

rized, on the pound-for-pound principle, to the extent of £150 to this company, for the purpose of testing the reef at deeper levels. Of this amount £75 has been paid.

Red Hill Mineral Company, Cascade River, Westland.—A company was formed about eighteen months ago in Christchurch to prospect in the vicinity of Red Hill, which lies between the headwaters of the Cascade and Gorge Rivers. A subsidy was authorized for this purpose, on the pound-for-pound principle, to the extent of £500; of which amount £204 has been paid. This company has, however, suspended operations, so that it is unlikely that any further subsidy will be required.

West Coast Prospecting Association, Otago.—This association was formed in Southland for the purpose of prospecting the southern portion of Westland and the south-west portion of Otago. A subsidy was authorized and paid to the extent of £150, on the pound-to-pound principle, to provide equipments and stores for thirty men for six months to prospect this part of the country.

Miscellaneous Aids to Prospecting.—Miscellaneous aids have been authorized, through County Councils and other bodies, from time to time during the past year, and for prospecting-works in progress previously authorized—but not completed until after the commencement of the past year—to the extent of £3,690 19s. 2d.; of which amount £1,719 9s. 5d. has been paid.

AIIDS TOWARDS THE TREATMENT OF ORES.

Testing-plant, School of Mines, Thames.—The great difficulty that the miners in the North Island districts have to contend with is a proper manipulation in the treatment of the ores. They are desirous of having an experimental or test plant connected with the School of Mines at the Thames, whereby tests of small parcels of stone could be made, and the best and cheapest method of treatment adopted for saving the gold and silver from the various classes of ore that are found in the locality. A subsidy on the pound-for-pound principle, to the extent of £200, was at first authorized, but lately this subsidy has been increased to the extent of £600, which, together with another £600 raised by the miners, will be sufficient to erect a very good test-plant.

Vulcan Smelting Company, Onehunga, Auckland.—This company has erected a smelting-furnace at Onehunga for the purpose of treating gold- and silver-ores. The furnace has not yet been tried, but the proprietors have every confidence that it will fully realize their expectations. Of its success, however, I have grave doubts. In order to assist the proprietors to test its capabilities and complete the furnace, a subsidy was authorized on the pound-for-pound principle to the extent of £25, of which amount £15 has been paid.

SUBSIDIZED ROADS TO MINES OTHER THAN GOLD.

Track to Coal-mines, Ohinemuri, Auckland.—Coal was discovered, about three years ago in a creek near the old road leading from Waitekauri to Paeroa. A horse-track was constructed from the old road up to the mine, which is estimated to cost £300. Of this amount a subsidy was authorized to the extent of £200, of which £103 11s. 8d. has been paid.

Road to Kanieri Coalfield, Westland.—Coal has been discovered on a range known as the Camel's Back, which is about eighteen miles up the Hokitika River from its mouth. A road from Hokitika and Kokatahi Road is in course of construction to get to these coal-seams that have been discovered. The estimated cost of the work is £600. Of this amount a subsidy to the extent of £300 was authorized, out of which £285 14s. 8d. has been paid.

ROADS UNDERTAKEN AND CONSTRUCTED WHOLLY BY GOVERNMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MINES AND OPENING OF LANDS.

Road, Collingwood to Karamea, Nelson.—There is a dray-road up the Aorere Valley from Collingwood for eighteen miles, and it is from the end of this dray-road that the present track commences. It is laid off with tolerably good grades, and can be widened into a dray-road whenever required. The track is surveyed for eight miles, and is taken over the top of the saddle (about 2,500ft. above sea-level) between the Aorere and Big Rivers. The track will be continued round the head of the principal branch of the Big River, so that only small tributaries will have to be crossed, and where good fords can be got. £1,000 was authorized for this track, and £400 has been expended. This is a portion of the district where no tracks have ever been constructed, and where a main track through the country is greatly required.

Road, Motueka to Takaka, Nelson.—This forms portion of the main road between Nelson and Collingwood. The portion constructed and in course of construction, under the direction of the Mines Department, is from the Upper Takaka Valley over the range towards Motueka, a distance of sixteen miles and a half. Three sections, of an aggregate length of eight miles, are completed, and three more sections, of an aggregate length of six miles and a half, are in progress. Tenders have been invited for the remaining section, of two miles in length, but have not yet been accepted. The total expenditure on this road amounts to £4,795 2s. 7d.

Road, Wangapeka to Karamea, Nelson.—There is a dray-road constructed to the accommodation-house on the side of the Wangapeka River, and after leaving this accommodation-house there is a bridle-track for more than five miles, which, although not constructed, is available for traffic; and it is from near the end of this bridle-track that the present work commences. The whole of the track has been surveyed to the saddle, a distance of sixteen miles, and six miles of it is under contract for construction. The grades are all good, and will form a good track when completed. From the top of the Wangapeka Saddle, a good grade can be got for the continuation of the track at some future time down the side of one of the branches of the Mokihinui River, to join the track already made from Mokihinui Township to Specimen Creek. The amount authorized for the construction of this track is £2,000, of which sum £1,825 15s. 10d. has been paid.

Owen Valley Road, Inangahua, Nelson.—This is a dray-road, 8ft. in width, from Lyell-Nelson Road to the Mount Owen Reefs. The road commences about two miles up the Buller River from