

# Building Materials

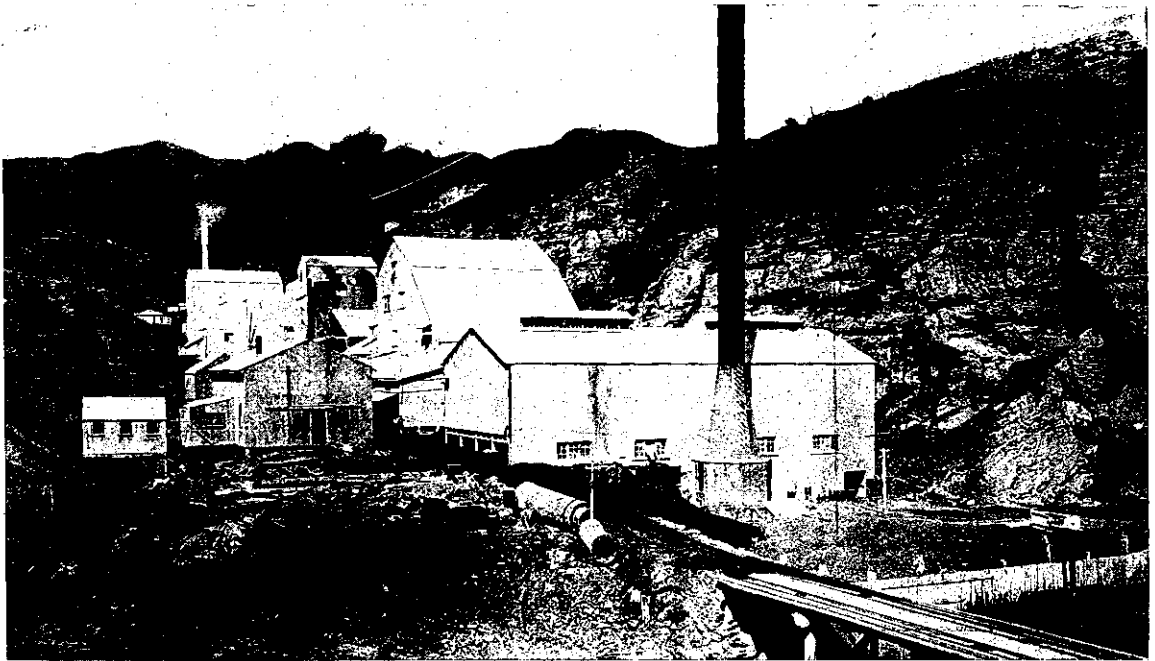
The Development of the Dominion's Resources.

BY R. WHITSON.

Possibly the present is not an opportune time to discuss matters relative to building, in fact in travelling from one end of the Dominion to the other this remark has been frequently made to us by many prominent men connected with the building trade. With all due deference however, to the opinions of those who have no doubt carefully thought this matter out, we venture to hold a different and incidentally a broader view of matters as they at present stand. The present war is bringing about some extraordinary changes in the once accepted, settled

trated on our own resources we should to-day have been in a very much stronger position to carry on our Dominion business with material produced in our own country. The average business man will tell you if you want a thing done to do it yourself, but in the pre-war days of cheap freights, low costs and moderate duties, one never heard the user of imported goods carry the argument to the length of saying "if you want a thing produced, produce it yourself."

It is easy to be wise after an event, and no doubt hundreds connected with many trades realize this



Our Industries—The Golden Bay Cement Works. The Cement Industry has made Immense Strides in N.Z. of late years

routine of many lines of business, and it is but natural that we, being at the extreme distance from most of the old world centres and markets at a time when freights are high and scarce, and the production of imported building materials has been reduced to a minimum owing to local conditions in the manufacturing centres, should be among the first to feel the sudden cessation of those supplies that we have in the past depended on.

This dependence we are paying for now at a cost out of all proportion to the partial stoppage of our oversea supplies, and the disquieting thing is the knowledge that had time and effort been concen-

trated on our own resources we should to-day have been in a very much stronger position to carry on our Dominion business with material produced in our own country. The average business man will tell you if you want a thing done to do it yourself, but in the pre-war days of cheap freights, low costs and moderate duties, one never heard the user of imported goods carry the argument to the length of saying "if you want a thing produced, produce it yourself."

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We do not for a moment contend that this country is, or could be as yet sufficiently developed to supply all materials necessary for the modern type of building, to do so would be palpably absurd. Such materials as tiles for roofing, glass windows, and ordinary door fittings, are not a commercial possibility yet in New Zealand owing to the price of Dominion labour and raw materials.