

Callaghan's Gold Sluicing Co., Ltd. (S. Havill, Manager).—369 oz. of gold, worth £1,845 2s. 4d. was won from its claim by the company named. Sluicing was suspended from a variety of causes during the latter part of the year, and it was then decided to work the claim by underground methods. The last-mentioned work is in progress. On an average, ten men were employed for the period.

Collingwood (Rocky, Aorere, and Anatoki Rivers, Takaka County, &c.).—Fifty-nine men were employed, winning 556 oz. 10 dwt. 22 gr. of gold, valued at £2,931 16s. 7d.

Waimea and Marlborough (Wangapeka, Baton, Wakamarina, Onamalutu, and Cullensville).—Fifty-seven men were employed, winning 2,057 oz. 1 dwt. 11 gr. of gold, valued at £11,931 12s. 9d. These figures are inclusive of those pertaining to the Mahakipawa Co.'s work.

Murchison (Howard, Matakitaki, and Maruia).—Two hundred and ten men were employed, winning 1,811 oz. 7 dwt. 8 gr. of gold, valued at £8,716 19s. 11d.

Buller (Charleston, Birchfield, Lyell, &c.).—Seventy-four men were employed, winning 868 oz. 5 dwt. 4 gr. of gold, valued at £4,635 13s. 6d.

Reefton (Merrijigs, Blackwater, and Ikamatua).—Sixty-six men were employed, winning 701 oz. 1 dwt. 8 gr. of gold, valued at £3,824 2s. 5d.

Grey (Ahaura, Moonlight, and Barrytown).—One hundred and forty-seven men were employed, winning 1,978 oz. 1 dwt. of gold, valued at £10,244 4s. 7d. These figures are inclusive of those pertaining to the Bell Hill Co.'s work.

Westland (Kumara, Callaghan's, Blue Spur, Rimu, and Kanieri).—One hundred and twenty-two men were employed, winning 1,612 oz. 9 dwt. 20 gr. of gold, valued at £8,484 10s. 1d. These figures are inclusive of those dealing with operations conducted at the Hohonu and Callaghan's Co.'s claims.

South Westland (Ross, Okarito, Gillespies, and Bruce Bay).—Fifty-four men were employed, winning 661 oz. 14 dwt. 6 gr. of gold, valued at £3,316 9s. 2d.

MINERALS OTHER THAN GOLD.

Onakaka Iron and Steel Co., Ltd. (J. A. Heskett, Manager).—No pig-iron or material of any description was produced at the company's works during the period under review. This result was due to several causes, the largest, no doubt, being the general all-round slackness of trade. Indications are to the effect that the year 1933 will see a partial resumption of operations at least.

Petroleum.—No great amount of activity has been shown in this class of work for the year. The Kotuku Oil and Goldfields Ltd. (a new company), however, has been formed with the object of testing an area at Kotuku, Hohonu Survey District, and certain preliminary operations have been undertaken thereon by the company. The same ground has been hitherto prospected (by another company), with a number of shafts and bores, but it is claimed that these were too shallow, and steps are now being taken to drill up to and beyond the ground so far penetrated with the object of testing new, and it may be more favourable strata.

PROSPECTING.

Operations pertaining to this class of work have been greatly increased for the year by an extended scheme of the Unemployment Board which has been responsible for alluvial work, in particular, having a widespread growth. Results from this source have been fair in some instances, and good in others, and with prospective gains they should be considered satisfactory. The drilling of small areas situate at lower Maori Gully, Hohonu Survey District; Blackball Creek, Mawheranui Survey District; and Butler's Freehold, Mahinapua Survey District, respectively, is stated to have been successful. Areas located in Antonios, Mawheraiti Survey District; at Minchicoff Terrace, Arnold Flat, Mawheranui Survey District; and on Brown's Terrace, Hohonu Survey District, similarly investigated, did not live up to expectations. This form of prospecting cannot be too highly commended where the testing of water-logged, and any but shallow, ground is concerned, for the work is speedy and effective, and gives accurate values when properly carried out. There is every indication that considerable impetus will be experienced by drill prospecting during 1933. No extensive and prolonged search for quartz reefs has been undertaken (the rewards for such work being few and seldom immediate), but such slackened conditions are unlikely to continue, as there is every reason to believe that revived and much-needed interest will be shown towards this important branch of mining during the ensuing period.

ACCIDENTS.

There were two fatal and two non-fatal accidents during the year. The first fatal accident, in which a man named Andrew Simpson was the victim, occurred at the Slate River Sluicing Coy's claim, Collingwood district, on the 8th April. The deceased was engaged in liberating gravels from the working-face (with a bar), when some overhanging ground came away quickly and buried him. The second fatal accident, in which a Thomas William Noble Douglas was the victim, occurred at the Rough and Tumble Mine, Mokihinui, on 11th October. This was brought about by the deceased trying to force a lath over a false set of timber, standing at the face of a drive, that was being advanced through loose gravels. The roof caved in, and the deceased was caught and smothered by the fallen debris. Francis Bowey and William J. White were the victims of the non-fatal accidents. The first mentioned, employed at the Alexander Mine, was struck by a piece of rock that fell from the hanging-wall, McVicar reef. He sustained a broken left leg. The last named, working on the Mount David Sluicing Co's water-race, slipped when attempting to lift a heavy stone, and this resulted in a ruptured lower left bowel.

GENERAL REMARKS.—MINING.

The gold obtained from alluvial work was considerably in advance of that won from the same source last year, the respective values being £54,085 9s., and £25,700 15s. 6d., which increase is most satisfactory. Recoveries from metalliferous mines also show a gain as to the quantity of gold won and values received for the period, the comparative figures in this respect being 32,420 oz. 15 dwt., valued at £189,801 10s. 1d., and 24,869 oz. 18 dwt., worth £118,567 6s. 2d. Dredging operations for the year have likewise resulted in enhanced returns, the amounts recovered and values received for the last and present periods being 10,435 oz. 18 dwt., worth £49,420 3s. 9d., and 16,960 oz. 4 dwt., valued at £106,708 3s. 11d., respectively. The general increase in gold won is due to the very marked and all-round livening-up experienced by mining over the whole period; and it would appear that the contributory causes to such activities must have been the continued economic depression, together with favourable values received each in an equal degree. Three new dredges and two large sluicing claims should commence operations during the ensuing year, hence it seems as if the next returns are likely to eclipse the increased ones now recorded.

PROSECUTIONS.

Eight informations were laid during the year. Two were withdrawn and the others were successful. A mine-manager was fined £1 and ordered to pay costs, 17s., for allowing rock-drills, other than axial water-feed drills, to be used. The same person was convicted and ordered to pay costs, 17s., for being the manager of a mine where a quantity of detonators, not required for immediate use, was taken out of the covered box in the drive or chamber set apart for their storage. Two miners were each charged (1) with taking explosive substance for use into the workings of a mine in a case other than a securely covered case or canister; and (2) taking quantities of detonators, not required for immediate use, out of the covered box in the drive or chamber set apart for their storage. One was convicted and fined £1, with costs, 17s., on the first charge, and ordered to pay costs, 17s., on the other. The second was convicted and ordered to pay costs, 17s. on each charge.