

COAL POSITION

The coal position throughout the year continued to be a source of constant anxiety, despite the reductions in train services.

The following table shows the consumption and stocks of locomotive coal during the past eight years :—

Year ended 31st March,					Coal Consumption.			Coal Stocks.
					Hard.	Soft.	Total.	
					Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
1939	..	..	..	..	284,295	200,128	484,423	93,046
1940	..	..	..	..	301,512	190,944	492,456	53,570
1941	..	..	..	..	298,465	230,087	528,552	76,109
1942	..	..	..	..	307,948	229,784	537,732	73,332
1943	..	..	..	..	333,773	278,068	611,841	65,087
1944	..	..	..	..	284,688	349,319	634,007	20,817
1945	..	..	..	..	205,577	371,349	576,926	20,954
1946	..	..	..	..	209,943	400,143	610,086	11,841

At the time of writing the stocks amount to 8,316 tons, but during the month of June, 1946, they fell below 3,000 tons, and further cuts upon the already restricted time-table had to be imposed on 21st June.

Apart from the loss of revenue on the regular train services, the coal shortage has meant that the railways have been unable to cater with special trains for special events such as football tours, Ranfurly Shield matches, show weeks, and the like. In pre-war years these special events, together with Sunday trains, have provided a good source of revenue at little additional expense.

The following table shows for the same years the consumption of coal from the point of view of efficiency and economy :—

Year ended 31st March,				Steam-engine Miles (000's).	Pounds per Engine-mile.	Steam Gross Ton-miles (000's).	Pounds per 1,000 Gross Ton-miles.	Percentage of Soft Coal used.
1939	..	..	..	16,978	64	2,767,240	392	41
1940	..	..	..	17,069	65	2,828,326	390	39
1941	..	..	..	17,072	69	2,991,761	396	44
1942	..	..	..	17,368	69	3,078,801	391	43
1943	..	..	..	18,840	73	3,467,082	395	45
1944	..	..	..	18,955	75	3,562,997	399	55
1945	..	..	..	16,087	80	3,117,337	415	64
1946	..	..	..	16,804	81	3,281,499	416	66

It will be noted that the efficiency figures continue to correlate closely with the proportion of soft coal used.

REHABILITATION

Approximately 7,600 railwaymen have been released from the Armed Services, and of this number 700 are not now in railway employment, thus leaving 6,900 to be rehabilitated.

A Railway Rehabilitation Officer has operated at headquarters during the year, and District Rehabilitation Officers have also been appointed for all branches. These officers work in close collaboration with the Rehabilitation Department. Through them contact is made with returned men and arrangements made for satisfactory placement and subsequent follow-up.