CHAPTER X

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF THE AREA

Though the area does not contain any significant economic mineral deposits, a few rocks and minerals of the area which have some economic utility are described below. Mention can be made of kyanite and muscovite mica, the latter occurring in the pegmatites. One such pegmatite, trending N-S and outcropping north-west of Ayyavaripalle, was mined some years ago for its muscovite mica though at present the mine is closed. The mica is of ruby colour and occurs in the form of 'books' measuring from 10 cm x 10 cm to 20 cm x 12 cm. Kyanite lenses of different sizes are associated with vein quartz. These were exploited for sometime till about 1956 but the mining operation was confined mainly to the easily accessible surface pockets (to a depth of about 3 m) only. Such kyanite pockets normally pinch off at a shallow depth as was observed by Subrahmaniam (1944-45) who mapped the kyanite deposits of Chundi-Malekonda area. According to him, though kyanite bearing veins pinch off at a fairly shallow depth, the presence of others at lower levels is not unlikely. His estimate of kyanite in the area is about 1000 tons. In the present area too, quartz veins traversing metapelites of staurolite-kyanite and first sillimanite zones contain such pockets of kyanite. Besides these, kyanite also occurs as coarse blades in the metapelites in considerable amount.

Quartzites are extensively used as road metal in the area. They, particularly the thin bedded and flaggy types which break with comparative ease into slabs, are also used for flooring purposes and in the construc-
tion of walls. Some of the metapelitic layers are also occasionally used for the latter purpose. Weathered calc-silicate rocks are in some places burnt for making lime for local use. Some compact types of granitic rocks are used, at places, as grinding stones.