

The new station at Granity has been partially completed, but difficulty is being experienced in finishing the building owing to shortage of building-materials.

A substation has recently been built at Mangapehi, where the training of teams is carried out by the officer in charge of the Rotowaro district.

SOCIAL AMENITIES

During the financial year 1945-46 the sum of £1,973 was expended in the improvement of social amenities for mining communities.

During the war years it has been impossible to improve social amenities to the extent desirable, but it is intended from now onward to expand activities in this direction so that mining communities will have facilities for recreation comparable with those of the more accessible and favoured larger centres.

HOUSING

The critical shortage of building materials have prevented any large-scale building programme in mining centres, but it is hoped to build a limited number of new houses during the coming year, probably at Huntly, Reefton, and Ohai.

In addition, the provision of a large-scale hostel both at Huntly and Ohai is now under consideration, and it is hoped thereby to greatly improve accommodation for single men employed in the coal-mines in those districts.

COAL MINERS' RELIEF FUND

Receipts from the levy of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per ton amounted to £5,706 for the year ended 31st March, 1946, and the total expenditure for the year was £9,219.

Interest earned amounted to £165, and the amount standing to the credit of the fund on 31st March, 1946, was £3,851.

At the close of the previous year the figures were: receipts, £5,566; expenditure, £10,059; interest, £301; balance as at 31st March, 1945, £7,199.

ASSISTANCE TO MINING

Financial assistance afforded the mining industry by subsidies and loans during the year ended 31st March, 1946, amounted to £11,173. Of this sum, £101 was for gold-mining, £14 for the production of manganese-ore, and the balance to the coal-mining industry.

MINERS' BENEFITS

The provision for payment of a miner's benefit is contained in the Social Security Act, 1938, which has been operative since the 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. There is now no provision for payment of any portion of miner's benefit in respect of a miner's child or children, as these, like the children of other beneficiaries, are covered by family benefit. The widow of a miner who died while in receipt of a miner's benefit has also received an increase of benefit from £52 to £78 per annum.

The new provisions referred to above were embodied in the Social Security Amendment Act, 1945.