

In the Lyell district the consolidation of the Alpine Extended Mine has led to more systematic development, which will probably have good results.

On the whole, it may be assumed that the large returns for the past year will be equalled, if not exceeded, by the product of next year's operations, especially as the prospects in other mines are of a favourable character. The returns from the quartz-mines in these districts amounted to £109,019 2s. 10d., showing an increase of £81,988 7s. 10d. over the previous year.

OTAGO AND SOUTHLAND.

The chief production for the year was from the Cromwell, Macetown, and Preservation Inlet districts.

The Achilles Mine at Bullendale, which has been one of the most regular gold-producers in the past, is now undergoing development, having been intrusted to Messrs. Taylor and Son, the eminent firm of mining engineers, London, and may again be expected to contribute to future returns.

In the other fields no very extensive operations are carried on, other than working out the most readily accessible parts of the reefs and veins that have been already opened, but the work now in course of development at the OPQ mine at Waipori is of a promising character.

The return from quartz-mines for the year was 9,870 oz. 0 dwt. 16 gr., valued at £38,493, as against 17,301 oz. 18 dwt. 16 gr., valued at £67,900, or a decrease of £29,407 on the previous year.

DIVIDENDS FROM QUARTZ-MINING.

The following dividends were paid by quartz-mining companies operating in New Zealand during the year ended 31st March, 1899:—

Waihi Company	...	...	...	...	...	£112,000
Waitekauri	...	...	...	...	...	9,620
Waiotahi	...	...	...	...	...	1,050
Big River	...	...	...	...	...	900

And since that date further dividends have been paid by the—

Waihi Company	...	...	...	...	...	£32,000
Waiotahi	...	...	...	...	...	300
Progress Mines	...	...	...	...	...	12,500

The total amount of dividends paid by the under-mentioned companies from the date of their commencing operations to the 30th of June, 1899, is as follows:—

Waihi Gold-mining Company	...	...	...	...	...	£404,500
Hauraki Gold-mining Company	...	...	...	...	...	144,000
Waiotahi	...	...	...	...	...	35,850
Waitekauri	...	...	...	...	...	42,180
Big River	...	...	...	...	...	40,500
Progress	...	...	...	...	...	12,500
Royal Oak	...	...	...	...	...	12,500
New Zealand Crown	...	...	...	...	...	10,000

ALLUVIAL MINING.

This class of gold-mining is confined to the Middle Island. The gold is derived from deposits of gravel found on the mountains at a height of 4,000 ft. above sea-level, and on horizons at various elevations, from the highest down to at least 300 ft. below sea-level. Many rivers and streams contain gold in the gravel of which their beds are composed, and it is also found in the later fluvial deposits in the lower lands. The gold from alluvial workings, including dredging operations, is about 40 per cent. of the total yield during the past year.

MARLBOROUGH.

The chief places from which gold is produced are Mahakipawa, Wakamarina, and some of the branches of the Wairau River.

NELSON.

In the Collingwood District the Parapara Hydraulic Sluicing and Mining