

ABRASIVE MATERIALS.

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BUHRSTONES.

PRODUCTION.

The use of buhrstones, or millstones, for flouring mills has almost entirely ceased. Mills for grinding the coarser cereals, paint ore, fertilizers, and cement rock continue to use the old-fashioned millstones, but this trade is comparatively limited, and the manufacture of millstones can hardly lay claim to existence as a separate industry. The value of the millstones produced in the United States has not amounted to \$30,000 in any year since 1889, and has exceeded \$25,000 only twice in that time—in 1897 and 1898—when the revival in other lines was reflected in a slight increase in the demand for millstones. The total value of the millstone production in 1898 amounted to \$25,934, distributed among 17 producers, an average of about \$1,500 each. Two of these producers in 1898 were in Virginia, 2 were in Pennsylvania, and 13 obtained their supply in Ulster County, New York. The stones are quarried from a quartz conglomerate rock, outcropping at several localities along the eastern slope of the Allegheny Mountains. The men engaged in the industry are generally individual and independent quarymen who, upon receipt of an order for one or more stones, take one or two helpers, go to the hills and select a boulder or blast out a piece of rock which will cut to the desired size. When finished, the stone or stones are hauled by wagon to the nearest rail or waterway shipping station, and no more work is done until other orders are received. The domestic product differs from the imported buhr, and when buhrstones were more generally used in flouring mills the imported French or Belgian buhr was considered superior to the domestic stone. For the coarser work now done by them the American stones seem to be as satisfactory as the foreign.

The millstone-making industry began to go down about twelve or fourteen years ago. Importations fell off very sharply in 1883 and 1884, and have amounted to as much as \$40,000 in only one year since 1884. In the fifteen years from 1868 to 1882, inclusive, the value of the buhrstones, rough and manufactured, imported into the United States

averaged \$84,680 a year. In 1883 the value dropped to \$73,685, and in the last fifteen years has averaged about \$30,000. The records of domestic production extend back only as far as 1880. In the five years 1880 to 1884, inclusive, the domestic product was valued at an average of \$170,000 a year. In the next five years, 1885 to 1889, it averaged only \$91,000 a year, while in the last nine years the average has been but a little over \$21,000 a year, that of 1898, \$25,934, being the maximum.

The production since 1880 and imports since 1868 are shown in the following tables:

Value of buhrstones produced in the United States from 1880 to 1898.

Year.	Value.	Year.	Value.
1880.....	\$200,000	1890.....	\$23,720
1881.....	150,000	1891.....	16,587
1882.....	200,000	1892.....	23,417
1883.....	150,000	1893.....	16,639
1884.....	150,000	1894.....	13,887
1885.....	100,000	1895.....	22,542
1886.....	140,000	1896.....	22,567
1887.....	100,000	1897.....	25,932
1888.....	81,000	1898.....	25,934
1889.....	35,155		

IMPORTS.

The following table gives the value of buhrstones and millstones imported into the United States each year since 1868:

Value of buhrstones and millstones imported into the United States from 1868 to 1898.

Year ending—	Rough.	Made into millstones.	Total.
June 30, 1868.....	\$74,224	.....	\$74,224
1869.....	57,942	\$2,419	60,361
1870.....	58,601	2,197	60,898
1871.....	35,406	3,698	39,104
1872.....	69,062	5,967	75,029
1873.....	60,463	8,115	68,578
1874.....	36,540	43,170	79,710
1875.....	48,068	66,991	115,059
1876.....	37,759	46,328	84,087
1877.....	60,857	23,068	83,925

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Value of buhrstones and millstones imported into the United States, etc.—Continued.

Year ending—	Rough.	Made into mill- stones.	Total.
June 30, 1878.....	\$87, 679	\$1, 928	\$89, 607
1879.....	101, 484	5, 088	106, 572
1880.....	120, 441	4, 631	125, 072
1881.....	100, 417	3, 495	103, 912
1882.....	103, 287	747	104, 034
1883.....	73, 413	272	73, 685
1884.....	45, 837	263	46, 100
1885.....	35, 022	455	35, 477
Dec. 31, 1886.....	29, 273	662	29, 935
1887.....	23, 816	191	24, 007
1888.....	36, 523	705	37, 228
1889.....	40, 432	452	40, 884
1890.....	32, 892	1, 103	33, 995
1891.....	23, 997	42	24, 039
1892.....	33, 657	529	34, 186
1893.....	29, 532	729	30, 261
1894.....	.....	.....	^a 18, 087
1895.....	.....	.....	20, 316
1896.....	.....	.....	26, 965
1897.....	.....	.....	22, 956
1898.....	.....	.....	22, 974

^a Not separately classified after 1893.