

Of the 965 vehicles engaged solely in the haulage of freight during 1929–30, 386 had pay-load capacities of under 2 tons, while 579 had capacities of 2 tons and over. In 1930–31 the smaller-sized vehicles increased by 20, or 5 per cent., while the bigger-sized trucks gained by 175, or 30 per cent.

Notwithstanding this increase in the heavier type of vehicles, the total quantity of freight per vehicle and the average receipts per vehicle per annum declined by 1 and 10 per cent. respectively in 1930–31 as compared with 1929–30.

The average receipts per ton of freight dropped from 14s. 11d. in 1929–30 to 13s. 8d. in 1930–31, while the average receipts per vehicle-mile also fell from 1s. 4d. to 1s. 2½d.

Competition with Railways.

The following figures illustrate the extent to which the organized freight services are operated on routes that parallel the railway and on routes unserved by the railway :—

				Year ended 31st March,		Percentage.	
				1930.	1931.	Increase.	Decrease.
(a) Motor Freight Routes that substantially parallel Rail Routes.							
Vehicles	..	..	Number	359	424	18	..
Vehicle mileage	..	..	Miles	4,300,000	5,400,000	26	..
Freight	..	..	Tons	326,000	354,000	9	..
Revenue	..	..	£	276,000	292,000	6	..
(b) Motor Freight Routes that do not parallel Rail Routes.							
Vehicles	..	..	Number	606	736	21	..
Vehicle mileage	..	..	Miles	5,500,000	6,300,000	15	..
Freight	..	..	Tons	550,000	684,000	24	..
Revenue	..	..	£	377,000	416,000	10	..

The foregoing figures direct attention to the fact that, on the basis of total receipts, approximately 60 per cent. of the organized motor freight business is located on routes unserved by the railway, and that the average length of haul is considerably shorter on these routes than on those paralleling the railway. The first statement is in contrast to the case of both omnibus and service-car services, where the services on routes paralleling the railway account for more than half of the business.

COMBINED FREIGHT AND PASSENGER SERVICES.

In January, 1931, there were ninety-seven vehicles engaged on defined routes in the transportation of both passengers and goods. This number was twenty-five less than the number recorded for January, 1930. The reason for the decrease in this class of service appears to be that as these combined services develop they tend to be replaced by services catering solely for passengers or goods, not for both.

The following summary shows the principal estimated data for these combined services for the years ended 31st March, 1930 and 1931, respectively :—

				Year ended 31st March,	
				1930.	1931.
Vehicles	..	..	Number	122	97
Vehicle mileage	..	..	Miles	1,500,000	1,300,000
Passengers	..	..	Number	88,000	33,000
Freight	..	..	Tons	25,000	14,886
Receipts	..	..	£	51,036	36,768

ROAD-CLASSIFICATION.

The classification of roads is based on a restriction of the maximum gross loads (*i.e.*, weight of vehicle plus the weight of the load) that may be transported over any given roads. Power is given in the Public Works Amendment Act, 1924, for the classification of all roads and streets with reference