

VII. STATE AID TO MINING.

(1) SUBSIDIZED PROSPECTING.

During the year ended 31st March, 1940, individual gold prospectors were assisted from the Mines Department vote to the extent of £18,503. This sum includes all payments made in respect of subsidies, wages, and equipment connected with the Department's subsidized gold-mining scheme, but does not include salaries and allowances paid to mining engineers and supervisors. The average number of men employed under the scheme was 293.

In addition, a total sum of £19,229 was advanced by way of subsidy, loan, or other form of financial assistance to companies and individuals engaged in prospecting and/or mining for gold, coal, and other minerals.

The Department has also undertaken surveys, prospecting, mining, and development work in selected areas at a cost of £8,120.

(2) GOVERNMENT PROSPECTING DRILLS.

The following table gives details of the drilling done for twelve months ended 31st December, 1939:—

Drills used : Diamond and Keystone drills. Percussion and Hand-placer drills.

Number of Holes drilled.	Total Depth.	Diameter of Hole.	Mineral sought.	Character of Country drilled through.	To whom lent.	Cost per Foot of Drilling.	Cost per Foot of Transport.	Cost per Foot of Carbons' Wear.	Remarks
						s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	
9	357	4 In.	Gold	Gravels, &c. ..	Labour Department (Employment Division)	9 4.5	..	..	..
2	212	6	Gold	Gravels, &c. ..	Rimu Gold Dredging Co., Ltd.	10 7	2 5	..	..
38	1,007	6	Gold	Gravels, &c. ..	Rimu Gold Dredging Co., Ltd.	4 11.9	2 1	..	..
2	300	4½ and 6	Gold	Sand and gravels	Mines Department	..	..	..	..
217	2,262	4 and 4½	*	Sand	State Iron and Steel Department	..	..	..	..
33	497	6	Gold	Gravels, &c. ..	Slab Hut Syndicate	..	..	..	In progress.
5	462	6	Gold	Gravels, &c. ..	T. H. Lee ..	9 2	4 2	..	..
13	390	6	Gold	Gravels, &c. ..	T. H. Lee ..	11 5	10 4	..	..
1	85	1½	Coal	Claystone and sandstone	State Coalmines	..	..	..	..
1	114	3½	Coal	Sandstone, grits, &c.	United Brunner Collieries, Ltd.	..	..	..	..
321	5,686								

* Testing depth of ironsand.

(3) SUBSIDIZED ROADS ON GOLDFIELDS.

The expenditure in the form of subsidies and direct grants upon roads on goldfields amounted to £597 11s. 8d., as compared with £5,220 12s. 3d. during the previous year.

(4) LEGISLATION AFFECTING METALLIFEROUS MINES.

By the Statutes Amendment Act, 1939, sections 384 to 392, 419, 422, 426, and paragraph (c) of section 425 of the Mining Act, 1926, were repealed and, instead, entirely new provisions were enacted setting out the manner in which moneys appropriated by Parliament to assist the mining industry are to be applied.

There was no amendment made to the regulations under the Mining Act during 1939.

It is with extreme regret that I have to record the death of Mr. Arthur W. Turner on 28th September, 1939. He was a very able mining engineer, and for three years had been one of the two Inspectors of Mines for the West Coast district.

During Mr. Turner's illness just prior to his death and until the end of March, 1940, when his successor, Mr. R. C. Ruffin, took up his duties, Mr. G. W. Lowes carried on alone as Inspector for the district.

I desire to acknowledge again his efficient help and co-operation, as well as that of the other Inspectors of Mines, which I have received during the year.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE DUGGAN,
Inspecting Engineer of Mines.