

**5. Traffic Engineering.**—The technical advice of the Department is being sought to an increasing extent by local authorities in regard to such matters as vehicle parking, traffic flow and congestion, and traffic facilities generally. During the year under review several such local problems were investigated, reported upon, and discussed with some of the urban local bodies.

### ROAD FINANCE

**6. Dominion's Road Bill, 1933-34 to 1938-39, inclusive, and 1943-44.**—The Department has abstracted from various official sources the statistical data relating to road finance and analysed it to show the approximate cost of roads, streets, and bridges under the headings of construction, maintenance, and loan charges. The expenditure has been apportioned in the three primary groups of roads, &c.—namely, main highways, urban roads and streets, and other (rural) roads. To obtain the mileages of these groups some estimation has been necessary, as with certain aspects of the figures for the whole road bill. Any estimations have been conservatively made, and the figures are sufficiently close to accuracy to form a reliable basis for broad conclusions.

**7.** The road bill for the year ended 31st March, 1944, is the latest figure that can be computed from complete available information. It differs materially from pre-war road bills in that practically no construction has been carried out during the war years. Constructional expenditure for the 1943-44 year amounted to only 11·9 per cent. of the total, whereas the corresponding proportion averaged over the six years immediately preceding the war amounted to 41·2 per cent. of the total. It is noticeable of the present bill that there is little variation in expenditure upon maintenance and interest charges when comparison is made to pre-war expenditure upon this source. The bill, which is given hereunder, shows the total expenditure on roads, streets, and bridges under the appropriate headings for the year ended 31st March, 1944 :—

Expenditure upon	Main Highways.	Urban Roads and Streets.	Other Roads.	Total.
	£	£	£	£
Maintenance .. .. .	1,519,201	441,633	1,270,279	3,231,113
Construction .. .. .	116,086	452,656	187,549	756,291
Interest and sinking-fund charges ..	695,571	698,960	995,773	2,390,304
Totals .. .. .	2,330,858	1,593,249	2,453,601	6,377,708

Table No. 3 in the Appendix gives a comparison of the expenditure on roads, streets, bridges, &c., over the individual years ended 31st March, 1934 to 1939, inclusive, with the present expenditure for the year ended 31st March, 1944. Owing to staffing shortages, the comparative expenditure has not been prepared for the intervening war years.

**8. Sources of Moneys expended on Roads, Streets, &c.**—The table hereunder gives the approximate percentages of the five main sources of moneys expended annually on all roads during the years 1933-34 to 1938-39 and 1943-44 :—

Source.	1933-34.	1934-35.	1935-36.	1936-37.	1937-38.	1938-39.	1943-44.
	Per Cent.	Per Cent.	Per Cent.	Per Cent.	Per Cent.	Per Cent.	Per Cent.
Loan .. .. .	9·8	10·8	14·0	22·5	29·0	32·8	3·4
Local rates .. .. .	32·9	30·2	30·3	27·7	24·2	20·9	39·4
Employment Promotion Fund ..	21·3	19·1	12·5	7·7	6·7	12·0	0·9
General Taxation .. .. .	16·0	14·8	14·5	13·2	12·4	11·0	16·1
Motor taxation .. .. .	20·0	25·1	28·7	28·9	27·7	23·3	40·2
Totals .. .. .	100·0	100·0	100·0	100·0	100·0	100·0	100·0

The figures from which the above percentages were computed are given in Table No. 4 of the Appendix.