

*Asbestos*.—The comprehensive prospecting programme of driving and crosscutting commenced by the Hume Pipe Co. in 1944 upon its asbestos deposits in the Upper Takaka district was completed early in 1945, and since then the property has been on a care and maintenance basis.

During 1945, 31 cwt. of asbestos, of an estimated value of £31, were produced incidental to the prospecting programme.

*Bentonite*.—In 1945, 167 tons of bentonite, of a value of £800, were produced from Porangahau deposits, as against 360 tons, valued at £1,640, produced in 1944. It is expected, however, that the overseas demand for this material will increase during the coming years. During 1945 an investigation was carried out by the Geological Survey of bentonite deposits at Kekerangu, in Marlborough, but so far no deposit of commercial grade has been located.

*Phosphate*.—Operations at Clarendon during 1945 were confined to the low-grade phosphatic sandstone, of which 7,956 tons were produced, valued at £2,188. It is possible that attention will be paid to other sections of this deposit in the Clarendon area proved by the drilling programme. No work was done on the medium-grade phosphate deposits, as reserves of this material were exhausted by the operations of the British Phosphate Commission during 1944.

*Serpentine*.—The production of serpentine again declined during 1945, only 13,933 tons being produced, as against 37,711 tons in 1944. This decline was due partly to the suspension of the regulations making its use compulsory in superphosphate fertilizers and partly owing to difficult transport conditions. Indications are that serpentine-superphosphate is now gaining favour and that production of this material, introduced as a war measure, will be maintained in after-years with increasing demand.

Production in 1945 came entirely from the North Auckland deposits, and, while operations will be continued from this locality by opening up fresh deposits, production has now commenced at a much larger deposit near Te Kuiti. The deposit at Mossburn, though inactive in 1945, is capable of satisfying all possible South Island requirements.

*Limestone*.—While limestone production, mainly owing to transport difficulties, declined from 903,808 tons in 1944 to 812,635 tons in 1945, notwithstanding this, production was at a much higher level than any of the preceding years other than 1944. There is now increased activity in the production of limestone for agricultural uses and, with attention now being paid to producing better-processed material, it would appear that the value of limestone production in our economy is being increasingly recognized.

*Dolomite*.—From the Mount Burnett deposits, near Collingwood, 4,644 tons of dolomite were produced, as against 3,931 tons in 1944.

*Clays*.—Clays other than for use in bricks were produced during 1945 to the amount of 8,251 tons, valued at £5,408. A drilling programme comprising fifteen holes and a total footage of 1,060 ft. was completed on the clay deposits at Kaka, in Nelson, and was successful in proving up additional reserves of clay suitable for the manufacture of insulators at Temuka. In the years to come increased attention must be given both to the prospecting of clay deposits and to research work in processing clays so that adequate reserves of uniform-grade material can be made available to the increased demands of industry.

*Silica Sand*.—During 1945, 20,009 tons of silica sand were produced, of a value of £45,066. Of this quantity, the most important contribution was that of 17,862 tons, valued at £42,870, which were obtained from North Auckland for use in the manufacture of glass.

*Pumice*.—During 1945, 2,183 tons of pumice, valued at £9,163, were produced for shipment overseas.

*General*.—Small amounts of arsenic, distomaceous earth, Fuller's earth, magnesite, and quartzite were also produced during 1945, but there was no development of note with regard to these minerals.