

The Rimu Flat dredge gave better results than in the previous year, the gold won being 11,800 oz., valued at £17,900, an increase of 3,986 oz. of gold and of £12,180 in value. The company operating the dredge is still prospecting other areas in the district.

The New River dredge commenced operations on an area near Dunganville, in Grey County, in June. Considerable difficulties were encountered, but towards the end of the year better results were being obtained. The gold won to the end of the year amounted to 567 oz., valued at £2,229.

(3) ALLUVIAL MINING.

The following is a statement showing the value of production and dividends declared from alluvial gold-mines during 1926 :—

Name of Company.	Estimated Value of Gold produced.	Dividends declared.	
		During 1926.	Total to End of 1926.
	£	£	£
Scandinavian Water-race Co.	1,857	..	..
Lawrence Sluicing Co.	3,487	1,000	3,000
Gabriel's Gully Sluicing Co.	4,262	1,000	18,615
W. R. Smyth	1,344	..	..
Golden Crescent Sluicing Co.	2,278	350	14,000
Sailor's Gully Sluicing Co.	2,420	1,050	8,570
Graham and party	932	325	4,388
Nokomai Hydraulic Sluicing Co.	1,578	..	54,684
Round Hill Mining Co.	2,276	..	..
Hohonu Gold Sluicing Co.	1,773	..	..
Stubbs and Steel	1,101	..	..
All other claims	20,351	..	..
Totals	43,659	3,725	Unknown.

V. MINERALS OTHER THAN GOLD.

IRON.

The blast furnace at Onakaka, belonging to the Onakaka Iron and Steel Co., was in operation for part of the year, and smelted 7,994 tons of ore for a production of 3,997 tons of pig iron. Several alterations were made to the plant, which enabled the cost of production to be lowered, and the company is now able to put iron on the market at a price which enables it to compete with imported iron in New Zealand, and even to ship pig iron to Australia.

SULPHUR.

The White Island Products, Ltd., has taken over from the former company the works at White Island and Tauranga. Operations on the island comprised the installation of plant to facilitate loading, and prospecting and opening up the sulphur deposits. Up till the end of the year 1,783 tons of crude sulphur had been shipped. The product after treatment was put on the market as a fertilizer.

PETROLEUM.

The Taranaki Oilfields, Ltd., continued its operations in the Taranaki and Gisborne districts. The Tarata well was drilled to a depth of 5,010 ft., but no oil was struck. The Moturoa well was sunk to a depth of 4,360 ft. without striking payable oil or gas. Waipu No. 1 well was sunk to a depth of 2,540 ft., but got no oil. Another well, Waipu No. 2, was started near Tokomaru Bay late in the year, and preparations were made for still another well, Waipu No. 3, on a site in the Waitara Survey District. Field-work by oil-geologists was carried on continuously in Taranaki and Gisborne districts with a view to locating favourable oil structures.

The Murchison Oil Co. started drilling a well near the Mangles River, and by the end of the year a depth of 1,763 ft. had been reached, without, however, striking more than slight showings of oil.

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.