

SCHEELITE.

A recent discovery is reported from Central Otago, but so far the only place where this mineral is prepared for the market is at the mine of Messrs. Donaldson Brothers, at Macrae's. Owing to the increasing demand, other parties working reefs in the same district (where scheelite is associated with the quartz) are reported to be making arrangements to supply requirements.

HÆMATITE PAINT.

This is produced at the works of the New Zealand Paint-manufacturing Company at Thames, and by Messrs. Washbourne Brothers in the Collingwood District. Some hæmatite suitable for paint-making has been discovered in the neighbourhood of Invercargill.

CINNABAR.

Some prospecting work is in hand near Waipori, Otago, where the indications are said to be such as will warrant further efforts being taken to thoroughly prove the ground. Some very good ore has been obtained there, and also near Taipo, in the West Coast District.

SHALE-OIL.

An industry entirely new to the colony will shortly be started at Orepuki, a very complete plant being in course of erection at that place for the purpose of working the extensive deposits of shale in the district. The company carrying on the operations appear sanguine of success, and if the products of the shale, when worked on a large scale, are equal in quality to the various extracts obtained in the laboratory, I think there is every reason for supposing that their expectations will be realised, provided, of course, the manufactured article can be supplied at or below ruling market rates.

The different classes of oils for lighting and lubricating purposes which have been experimentally extracted are extremely pure and free from the disagreeable mineral odour usually accompanying such oils. The paraffin wax, another product, is even superior to that ordinarily on the market, and as the company is providing machinery for the treatment of all the by-products, there should be very little waste in connection with their operations.

ROADS AND TRACKS.

The expenditure on roads and tracks during the year shows an increase compared with that of last year. The total expenditure by the department during the last eighteen years on roads and tracks for the development of the mining industry amounts to £329,147 18s. 1d. in direct grants, and £95,564 8s. in subsidies to local bodies; out of which £44,258 2s. 6d. and £2,865 7s. 4d. respectively were expended during the year.

THE MINING BUREAU.

The publication of the *New Zealand Mines Record* has been continued during the year by the Secretary of the Mining Bureau, and the information obtained by the department from its officers and other sources has been thus made available at regular intervals. Some of the papers have been separately printed for distribution through the Agent-General, Chambers of Mines, and other bodies; while the orders issued by the Home Office in reference to explosives have been issued in a handy form for distribution by the Inspectors of Mines.

Most of the Australian Colonies are now publishing monthly or quarterly statistics, and lately the Queensland Government has commenced the issue of a monthly mining journal.

DEPARTMENTAL.

Owing to failing eyesight Mr. George Wilson, the late Inspecting Engineer, has retired from the service. He has been succeeded by Mr. John Hayes, F.S.Sc., who was Inspector of Mines for the Southern District, Mr. Edwin Ridley Green being appointed to fill the position formerly occupied by the present Inspecting Engineer.