

(3) ALLUVIAL MINING.

The following is a statement showing the value of production and dividends declared from alluvial gold-mines during 1927 :—

Name of Company.	Estimated Value of Gold produced.	Dividends declared.	
		During 1927.	Total to End of 1927.
	£	£	£
Lawrence Sluicing Co.	2,781	750	3,750
Gabriel's Gully Sluicing Co.	3,399	600	19,215
Golden Crescent Sluicing Co.	1,204	175	14,175
Sailor's Gully Sluicing Co.	2,059	630	9,200
Round Hill Mining Co.	1,512	..	..
Morgan Bros.	1,158	..	..
Hohonu Gold Sluicing Co.	1,493	..	..
Stubbs and Steel	1,062	..	..
Rimu United	475	..	..
All other claims	25,011	..	..
Totals	40,154	2,155	Unknown.

V. MINERALS OTHER THAN GOLD.

IRON.

The local demand for pig iron was not sufficient to keep the blast furnace at Onakaka in operation throughout the year. 6,886 tons of iron-ore were smelted and produced 3,383 tons of pig iron, valued at £17,761. Through minor alterations to the plant further reductions in the cost of production have been obtained. The company is now endeavouring to raise capital to increase the capacity of the blast furnace and install a pipe-founding plant, by means of which it is expected to keep the furnace at full production throughout the whole of the year.

SULPHUR.

From White Island 900 tons of 33-per-cent. sulphur, valued at £3 10s. per ton, were shipped and sold during the year. The principal work on the island consisted of the putting-down of twenty-seven boreholes to an average depth of 180 ft. for the purpose of testing the sulphur deposits below the floor of the crater, and the relaying of the tram-line from Crater Bay at a lower level in order to gain better facilities for working the higher-grade sulphur found on the floor and sides of the crater.

PETROLEUM.

The Taranaki Oilfields, Ltd., has so far met with no success in its search for oil. During the year drilling was confined to areas in the Gisborne and Waiapu districts. The Waiapu No. 2 well reached a depth of 2,908 ft. without striking oil. The Gisborne No. 1 well was put down to a depth of 2,140 ft. on a favourable structure near Morere; it still has some distance to go before it reaches the Cretaceous rocks, which, on the geological evidence, are expected to be oil-bearing. Towards the end of the year the site was prepared and the erection of the derrick begun for another well, known as the Gisborne No. 2 well, on a favourable structure found in the Manganone Valley, about seven miles from the No. 1 well.

An effort was made by the Blenheim Oil Well Reclamation Co., Ltd., to recondition and bring into production the Blenheim well. An oil-sand was known to exist at about 2,180 ft. The intention of the company was to clear the well to that depth, plug it there, and then "shoot" the well. From that horizon 30,000 gallons of oil had been got in January, 1914. The well was cleared to the depth required, but a string of 7 in. casing fell down the well, and by the end of the year only part of the casing had been recovered.

Drilling at the Mangles River by the Murchison Oil Co. was continued throughout the year, and the depth reached was 3,461 ft. Some gas and a show of oil were got at about 2,300 ft.

VI. STONE-QUARRY INSPECTION AND STATISTICS.

By section 2 of the Stone-quarries Amendment Act, 1920, the application of the Act was extended to include every place, not being a mine, in which persons work in quarrying stone and any part of which has a face more than 15 ft. deep, and also in any tunnel in the construction of which explosives are used. The Act, however, does not apply to any Government operations, or any road or railway cutting, or excavations for buildings.