

## REPORT.

### 1. INTRODUCTION.

The following summary outlines the main facts recorded in this report :—

- (1) Continued expansion of motor transport : Vehicles licensed increased by 9·84 per cent., from 280,000 in 1938 to 307,000, while petrol-consumption rose from 82,000,000 gallons to 89,000,000 gallons.
- (2) Traffic census shows tremendous increase in traffic on main-highway system. Between 1934-35 and 1937-38 the total mileage travelled increased by 50 per cent., largely due to greater use being made of the private car.
- (3) Expenditure on roads, streets, and bridges reached a new high level. In 1937-38 a total of £10,600,000, or £1,600,000 more than the 1936-37 figure of £9,000,000, was recorded.
- (4) Motor-taxation receipts reflect expansion in motor transport. Taxation amounted to £5,900,000, or £500,000 in advance of the previous year's figure of £5,400,000. Petrol-tax netted £4,100,000, against £3,800,000 in 1937-38.
- (5) Motor accidents : 4,383 accidents occurred during the year, causing 246 deaths and injuries to 5,635 other people.
- (6) Decline in the motor-accident death-rate from 9·63 deaths per 10,000 motor-vehicles in 1937-38 to 8·85 in 1938-39.
- (7) The Road Safety Council continued to give valuable assistance in advising on road-safety matters.
- (8) Convictions for breaches of traffic laws numbered 24,322 in 1938-39, compared with 17,814 in 1937-38.
- (9) Improvement in the standard of mechanical fitness of motor-vehicles : At the inspection in March, 1939, 55 per cent. of the vehicles tested for warrants of fitness were found to be correct in every detail. At the first inspection in September, 1937, only 21 per cent. passed the standard tests.
- (10) An excess of claims over premiums was recorded for the third-party-insurance scheme, necessitating increases in the premiums for certain classes of vehicles.
- (11) At the 31st March there were 774 passenger-services, 3,161 goods-services, and 99 taxi-services licensed under the Transport Licensing Act, covering in all 7,500 vehicles.
- (12) Considerable increase in volume of business done by licensed motor transport and commercial-aircraft services.