

SUMMARY OF DREDGES IN SOUTHERN MINING DISTRICT.

				At 31st March, 1901.		At 31st December, 1901.	
Working—							
In Otago	...	...	...	99		115	
In Southland	...	...	...	26		32	
				125		147	
Building—							
Otago	...	...	...	...	...	26	
Southland	...	...	...	...	...	4	
						30	
Standing—							
Otago	...	...	...	...	...	24	
Southland	...	...	...	...	...	1	
						25	
Removing—							
Otago	...	...	...	...	...	18	
Southland	...	...	...	...	...	1	
						19	
Total for Otago and Southland				...	...	221	
Increase of working dredges—							
Otago	...	...	...	...	...	16	
Southland	...	...	...	...	...	6	
Total				...	...	22	

The owners of all dredges working on the Clutha, Kawarau, Shotover, Dart, Lower Manuherikia, Pomahaka, Waikaia, Mataura, and Waiau Rivers have received notice that the river on which the dredge is working is deep and swift-flowing, and that the requirements of clause 2, Regulation 83, of "The Mining Act, 1898," must be complied with.

Four fatal accidents (involving the loss of five lives) and five non-fatal accidents were reported to me during the year. As usual, a proportion of the accidents occurred while oiling, machinery being in motion; of these, Arthur Cormack was killed on the Teviot dredge and Albert Shirley sustained a fractured leg on the Little Waikaka dredge.

Herbert Blatch and H. Ferris, Dunstan Lead dredge, Alexandra, were drowned owing, presumably, to mismanagement of the coal-boat. Had the men stuck to the boat instead of jumping into the river they would in all probability have been saved.

Archibald McLean, dredgemaster, First Chance dredge, Alexandra, and James Reid, winchman, Lady Charlton dredge, Gore, were drowned. The Coroner's jury in each case brought in a verdict that there was no evidence to show how the accident occurred.

REMARKS.

The question of reducing working-costs is receiving attention from dredge-designers and others. Two prominent innovations have been introduced during the year. Mr. William O'Brien, of Waipori, has successfully applied hydraulic power to replace steam on two dredges at Waipori, and is engaged fitting up three other dredges with similar motive power.

Messrs. Payne and Peck, dredge-designers, Dunedin, have invented a revolving elevator which discharges tailings from the screen chute to some distance from the dredge, at the same time stacking the tailings to a considerable height. It is believed that by its adoption this elevator will replace the costly and cumbrous travelling elevator at present used in deep ground; that wear-and-tear will be decreased, and first cost lessened.

The Ngapara dredge has been fitted with the elevator, and the owners of the Glasgow (Sandy Point) dredge have decided to give the elevator a trial on their machine.

OTHER MINERALS.

ANTIMONY.

Antimony Exploration Syndicate, Alexandra (Robert Blair, manager; William Stewart, secretary).—(7/6/1901): No. 2 shaft is sunk 54 ft. to the level. The crosscut at 3 ft. from shaft struck lode formation, which is 15 ft. between the walls; the antimony lode here is from 9 in. to 3 ft. in width. The level is driven on the lode a distance of 55 ft., giving about 150 ft. of backs in sight. 29 tons first-grade and about 200 tons of second-grade ore have been taken out, and are now lying in the paddock. The course of the lode formation is due east and west. Further prospecting has proved the lode to continue west, and at 500 yards from No. 2 shaft No. 3 shaft is sunk, cutting the lode at 40 ft. Surface-trenching on the outcrop proves the continuance of the lode between the shafts. Trial shipments have been sent to Melbourne with a view to obtaining the actual value of the metal. If satisfactory returns are received it is intended to erect smelting-works on the ground.