

Accidents.—I have regretfully to record one fatal accident. This occurred early in the year, a young man named Frederick Archer, age 20 years, being crushed to death between the screen and the side of the distributing-box on the Rimu dredge. Deceased evidently fell on top of the revolving screen, and was carried around by it against the walls of the distributing-box, his body being found underneath the screen. An inquest was held, and the verdict of accidental death returned. No evidence was forthcoming as to how deceased came to get into the position. The screen was well railed off, and there was no occasion for deceased to go inside the railing at the time. He had been engaged in sweeping the deck on the port side of the screen, and the only inference is that instead of walking around outside the railing to resume his work on the starboard side he had attempted to take a short cut over the screen on portion of the gantry timbers, and while doing so lost his balance.

Two other accidents of a much less serious nature were reported. One of these consisted of the gassing of a young man named Christopher Curtain at the Wealth of Nations Mine at Reefton. He was employed at the time in removing old timber from the top of a winze on No. 12 level, which was to be baled out. The winze was full of water charged with sulphuretted hydrogen, and it is presumed that he disturbed the water, causing the gas to be freed. Curtain was rendered semi-unconscious, but speedily recovered on removal to the Hospital. The other accident was to a man named F. C. Bell at the Hohonu Sluicing Company's claim at Greenstone. Some of the employees were putting in boxes near the face at the time. Bell, who was in charge of the working, was assisting them, but had just sat down on the edge of the race when a small slab fell away from a boulder of sandstone behind him. The material only fell a few inches, but it struck Bell on the back, causing injuries that necessitated him being taken to the Westland Hospital, where he remained for several weeks.

SOUTHERN INSPECTION DISTRICT (Mr. A. WHITLEY, Inspector of Mines).

Quartz and Alluvial Mining.

WAITAKI COUNTY.

Livingstone and Maerewhenua.—A long period of dry weather was experienced in the early part of the year, which caused a shortage of water for sluicing, consequently there has been a falling-off in the yield of gold. Returns show that nine men were employed, producing 87 oz. gold, valued at £338.

WAIHEMO COUNTY.

Golden Point Mine (Macrae's).—No work was done in the mine during the year. At the battery 1,100 tons of tailings, saved from the previous crushings, were treated by cyanide for a yield of gold valued at £628, and 13 tons of concentrates, valued at £233, were shipped to Australia for smelting.

Mount Moore Gold-mining Syndicate (Stoneburn).—This syndicate has taken up the Golden Bar Mine, and commenced to sink a vertical shaft to prospect the reefs at a depth of 100 ft. below the low-level tunnel.

MANIOTOTO COUNTY.

St. Bathans's.—The Scandinavian Water-race Company has reopened the Kildare lead at a depth of 177 ft. below the present surface level. The lead comprises a rich seam of quartz gravel, of an average width of 3 ft., which is dipping south-west at an angle of 45°. Two hydraulic elevators are required for lifting the gravel, and owing to the increasing depth other methods will have to be adopted for mining the lead at the deeper levels. The yield of gold for the year amounted to 619 oz., valued at £2,430.

Cambrian.—Four sluicing and elevating claims employing eight men were in operation. The Vinegar Hill Sluicing Company was the principal producer with a yield of 280 oz. gold, valued at £1,162.

Naseby and Kyeburn.—Twenty-six men were engaged in alluvial mining in these localities. The yield of gold amounted to 471 oz., valued at £2,088.

Patearoa.—Three claims were worked during the year. The gold won amounted to 114 oz., valued at £448.

TUAPEKA COUNTY.

Gabriel's Gully Sluicing Company (Blue Spur).—Two sluicing plants have been treating auriferous cement throughout the year with payable results. Fourteen men were employed, producing 926 oz. of gold, valued at £3,783. Dividends amounting to £2,000 were paid.

Lawrence Sluicing Company (Blue Spur).—This company is working the north section of the Blue Spur cement deposit, the tailings from sluicing operations being discharged into Munro's Gully. Six men were employed during the year, and the yield of gold was valued at £710.

Golden Crescent Sluicing Company (Weatherstone).—This company has been treating low-grade cement throughout the year. The gold won amounted to 248 oz., valued at £1,028. Six men were employed.

Sailor's Gully Sluicing Company (Waitahuna).—Operations were confined to sluicing surface clay and weathered portions of the cement deposit in the company's claim. Gold valued at £2,933 was won, and dividends amounting to £1,680 were paid.

Havelock Sluicing Company (Waitahuna).—Sluicing and elevating was carried on up to July. The last two paddocks taken out did not yield sufficient gold to pay working-costs. Additional plant was required before work could be continued, and as the prospects of meeting with payable ground were not considered favourable the company decided to cease operations. This company, which was registered in 1908 with £4,000 subscribed capital, produced gold valued at £38,838, and paid £11,400 in dividends.

Waipori.—Five alluvial claims, employing nine men, were in operation during the year. The gold won amounted to 533 oz., valued at £2,189. R. J. Cotton was the principal producer, with 293 oz., valued at £1,230.

VINCENT COUNTY.

Old Man Range.—R. T. Symes, owner of the Advance Mine, crushed 75 tons of quartz from a winze and drive on White's reef, 35 ft. below the battery level, for a yield of 59 oz. gold, valued at £237.

Nevis.—Returns from this locality show that seven alluvial claims, employing twenty-five men, were in operation during the year. The gold won amounted to 1,194 oz., valued at £4,723. Graham and party were the principal producers with 712 oz., valued at £2,848.

Clutha River.—The Clutha Development Company (Limited) have been engaged in prospecting a large area of river-bed in the vicinity of Lowburn with one of the Government Keystone drills. The prospects obtained are considered to be very encouraging, and it is intended to continue drilling until the area is thoroughly tested.

LAKE COUNTY.

Shotover River.—Nineteen men were employed at alluvial mining in this locality. The gold won amounted to 393 oz., valued at £1,570.

Sandhills Gold-mining Company (Upper Shotover).—This company is concentrating on the work of sluicing out an old channel of the Shotover River for the purpose of turning the river from its present course and working about 60 chains of its bed.

Reid and Lynch (Sawyer's Creek).—Loose gold-bearing quartz was found in a slip at the head of Sawyer's Creek, and driving is in progress to prospect for the reef from which it was shed.

Kawarau Gold-mining Company.—A license for a dam at the outlet of Lake Wakatipu having been granted to the company the work of preparing the site was commenced in the latter part of the year. The dam will be of the stoney sluice type, comprising ten gates each 40 ft. wide and 7 ft. high, operated by winches for controlling the flow of water from the lake. The company's special dredging claims in the Kawarau River have been subdivided into 128 claims, each one-quarter of a mile in length, which are being leased to subsidiary companies and parties.