

5. No alterations in the limitation of loads on the roads were effected during the year. Roadworks have chiefly been confined to the maintenance of existing surfaces, and in general this maintenance has consisted in the repair of climatic damage rather than damage caused by traffic.

6. **Road Accidents.**—During 1943 the number of road accidents reported was 2,412—*i.e.*, nearly 9 per cent. more than the number similarly reported in 1942.

The road deaths in 1943 totalled 145 as compared with 167 in 1942, but there was an increase in the number of persons injured during 1943, these totalling 2,746, as against 2,416 in 1942.

The following table classifies the casualties resulting from motor-vehicle accidents during the last five years:—

	Killed.					Injured.				
	1939.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.	1939.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.
Occupants of motor-vehicles	127	86	76	75	67	3,015	2,095	1,820	1,197	1,498
Motor-cyclists and pillion-riders	33	26	21	26	16	740	479	397	221	198
Bicyclists	38	30	25	22	20	913	872	726	177	463
Pedestrians	50	59	53	44	42	925	721	612	192	557
Others	3	3	..	..	..	56	53	36	29	30
Total	251	204	175	167	145	5,649	4,223	3,591	2,416	2,746

7. The number of fatalities in 1943 showed a drop of over 40 per cent. since 1939. The following table compares the number of casualties on the open road with the number occurring in the cities and other towns. The table shows that while the number of accidents on the open road has materially decreased, the number occurring in the built-up areas remains very considerable despite the reduction in the volume of traffic. The preceding table indicates that the accident rate among pedestrians shows the least improvement.

Year.	Number of Persons killed or injured.					
	In Built-up Areas.		On the Open Road.		Totals.	
	Killed.	Injured.	Killed.	Injured.	Killed.	Injured.
1939	92	3,287	159	2,362	251	5,649
1940	92	2,591	112	1,632	204	4,223
1941	96	2,329	79	1,262	175	3,591
1942	85	1,581	82	835	167	2,416
1943	76	1,929	69	817	145	2,746

8. **Road Traffic Instruction in Schools.**—During the war many of the former activities designed to cope with the road-accident problem have been temporarily shelved. However, the work in schools is thought to be of such importance and effectiveness that this has been extended during the past year. The great burden of this instruction is necessarily carried by the school-teachers themselves in their daily work. Their instruction has been maintained throughout, and the resultant improvement in road conduct of school pupils is reflected by the following accident figures:

			Number of School Pupils injured (including killed).					
			1938.	1939.	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.
As pedestrians	..	..	183	182	145	111	70	49
As cyclists	..	..	225	214	188	150	97	57
Total	..	..	408	396	333	261	167	106

9. This steady improvement in the accident position among school pupils is very striking when compared with the general accident position. In 1943 the number of casualties among adult pedestrians and cyclists showed a slight increase again, but the corresponding school-child casualties showed a further drop to only 63 per cent. of the 1942 total and amounted in all to little more than one-quarter of the child casualties prior to the war.

10. It is hoped that, in addition to reducing the immediate accident rate among juveniles, persistent instruction of the school child will have a beneficial long-term result upon the general road-accident position in New Zealand.

11. After an unavoidable break of twelve months the two Departmental Road Traffic Instructors resumed their work in the schools in February, 1943, and later in the year two additional full-time Instructors were appointed to the Department.

12. During the year a scheme was brought into operation co-ordinating all the "outside" traffic instruction available to schools. Hitherto some of the local bodies had sent their Traffic Inspectors and some of the automobile associations their road service officers to schools for the purpose of lecturing to pupils on matters of traffic conduct. Under the new scheme this assistance to teachers is organized so that the instruction available is directed to the best advantage and is given on more or less uniform lines.