

SCHEELITE.

Messrs. Donaldson Brothers, of Macrae's (Otago), continue to separate sheelite from the quartz, and as yet are the only people in the colony who prepare this ore as a marketable product. Other parties in the district are reported to have given some attention to the subject, but nothing of importance has so far been done by them to place sheelite on the market.

HEMATITE PAINT.

This is still being produced at the Thames by the New Zealand Paint-manufacturing Company, and at Parapara by Messrs. Washbourne Brothers. The latter firm also manufacture knife-polish from a felspathic rock found in the locality.

CINNABAR.

The prospecting which has been carried on between Waitahuna and Waipori (Otago) is said to have been very satisfactory, the discovery of a lode of considerable extent being reported. Some other prospecting has also been undertaken in the Thames District at Kauaeranga Valley.

ANTIMONY.

A lode is being exploited at Alexandra South, but can hardly be said to have yet reached a commercial stage.

CHROME-ORE.

Some work is being done on the deposit near Croixelles Harbour. The shipment last year amounted to 28 tons.

COPPER-ORE.

The attention of prospectors is being directed to the lodes at Moke Creek, Lake Wakatipu.

SHALE-OIL.

At Orepuki, a mine has been opened out for the supply of shale, and extensive works erected to treat the mineral for the extraction of oils, parafin wax, ammonia, &c. The manufacture of oil and other products was commenced in the early part of this year, and it is understood that the productions of the works are being readily sought after. This is a new industry so far as New Zealand is concerned, and it is to be hoped that the venture, upon which a large capital has been expended, will be eminently successful.

ROADS AND TRACKS.

As compared with the previous year, the expenditure on roads and tracks shows a decrease of £5,797 15s. 8d. The amount paid as subsidies to local bodies was £3,264 13s. 1d., and the sum of £45,152 14s. 2d. has been expended in direct grants on roads and tracks for the development of mining districts. The total sums for the past nineteen years are £373,904 18s. 2d. and £98,446 14s. 2d. respectively.

GEOLOGICAL EXPLORATIONS.

Examinations have been made in several parts of the colony with a view to the determination of the character and extent of mineral country hitherto unworked, and naturally the coal-bearing areas have received a fair share of attention. The Government Geologist (Mr. McKay) is of opinion that the coal areas at Pakawau and Puponga, in the Collingwood District, are likely to prove satisfactory.

The question of the probability of a payable coal-field at Waimangaroa has been under investigation. The measures here lie at a very steep angle, and it is estimated that to reach the coal at a site convenient to the railway at Waimangaroa Station shafts not less than 1,500 ft. deep would be required, but coal may be reached at a more moderate depth near the mouth of Ngakawau River.

In regard to the alleged possibilities of an important coal-field further west than that already exploited by the mines in the Grey Valley, Mr. McKay is not over sanguine, but he recommended that proof should be obtained by boring. Accordingly the Greymouth Harbour Board, with assistance from the Govern-