

paration, and for medicinal purposes. Magnesium chloride (MgCl_2) can be made by treating magnesite with hydrochloric acid, and magnesium sulphate by treating the same material with sulphuric acid. Magnesium chloride is used principally for making Sorel cement and in the manufacture of cotton goods. Magnesium sulphate is used in the manufacture of textiles, in the tanning of leather, and, in the hydrated form known as Epsom salt, for medicinal purposes. Epsom salt is also produced from natural deposits at Clinton (see page 51) and elsewhere.

Magnesia (MgO) is used to some extent in glass making and in the rubber industry; crude magnesite is used with asbestos fibre as a heat-resisting packing for furnaces and pipes.

Metallic Magnesium.¹

The metal magnesium is of a silvery white colour, chemically inert, tough, malleable, and ductile when heated. It has a specific gravity (1.74) or two-thirds that of aluminum, and is the lightest metal known that remains comparatively unaltered under atmospheric conditions. Magnesium is used in powdered form, in ribbons, or in sticks. Powdered magnesium is used for flash lights in photography, in fireworks, and for flares, etc., in military operations. Magnesium ribbon, as well as the powder, is used in testing for phosphorus and potash in chemical laboratories. Massive magnesium in sticks is used as a scavenger, that is, a deoxidizing agent of alloys. Magnesium is a powerful deoxidizing and denitrifying agent and its oxide is more stable at high temperatures than other agents such as aluminum, silicon, and phosphorus.

The metal magnesium has been produced chiefly by electrolysis of the fused double chloride of magnesium and potassium (MgCl_2KCl). Other processes, some of them still in the experimental stage, are reduction of the fused magnesium chloride with soda or aluminum, reduction with carbon, reduction of magnesia (MgO) or magnesite (MgCO_3) to slag forming residues, and electrolysis of dissolved MgO . The double chloride of magnesium and potassium used for this purpose is the dehydrated mineral carnallite obtained from the salt deposits of Stassfurt in Germany.

A small quantity of magnesium added to steel, copper, nickel, or various alloys of these and other metals, clears up the oxides of these metals that may be present and makes for a denser and more homogeneous product. Alloys of aluminum with a small percentage of massive magnesium have proved very useful. They are lighter than aluminum and have greater tensile strength and resistance to impact. Magnalium, an alloy of aluminum, with less than 2 per cent of magnesium and with equally small percentages of calcium, nickel, tin, and lead, has been used for kitchen and domestic ware, surgical and optical instruments, military equipment, etc. Aluminum alloyed with magnesium has been used for making larger castings. Numerous other alloys of magnesium and aluminum, magnesium and copper, magnesium zinc, etc., have been made. Conditions seem promising for a more extensive use of the metal in alloys in the future. The obstacle at present to such use is the cost of producing metallic magnesium. For instance, German magnesium sold at \$1.65 per pound in

¹Grosvenor, Wm. M., *Metal. and Chem. Eng.*, vol. 14, No. 5, Mar. 1, 1916, p. 283.
King, J. C., "Magnesium," *Trans. Can. Min. Inst.*, vol. XX, 1917, pp. 471-480.

Stone, R. W., "Magnesium in 1917," *U.S. Geol. Surv., Mineral resources of the U.S.*, 1917, pt. I, pp. 147-151.