

the part of some of the owners of claims in untried districts to await the result of the work of the pioneer dredges. This is particularly noticeable in the Cardrona Valley and on the upper portion of the Clutha River. These districts have yielded large quantities of gold to the alluvial miner, and in all probability will yet pay dredgers handsomely.

Payable returns of gold have been got by a majority of the dredges working on the "Molyneux" (correctly, the "Clutha") and Kawarau Rivers, and also on the Waipori, Tuapeka, Evans Flat, Shag Valley, Waitahuna, Glenore, Manuhierikia, Nevis, and the Southland river-flats. Exceptions are—Macrae's Flat, Enterprise Gully, Naseby, Maniototo, Kyeburn, and Ophir. These dredges are all sold for removal to other districts. The cause of their failure may be debited more to their inability to treat tight wash than to the poverty of the ground.

The following is a return of dredges, so far as obtainable by me, up to the 31st March : Dredges at work, 79; dredges not at work, 3; dredges undergoing alteration, 1; dredges undergoing removal, 8; dredges building, 105 : total, 196.

ACCIDENTS AT GOLD-MINES.

No accidents have been reported to me (1st November, 1899, to 31st March, 1900).

ACCIDENTS ON DREDGES.

Adam's Flat.—(30/10/99) : A. H. Waddell, engineer, lost the first joint of his right forefinger between the crank and the bed-plate of engines. He was feeling the eccentric strap for signs of heating while the engines were working. I reported this accident specially to you under date of 1st December, 1899.

Mataura Enterprise.—(23/11/99) : I reported specially under date of 5th December, 1899. Walter Turner was running one of the side-lines in a small boat. The boat tilted, and Turner was thrown or fell out. He was carried down the river, and, although he managed to get his body on to the tailings-heap several times, the current and drift were so strong that he could not drag his legs out, and was carried down stream about two miles and found drowned. The Coroner's jury brought in a verdict that Walter Turner met his death by accidental drowning, and added a rider that the appliances were deficient for travelling between the bank and the dredge, and also that one of the boats should be always kept at the dredge.