

STATE AID TO MINING

Subsidized Prospecting

Subsidies, loans, &c., advanced to the mining industry during the financial year 1948-49 totalled £4,874.

The Mines Department spent £39,746 in surveying, prospecting, and developing areas.

LEGISLATION

The Mining Amendment Act, 1948 (No. 26), was passed during the year making provision for—

- (a) Royalty on mineral licences to be fixed by weight or quantity.
- (b) Restriction of right of renewal of mining licences except residence or business site licences.
- (c) Renewal of original priority in respect of water-race licences.
- (d) Appointment of Wardens.
- (e) Consent of Minister to be obtained to grant of metal mining privileges over land affected by coal-mining right.
- (f) Hours of work underground not to exceed seven hours a day.
- (g) Restricting employment of youths underground to those over nineteen years old, with certain exceptions.

GOVERNMENT DRILLS

All Mines Department drills were continuously employed throughout the year. Owing to the heavy programme of drilling undertaken by the Department in all the coalfields, no drilling was done for private operators.

SUBSIDIZED ROADS

Expenditure on subsidies for the maintenance and construction of roads in mining areas during the year 1948-49 was £6,880, the equivalent expenditure for the previous year being £3,476.

I have, &c.,

R. H. SCHOEN,
Inspecting Engineer of Mines.