

Prospecting by boring, shaft-sinking, and driving was carried out in many areas in Southland, Otago, and the West Coast districts of the South Island.

Several of the West Coast areas which had been bored proved that they could be worked profitably by dredges.

Six hundred and thirty-two bores were drilled in alluvial ground in the Southern District, their total depths being 34,040 ft. In the West Coast District 1,512 bores, totalling 49,504 ft., were put down during 1936, and in the Northern District thirteen holes, totalling 611 ft.

The inclined shaft at Wetherstones was stopped at a fault when it was 1,737 ft. in from the surface. The plant was then withdrawn from the shaft and later removed from the area.

A good deal of driving was done during the year to the south of the Kawarau River, but on Cromwell Flat the only work done, except boring, was a little "blocking-out" in the Bell-Hooper Mine and some further prospecting in Mr. R. J. Bell's north shaft.

At the King Solomon Mine 1,958 oz. of gold, valued at £14,569, was recovered in 1936. The returns commenced to fall, and towards the end of the year work was confined to the payable ground in the south-west section of the mine and to the "blocking-out" of the remainder of the payable pillars in the east section.

At the Nokomai Claim, where about three years ago a drag-line excavator was tried and abandoned, it has been decided again to alter the method of working the claim. A pair of 12 in. gravel-pumps are to work in series, mounted on a steel pontoon, and will elevate the wash 120 ft. to the boxes at the surface.

V. MINERALS OTHER THAN GOLD.

IRON.

No iron ore was mined at Onakaka during 1936.

ASBESTOS.

Active prospecting has been carried out on the area near Takaka now held by Hume Pipe Co. (Aust.), Ltd.

SULPHUR.

No work of importance was done at any of the sulphur-deposits during 1936.

QUICKSILVER.

The North Auckland quicksilver mines were not worked during 1936.

TUNGSTEN.

From Glenorchy and Macraes the production of scheelite during 1936 was less than the previous year's output. The value of the yield from both fields was £3,448, compared with £4,719 in 1935.

PLATINUM.

Four of the sluicing companies, operating in Southland, in conjunction with the gold recovered, obtained 29½ oz. of platinum, valued at £187.

PETROLEUM.

At Kotuku five shallow boreholes were put down by the Maoriland Oilfields, Ltd., and 1,188 gallons of oil were collected.

No drilling was done during 1936 in Southland or by the Moturoa Oilfields, Ltd., in Taranaki.

From the Moturoa Nos. 1 and 4 wells 7,925 gallons and 43,267 gallons respectively were collected under steady flow. At the No. 2 well bailing had to be done at intervals and, from that well, 106,699 gallons were obtained during the year.

VI. STONE-QUARRY INSPECTION AND STATISTICS.

By section 2 of the Stone-quarries Amendment Act, 1920, the application of the Stone-quarries Act, 1910, 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. The Act also applies to any tunnel in the construction of which explosives are used, but it does not apply to any Government operations, or any road or railway cutting, or excavations for buildings.