is out of the question. This, however, gives force to the suggestion now made for the planting of forest-trees—where this can be done to advantage—on old alluvial mining-areas and tailings-deposits.

The mining districts of Central Otago are climatically suited to fruit-growing, and now that railway-construction is getting well advanced, and quick communication with populous centres thereby established, the question of planting fruit-trees and so turning old mining-areas into orchards and fruit-gardens is a matter of practical interest and importance, as the water used for mining purposes in the past, and at the present time, will eventually be available for irrigation purposes.

MINERALS OTHER THAN GOLD.

SCHHEELITE.

This mineral occurs principally near Glenorchy (Lake Wakatipu), and at Macrae's in the Otago District, also at Top Valley near Blenheim, in the Marlborough District. It is found in conjunction with quartz, but the only place at which it is being separated is at the battery connected with Messrs. W. and G. Donaldson's mine at Macrae's. The concentrated mineral finds a ready market in Europe. During the past two or three years numerous inquiries have been made for a supply of scheelite containing not less than 60 per cent. of tungstic acid. One inquiry alone was for a supply of from 20 to 40 tons per month, an amount practically equal to the present average annual supply.

CINNABAR.

A limited amount of work has been done during the year at the claim at Waitahuna, near Lawrence. The mine, however, has not yet reached a productive stage.

GALENA.

A trial shipment of ore from the Kia-Ora (late Tui) Mine, near Te Aroha, Auckland District, was sent to Australia for treatment during the year, but although some assistance was given by the Government in this matter no report of the results of the trial have been received by the Department. From information supplied, it appears that the reef consists of quartz, carrying rich sulphide ore in shoots, and galena. The latter is said to vary from 6 in. to 5 ft. in width, with an average of about 2 ft.; the reef as a whole having an average width of 8 ft., although an occasional width of 20 ft. is attained.

COPPER.

Operations have been commenced with a view to the reopening of the copper-mine near Nelson, and the work done is reported on by Mr. Tennent, Inspector of Mines.

PLATINUM.

This metal is associated with the alluvial gold at Orepuki and Round Hill, Southland, and also near Takaka, Nelson. The Round Hill Gold-mining Company separate the platinum from the gold, the yield being about 1 oz. of platinum to every 100 oz. of gold.

HÆMATITE.

This mineral is manufactured into paint at Thames, and also at Parapara, near Collingwood. At the latter place the rich ores of the Parapara ironstone deposits are drawn on, and the ore ground, both raw and after being calcined, different colours resulting.

Knife-polish is also made at Parapara by grinding a felspathic rock.

In Southland, hæmatite is being got at Mataura and used for colouring purposes at the Mataura Paper-mills.

IRON.

Operations for the working of the ironsands of Taranaki and the ores at Parapara have not commenced.

PETROLEUM.

Some boring for petroleum was undertaken during the year at Kotuku (in the vicinity of Lake Brunner), between Otira and Greymouth. Oil in small quantity has been obtained. Although no active work is now in progress, I understand the matter of further investigation as to the possibilities of the district is not being altogether left in abeyance.

ROCK PHOSPHATE.

The output of this mineral shows a steady increase. During last year the production at the quarries at Clarendon and Milburn (Tokomariro District, Otago), was about 4,400 tons. Its value for the preparation of a fertiliser is apparently well established.

SCHOOLS OF MINES.

The instruction given at these institutions is of considerable benefit to young men preparing to take positions in and about mines and batteries.

An examination, open only to students at the several schools of mines, is held annually in December. Scholarships, tenable for three years at the Otago University, Dunedin, together with a grant of £50 per annum, are available to those competing students who comply with the conditions under which these scholarships are granted.