

Golden Sands Sluicing, Barrytown.—Dennehy Bros., operating this claim on tribute, won 575 oz. 11 dwt. 12 gr. gold. Values are maintained in the wash, but the workings have almost reached the boundary of the Barrytown Gold Dredging Co.'s claim, therefore, its future remains somewhat uncertain.

MISCELLANEOUS MINERALS

Asbestos and Mica.—There was no asbestos or mica produced in this inspection district during the year, both companies concerned having ceased operations.

Pottery Clay.—From Polglaze's underground clay-pit at Kaka, Waimea County, 270 tons of high-grade pottery clay were produced. The output is down to a tenth of that of the previous year, due to cessation of overseas demand for insulators that were previously manufactured from the raw material produced in Kaka. From Mellor Quarry in same district the amount of pottery clay produced was 134 tons.

Iron-ore.—A total of 306 tons of iron-ore were quarried and reduced by grinding to a state suitable for use in gasworks—106 tons were sold, while 200 tons were stacked at the wharf ready for shipment.

Talc and Magnesite.—Lime and Marble, Ltd., quarried 374 tons talc and magnesite from mineral licence held by the company at Takaka.

Arsenic.—From the roasting-furnace at Blackwater Mine treatment plant an amount of 17 tons 10 cwt. 3 qr. arsenic was obtained, valued at £18 per ton.

Clays.—In the Greymouth district, 1,100 tons of clay were used for brickmaking, valued at approximately £550.

GENERAL REMARKS: MINING AND PROSPECTING

Anticipations in 1945 of an improvement in labour situation, supply of plant, and material required in the mining industry have not been realized, consequently a further decline in output has to be recorded, primarily due to restrictions of operations. There are few claims and plants working to their full capacity, and many remain idle that were shut down during the years of war. The foregoing trend would be speedily reversed if conditions for expansion became favourable, for there is a strong belief prevalent that the price of gold will increase or, alternatively, strong inducements offered to step up production to meet demands for international currency exchange required under the new trading agreements which are to be made in the near future.

Prospecting remains dormant, no new areas being tested. On alluvial areas 1,121 ft. were bored ahead of operating dredges. The footage was drilled by three crews, who put down fourteen holes.

FATAL ACCIDENTS

Nil.

SERIOUS NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS

Three serious non-fatal accidents occurred during the year:—

Dredges.—On 9th March, 1946, M. Topp, an employee of Slab Hut Dredge, had his foot caught between a dredge bucket and a ladder roller when cleaning the ladder. The winchman had previously been directed to stop the buckets by cutting off the power, and Topp immediately attempted to cross the bucket line, evidently being under the impression that the buckets would stop simultaneously with the cutting-off of the power. After cutting off the current the buckets travel 18 in. before coming to a dead stop. It was during this movement that the injury occurred. It was found necessary later to amputate the big toe.

On 27th May, 1946, Jas. B. Outram, workshops labourer, Redjacks Dredge, suffered a fractured lower end of right radius caused when trying to start a tractor by cranking, and the engine back-fired.

On 26th October, 1946, H. Olson, employee, Arakura Dredge, slipped and fell from the dredge ladder while assisting to break the bucket line and fell 24 ft. into the well hole. He suffered a fractured thigh and considerable bruising.

PROSECUTIONS UNDER THE MINING ACT

Nil.

SOUTHERN INSPECTION DISTRICT (T. McMILLAN, Inspector of Mines)

QUARTZ AND ALLUVIAL MINING

Waitaki County

Sluicing operations have been carried out in the auriferous gravels of the Livingstone and Maerewhenua Goldfields.

Waihemo County

The Gallery Syndicate have continued mining and development operations at their Round Hill Mine and treatment operations at their Deep Bell Battery, where 1,225 tons of quartz have been treated.