

(3.) ALLUVIAL MINING.

There were 432 men employed on 131 alluvial claims during the year. The total output was valued at £80,273, which is slightly in excess of that of the preceding year. A large number of these claims are worked by their owners, and the returns from this class of mining show that on an average each man won gold to the value of £3 10s. per week. Messrs. Morgan Bros.' claim at Cambrian, Otago, worked by three men, furnished the highest output for the year—viz., 1,655 oz., valued at £6,620.

The position of working operations at the various alluvial mines is commented upon by the District Inspectors of Mines in Annexure A accompanying this report.

The following is a table showing the value of production of alluvial gold-mines and the dividends paid by the principal companies during 1919:—

Name of Company.	Value of Gold produced.	Dividends declared.	
		During 1919.	Total to end of 1919.
<i>Otago and Southland.</i>			
United M. & E. Water-race Company ..	£ 1,041	£ 228	£ 3,534
Gabriel's Gully Sluicing Company	4,661	1,840	14,295
Eighty-two other claims	53,497	*	*
<i>Nelson and Westland.</i>			
Forty-seven claims	21,074	*	*
Totals, 1919	80,273	2,068	*
Totals, 1918	78,895	4,953	*
Totals, 1917	89,941	5,710	*

* The profits from these claims, which are mostly privately owned, are unobtainable.

V. MINERALS OTHER THAN GOLD.

TUNGSTEN-ORE.

The quantity of tungsten-ore exported during the year amounted to 131 tons, valued at £29,489, as compared with 169½ tons, valued at £37,922, in 1919. The following statement shows the quantity and value of ore exported:—

Year.		Quantity.	Value.	Year.		Quantity.	Value.
		Tons.	£			Tons.	£
1899	32	2,788	1911	138	11,853
1900	54	2,635	1912	135	13,347
1901	2	83	1913	221	22,933
1902	39	1,200	1914	204	21,498
1903	42	1,439	1915	194	27,784
1904	17	791	1916	266	49,070
1905	28	1,848	1917	161	28,972
1906	55	3,407	1918	169½	37,922
1907	137	15,486	1919	131	29,489
1908	68	6,055				
1909	58	4,263				
1910	143	15,070	Totals	2,294½	297,933

The quantity of tungsten concentrate obtained during the year was 122¼ tons, as compared with 143¾ tons for the previous year and 199½ tons during 1917.

During the war period the Imperial Government bought the whole of the output of tungsten-ore in the Empire, and the price eventually rose to £3 8s. per unit, on a basis of 65 per cent. WO 3. After the Armistice the demand for this ore ceased, and stocks began to accumulate to such an extent that further supplies after the 30th April were refused. Owners of producing mines, and even of claims which had not yet reached the productive stage, were subsequently adequately compensated for any loss they might have been put to by the termination of their contract at an earlier date than was anticipated.

As the price of tungsten-ore has now fallen to £1 10s. per unit production during the latter part of the year has been curtailed, and until a more favourable market offers there is little likelihood of any great activity in the development of scheelite deposits unless warranted by their gold contents.