

The cost of restoration of flood damage is as follows:—

|                                         | £               |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Gisborne District .. .. .               | 46,100          |
| Napier District .. .. .                 | 122,032         |
| Greymouth District .. .. .              | 20,503          |
| Nelson District .. .. .                 | 10,433          |
| Local bodies' (estimated) share .. .. . | 5,000           |
|                                         | <u>£204,068</u> |

Charges in connection with the renewal of bridges lost on the East Coast of the North Island during the flood have still to be met, and when the total cost of the damage is assessed it will be found to be little short of the total damage during the Murchison and Napier earthquakes, when the cost of restoration of highways was £280,000.

The sealing of highways, particularly the arterial routes, should result in a general reduction of maintenance-costs, and the downward trend should, before long, become evident.

There are, however, several factors operating in the meantime to offset the accrued benefits. These factors may be summarized as follows:—

- (1) Although sealing saves the surface wear, much of the formation is still very "green" and will take a year or two in which to stabilize. In the meantime, due to the accelerated programme, more than the normal quantity of slips may be expected.
- (2) There is 77 per cent. of the highway system unsealed, and with the ever-increasing number of vehicles operating increased expenditure can be expected on gravelled surfaces until such time as the motor-vehicle-saturation point is reached. The proportion of motor-vehicles to population is now one to five, the number of vehicles having increased from 287,350 to 305,828 during the year.
- (3) The local bodies, having been relieved of the trunk routes, are concentrating, as far as their funds will permit, on improved maintenance on the highway feeder routes, with consequent increased subsidy payments from the Board.
- (4) During sealing operations it is necessary to intensify maintenance where there is any delay between the time of completion of the metal surface and the application of the bituminous material, and, of course, the greater the programme in any one year, the greater will be the maintenance in this direction. A regulation providing for reduction of speeds during reconstruction is urgently required.
- (5) With the taking-over of the State highways, many sections on which reseals and smoothing coats were overdue were given attention.

Considering the system as a whole, there has been a general all-round improvement in road surfaces. The great majority of complaints have referred to the unpleasant conditions experienced by motorists during reconstruction. Most motorists, however, recognize that these conditions are temporary and unavoidable, and that it is only a matter of exercising a little care and patience when travel comfort will be greatly increased. Too much cannot be said in deprecation of that small section of motorists who "hog" the road at all times. They are a danger to themselves and other road-users. They are most unfair to the workmen, and have no regard for the Board's equipment, their own machines, or any extra construction costs which their action might entail.

TABLE I.—MAINTENANCE OF MAIN HIGHWAYS (INCLUDING BRIDGES).

| Highway District.      | Length Maintained. | Board.    | Local Authorities. | Total.    | Expenditure                 |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
|------------------------|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|                        |                    |           |                    |           | Average per Mile per Annum. |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
|                        |                    |           |                    |           | 1938-39.                    | 1937-38. | 1936-37. | 1935-36. | 1934-35. | 1933-34. | 1932-33. | 1931-32. | 1930-31. | 1929-30. |
|                        | M. ch.             | £         | £                  | £         | £                           | £        | £        | £        | £        | £        | £        | £        | £        | £        |
| 1. Auckland North      | 825 25             | 72,430    | 10,672             | 83,102    | 100·7                       | 115·1    | 93·2     | 110·1    | 97·9     | 71·6     | 61·2     | 79·2     | 83·4     | 115·7    |
| 2. Auckland South      | 1,452 72           | 160,391   | 27,312             | 187,703   | 129·2                       | 126·2    | 119·3    | 181·4    | 141·1    | 124·6    | 106·9    | 145·3    | 175·8    | 214·3    |
| 3. Tauranga            | 718 33             | 110,308   | 3,749              | 114,057   | 158·8                       | 128·4    | 84·3     | 153·1    | 87·1     | 72·9     | 61·9     | 70·7     | 80·4     | 90·7     |
| 4. Gisborne            | 394 25             | 97,167    | 7,907              | 105,074   | 266·5                       | 215·2    | 182·9    | 178·1    | 164·9    | 106·4    | 96·3     | 117·3    | 163·5    | 189·5    |
| 5. Napier              | 737 66             | 195,282   | 15,441             | 210,723   | 285·6                       | 99·6     | 82·4     | 138·9    | 117·7    | 81·4     | 79·3     | 75·9     | 121·2    | 146·7    |
| 6. King-country        | 602 25             | 61,946    | 6,126              | 68,072    | 113·0                       | 95·3     | 116·5    | 89·2     | 99·7     | 70·8     | 57·1     | 70·0     | 85·8     | 115·7    |
| 7. Taranaki            | 473 20             | 53,114    | 4,678              | 57,792    | 122·1                       | 94·7     | 101·1    | 123·4    | 102·5    | 83·8     | 84·5     | 125·2    | 136·0    | 172·8    |
| 8. Wanganui            | 530 25             | 77,093    | 6,229              | 83,322    | 157·1                       | 152·5    | 115·9    | 122·0    | 87·5     | 80·8     | 66·0     | 101·0    | 126·7    | 176·1    |
| 9. Wellington West     | 503 71             | 45,182    | 8,065              | 53,247    | 105·7                       | 102·9    | 121·9    | 164·1    | 124·7    | 106·0    | 110·8    | 149·8    | 179·0    | 224·3    |
| 10. Wellington East    | 504 39             | 35,338    | 9,522              | 44,860    | 88·9                        | 89·4     | 108·0    | 175·3    | 181·3    | 114·9    | 91·4     | 128·6    | 141·6    | 159·0    |
| Totals, North Island   | 6,743 01           | 908,251   | 99,701             | 1,007,952 | 149·5                       | 119·7    | 109·0    | 143·2    | 118·3    | 91·3     | 81·0     | 104·5    | 124·8    | 155·8    |
| 11. Nelson             | 696 36             | 69,377    | 6,167              | 75,544    | 108·5                       | 99·2     | 80·3     | 116·8    | 101·1    | 74·1     | 66·6     | 103·6    | 82·0     | 112·8    |
| 12. West Coast         | 543 14             | 79,992    | 5,483              | 85,475    | 157·4                       | 145·5    | 141·8    | 214·5    | 142·6    | 110·8    | 104·1    | 136·7    | 122·4    | 166·8    |
| 13. Canterbury North   | 364 10             | 27,319    | 3,193              | 30,512    | 83·8                        | 92·8     | 64·3     | 62·8     | 55·7     | 58·3     | 50·0     | 55·4     | 72·6     | 99·7     |
| 14. Canterbury Central | 750 41             | 45,008    | 8,431              | 53,439    | 71·2                        | 63·1     | 54·6     | 81·1     | 55·2     | 50·9     | 50·2     | 76·5     | 75·2     | 77·3     |
| 15. Canterbury South   | 822 58             | 40,811    | 7,130              | 47,941    | 58·3                        | 52·6     | 54·0     | 96·7     | 66·9     | 59·3     | 67·0     | 78·7     | 88·0     | 89·6     |
| 16. Otago Central      | 843 50             | 49,035    | 7,037              | 56,072    | 66·5                        | 53·8     | 49·5     | 70·1     | 75·1     | 59·3     | 46·4     | 52·8     | 36·4     | 73·9     |
| 17. Otago South        | 523 74             | 41,431    | 6,204              | 50,635    | 96·6                        | 76·5     | 62·8     | 97·8     | 84·6     | 73·8     | 72·8     | 99·5     | 90·8     | 108·1    |
| 18. Southland          | 918 57             | 47,116    | 9,384              | 56,500    | 61·5                        | 74·8     | 57·2     | 57·1     | 53·9     | 44·4     | 41·6     | 43·2     | 58·7     | 57·9     |
| Totals, South Island   | 5,163 20           | 403,089   | 53,029             | 456,118   | 83·5                        | 77·9     | 67·5     | 96·2     | 77·6     | 62·7     | 60·3     | 77·4     | 75·8     | 94·1     |
| Totals, Dominion       | 12,206 21          | 1,311,340 | 152,730            | 1,464,070 | 119·9                       | 101·2    | 90·5     | 122·4    | 100·3    | 78·5     | 70·7     | 92·5     | 103·1    | 128·6    |