

For the current year the provision made for roads and bridges has not been limited on account of prevailing conditions, but it must of course be understood that the authorization of expenditure will be dependent upon the Government's ability to raise the necessary loan for public-works purposes. Moreover, it is not intended that the ways and means provided shall be expended by 31st March, 1915, but they are expected to suffice till 31st December, 1916, or even, if necessary, to 31st March, 1917.

ROADS ON GOLDFIELDS (MINES DEPARTMENT).

The total allocation under this head last year amounted to £72,409, on account of which a vote of £53,300 was taken. The expenditure during the year was £30,065.

The sum proposed to be authorized for the current year is £63,511, on account of which a vote of £40,000 is asked for.

TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR ROADWORKS.

The appropriations last year were as under:—		£
Roads, &c. . . . .	.. .. .	557,700
Backblock roads, &c. . . . .	.. .. .	201,000
Goldfields roads, &c. . . . .	.. .. .	53,300
Improved-farm-settlement roads	.. .. .	10,000
Opening up Crown Lands for Settlement Account	.. .. .	173,300
National Endowment Account	40,000
Maintenance of roads (Consolidated Fund)	45,000
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Total	£1,080,300
The provision for the current year is as under:—		£
Roads, &c.	300,000
Backblock roads, &c. . . . .	.. .. .	160,000
Roads on goldfields	.. .. .	40,000
Improved-farm settlements	.. .. .	5,610
Land for Settlements Account	.. .. .	130,000
National Endowment Account	40,000
New Hutt Road	250
Maintenance of roads (Consolidated Fund)	50,000
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Total	£725,860

DEVELOPMENT OF MINING.

The value of the mineral output for the year amounted to £2,752,730, being a decrease as compared with the output of the previous year. This was only to be expected, however, in view of the prohibition of the export of certain minerals during the term of the war.

The output of coal was the highest yet recorded, being 2,275,593 tons, an increase of 387,588 tons over the output of the previous year.

Splendid marble is being produced from the Nelson District, and to aid in the development of this industry assistance is being granted by way of loan to enable the stone to be economically transported to the port of shipment.

The expenditure under the heading of mining development during last year was £2,384, and a vote of £10,000 is proposed to be taken this year.