

METALLIFEROUS MINES.

Some attention is still being directed to the search for lodes containing deposits of copper, but no production of any importance has been recorded.

MANGANESE.

The production of this metal is unimportant, 217 tons only having been exported.

SULPHUR.

At Tikitere, in the Rotorua District, 2,043 tons 12 cwt., of the value of £5,367, were mined and exported; the ore contained about 75 per cent. of sulphur. It is said a larger quantity could be produced if a better tenure to the land was obtained, so that refining works could be erected on the ground.

OPAL-MINING.

Although opals of a valuable kind occur at Tairua, in the Auckland District, there is no record of any production for the year.

PETROLEUM.

The boring operations carried on in the Taranaki District have so far been unsuccessful.

KAURI-GUM.

There has been an increase of 3,264 tons in the production during the year, the quantity being 9,905 tons, valued at £586,767, as against 6,641 tons for the previous year, valued at £398,010. The total quantity of kauri-gum exported since 1853 is 200,475 tons, valued at £9,099,619. This industry affords a livelihood to a large number of both Europeans and Natives; but the average earnings of persons employed in digging gum cannot be ascertained. No doubt the time is approaching when the gum will be exhausted, but a considerable period will yet elapse before this takes place.

MOLYBDENITE.

The discovery of this metal was lately made in the Iron Cap Mine at Tararu, Thames. It occurs as loose fragments in nests and small stringers alongside 12 in. ironstone vein. Some small fragments run about 40 per cent., but further prospecting must be done before the value of the discovery can be estimated.

Thirty years ago molybdenite was found as fine flakes in subcrystalline limestone for the west coast of Otago; and more recently in some auriferous quartz taken from a reef in the Moonlight Claim, Paparoa Range, but not in paying quantity.

SCHEELITE.

A parcel of 40 tons of this mineral was obtained by Messrs. Donaldson Brothers from their claim at Macrae's, Otago, where it is found associated with the quartz in an auriferous lode. The material is obtained by crushing the quartz, and recovering the scheelite by concentration. It is said to contain 67 per cent. tungstic acid.

ROADS AND TRACKS.

The expenditure on roads and tracks during the year shows a decrease compared with that of last year. The total expenditure by the department during the last seventeen years on roads and tracks for the development of the mining industry amounts to £285,322 8s. 2d. in direct grants, and £92,266 8s. 1d. in subsidies to local bodies; out of which £42,358 8s. 6d. and £4,191 7s. 9d. respectively were expended during the year.

HÆMATITE PAINT.

In the Collingwood District 100 tons of paint were manufactured from hæmatite by Washbourne Brothers. The New Zealand Paint Manufacturing Company also produced 106 tons of the paint at their hæmatite works at the Thames Goldfield.