

from a coarse, rotten shale to a hard, fine-grained sandstone, and immense areas of gypsum.

This sandstone occurs in almost if not every county in the Territory and is used largely for foundations and similar building purposes. About 8 miles southwest of Watonga, capping the hills bordering the valley of the North Canadian, is a ledge of dolomite several feet in thickness, overlying a good quality of sandstone. The dolomite is of an excellent quality, and must eventually prove of great value as a building stone.

The two natural products most promising in Oklahoma are its gypsum and its salt.

The gypsum outcrops as great ledges, extending clear across the Territory. One very important series is exposed along the bluffs on the south side of the Cimarron from the Kansas line to the Glass Mountains, then bearing to the south gradually leaves the river, capping the bluffs which rise west of the Cimarron Valley.

In many places the soluble gypsum has yielded to the action of the running water, and immense caves, tunnels, natural bridges, and fantastic forms have resulted. Some of these caves harbor thousands of bats and the guano that has accumulated sells at a very high price as a fertilizer.

As far back as 1852 Marcy, in his explorations of the Red River, said that the discovery of gold in the Wichita Mountains would attract more attention, but that the discovery of the large gypsum beds would be worth more than the gold. The supply is practically inexhaustible, and with better means of transportation and the introduction of improved processes in the manufacture of plaster, cement, and fertilizers, must prove of great commercial value.

There are three principal salt areas: The Saline Reservation, about 25 miles east of Alva, in Woods County; the Salt Plains of the Cimarron, about 30 miles west of Alva, in Woodward County, and the plains of Salt Creek, about 10 miles north of Watonga, in Blaine County.

Each of these regions furnishes a local supply of salt, while at the Blaine County works several thousand pounds are manufactured daily. Were it not for the almost unlimited supply of salt in Kansas this industry would receive an immediate development on a large scale, and with means for transportation there is no reason why salt should not be manufactured here in competition with Kansas at a good profit.

On the Salt Plains of the Cimarron there are places where large springs bubble up through the sand, the water as clear as crystal and as salt as brine. Along the edges of the stream, formed by the union of these springs, are thick incrustations of salt, dazzling white in their purity, while on the grasses, sticks, or other foreign substances that may serve as nucleus, immense crystals of salt sparkle in the sunlight like diamonds.

From these springs thousands of gallons of water, saturated with salt, find their way into the Cimarron, carrying away enough salt to supply the whole Southwest. To pump this water into vats and evaporate it is the only process necessary to produce salt of an excellent quality. In addition, shallow wells sunk in the sand furnish an abundance of water highly charged with salt, and the cost of evaporation is practically the only one connected with the development of this industry.

Special attention has been paid to the native plants of the Territory,