

TRIPOLITE.

Tripolite, or as it is also called *tripoli*, *infusorial earth*, *diatomaceous earth*, *fossil flour*, or *kieselguhr*, is an earthy material composed of the minute siliceous shells or frustules of diatoms. It usually contains such impurities as sand, clay, carbonate of lime, iron oxide, etc. The following analysis is from a sample of tripolite from New Brunswick.¹

Silica (SiO ₂)	80·487%
Alumina (Al ₂ O ₃)	3·146%
Ferric oxide (Fe ₂ O ₃)	·951%
Lime (CaO)	·342%
Magnesia (MgO)	·283%
Carbon dioxide (CO ₂)	·011%
Water and organic matter	13·321%

98·541

USES.

Owing to the finely divided and angular silica, which is the main constituent of tripolite, it is very useful as a polishing material for metal. For this purpose it is prepared in three forms:—

- (1) Dry powder, to be moistened or otherwise prepared by the user.
- (2) Mixed with about one-third its weight of tallow or other hard grease and moulded into bricks or sticks. This is used on buffing wheels.
- (3) Mixed with some cleansing liquid in the form of the well known liquid metal polishes.

In those industries where there is much polishing of metal work large quantities of tripolite are used in the form of grease bricks. Much is imported into the country already manufactured and some manufactured here. In the returns, under the head "tripolite (grease brick)," all is recorded as imported. This is because the tripolite used even in the Canadian made bricks is imported.

¹ Page 22 S. Annual Report, Geological Survey, Vol. XV.