

ITEMS FROM ANNUAL ACCOUNTS AND BALANCE-SHEET.

The following details extracted from the audited accounts will enable honourable members to appraise the financial position of the Department's trading venture :—

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The payments for interest totalled	4,497
The cost of sea carriage of coal amounted to	33,055
The cost of railway haulage amounted to	25,046
The total wages paid for coal-winning were	63,353
The cost of management and office salaries (Head Office and mines) totalled	3,630
The gross capital expenditure on the whole undertaking to the 31st March, 1935, was	681,971
The total depreciation written off to 31st March, 1935 (equal to 76·3 per cent. of the gross capital expenditure) amounted to	520,679
The amount written off for depreciation for the year was	8,990
The present book value of permanent or fixed assets is	161,292
The loan capital as at 31st March, 1935, stood at	105,833
The net profits of the State Coal-mines Account from inception to 31st March, 1935, after charging the special depreciation of Colliery Development Accounts and after crediting interest on Sinking Fund Investments, were	182,196
The net profit for the year ended 31st March, 1935, was	13,005
The Sinking Fund as at 31st March, 1935, was in credit	8,591
The amount taken out of the Sinking Fund during the year and applied in reduction of loan capital was	8,400
General Reserve as at 31st March, 1935, stood at	169,109
The amount at credit of Profit and Loss as at 31st March, 1935, was	4,495
The cash in hand and in the Public Account as at 31st March, 1935, was (last year £3,301)	8,273

HOUSING.

Thirty-five loans have been granted to miners and others, under the Department's housing scheme, to enable the workmen to erect and own their own houses. The loans, which range from £250 to £300, are repayable, together with interest, by fortnightly instalments over a term of twenty years. No new loans were granted during the year under review.

SOCIAL AMENITIES AT MINING TOWNSHIPS.

From the State Coal-mines Account grants were made to the Runanga Borough for street-lighting and street-maintenance.

On the estimates for the current year provision is being made for top-dressing the Runanga Domain.

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.

During the 1934–35 field season detailed geological examinations were continued in the Eketahuna, Amuri, and Naseby districts. Further work is to be done in the Amuri Subdivision, but the mapping of the other two areas is now finished. Early in 1935 the party working in the Naseby Subdivision was transferred to another auriferous district, that of which Waikaia is the centre. The detailed soil-survey of the Waipa County was continued, and a reconnaissance of part of Ashburton County carried out. In addition, hurried examinations of the underground water conditions in the Hamilton Basin and parts of Taranaki were undertaken.

The time of one officer was fully occupied and that of several other officers partly occupied in making geophysical surveys in connection with mining problems in other districts, the greater portion of the work being carried out at Waihi, Reefton, Ida Valley, Alexandra, and Waikaia. The information obtained by geophysical surveys directs the miner to the most favourable points to prospect, but it does not determine definitely the mineral-content of any deposit, and only very rarely should capital be expended on development-work before the value and extent of the deposit have been proved by the other usual well-known prospecting methods.