

ASSISTANCE TO MINING

Financial assistance to the mining industry by subsidies and loans during the year ended 31st March, 1947, amounted to £21,314. Of this sum, £354 was for gold-mining, £420 for cinnabar-mining, £40 for scheelite-mining, and the balance for coal-mining.

MINERS' BENEFITS

The provision for payment of a miner's benefit is contained in the Social Security Act, 1938, which has been operative since 1st April, 1939. One of the necessary qualifications is that the applicant should be seriously and permanently incapacitated by miner's phthisis or totally and permanently incapacitated by heart or other occupational disease associated with mining service in New Zealand.

The rate of benefit for a miner is £104 per annum, increased, in the case of an applicant who is married, by £104 per annum for his wife. The widow of a miner who died while in receipt of a miner's benefit may be granted a benefit of £78 per annum during widowhood.

This scheme, which originated with the Miner's Phthisis Act, 1915, is administered by the Social Security Commission, and the following is a summary of the operations for the year ended 31st March, 1947 :—

	£
Payments from 1st November, 1915, to 31st March, 1946 ..	1,663,026
Payments for 1946-47	105,416
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	£1,768,442
Number of new grants for year 1946-47—	
Males	44
Females	4
	— 48
Number of benefits in force at 31st March, 1947—	
Males	634
Females	84
	—718
Annual value of benefits in force at 31st March, 1947 ..	£101,956
Dissection of benefits in force at 31st March, 1947—	
Single miners	320
Married miners	314
Widows	84
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	718
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LEGISLATION

The Coal-mines Act, 1925, was amended by section 17 of the Statutes Amendment Act, 1946, to provide that leases under Part I of the Act may be restricted to a specified seam of coal or to a defined coal-bearing horizon.