

a University Entrance bursary in coal-mining and thereby became ineligible. This is the last occasion upon which examinations will be held for the award of these scholarships. Of late years they have not fulfilled their function as entrance scholarships to the University School of Mines, and it has been decided to suspend their award and substitute entrance bursaries in coal-mining, the regulations governing the award of which were detailed at length in the Mines Statement for the year 1949.

Early in the present year a Selection Board was convened in Christchurch to interview applicants, and as a consequence six bursaries, the maximum number possible, were awarded. The progress of these, the initial bursars both at University and later at the mines, will be followed with interest.

The first travelling scholarship in coal-mining, open to graduates of the Otago University School of Mines, was awarded by the Council of the University during 1949, and the first holder is now overseas studying opencast coal-mining technique. Arrangements have recently been made whereby holders of these travelling scholarships may pursue a course of training and study specially planned for graduates by the National Coal Board of Great Britain. This will give scholarship-holders an excellent opportunity to become familiar with up-to-date practice in Great Britain, and the whole industry in New Zealand must eventually benefit.

For some time it has been the desire of the Director of the Otago School of Mines and Metallurgy to arrange a mining conference in Dunedin so that members of the industry might meet not only to discuss mining problems, but also to become familiar with the new equipment and facilities now available at the school. The Mines Department willingly supported this proposal, and it was finally decided to hold the conference in May of this year. Although the last conference in 1926 had dealt with mining generally, it was decided in this case to confine discussion to coal-mining, in view of its major importance. The conference proved a great success, for which credit is due in great part to the Faculty of the Otago School of Mines, who made all the preliminary arrangements and organized the conference throughout its various sessions. One very pleasing feature was the attendance of two visitors from Australia who occupy leading positions in the coal-mining industry there. Their contributions to the discussions were particularly helpful in view of their extensive overseas experience. At the conclusion of the conference a conducted tour of the southern coalfields was arranged in which many members participated. Generally it was felt that much was achieved by the conference and that the frank discussion of many controversial problems was of considerable value. It is to be hoped that it may be possible to arrange similar conferences at closer intervals than formerly.

### COAL-MINES COUNCIL

The Coal-mines Council continued to work during the year and issued 90 decisions dealing with 294 separate matters, mainly in connection with the settlement of industrial disputes and the determination of working conditions in the industry.

### RESCUE STATIONS

Rescue stations at Dobson, Ohai, Rotowaro, and Granity were in full operation during the year and continued to render valuable service to the coal-mining industry.

Full details of the operations of these stations will be found in the annual report of the Superintendent, which is published as an Annexure to this Statement.