Table I.—Causes of Fire.

—	Cities over 20,000 Population: Eight-year Average, 1/4/31–31/3/39.						All Fire Districts: Year ended 31st March, 1939.					
	Dwellings.		Business Premises.		Total.		Dwellings.		Business Premises.		Total.	
	Number of Fires.	Fire Loss.	Number of Fires.	Fire Loss.	Number of Fires.	Fire Loss.	Number of Fires.	Fire Loss.	Number of Fires.	Fire Loss.	Number of Fires.	Fire Loss.
		£		£		£		£		£		£
Defective electrical installations	1·2	58	2·2	300	3·5	358	2	114	8	2,039	10	2,153
Electric irons and radiators left on	17·4	3,095	7·1	2,579	24·5	5,674	31	6,394	10	5,025	41	11,419
Short circuits and overheating	7·6	589	16·7	1,774	24·4	2,363	19	2,723	28	1,172	47	3,895
Other electrical faults	1·9	167	4·4	336	6·2	504	..	..	2	3	2	3
Gas explosions	0·9	54	0·4	2	1·2	55	..	..	..	..	..	..
Gas-rings, &c., left on or in contact with curtains, &c.	6·7	552	4·4	266	11·1	818	9	138	7	34	16	172
Defective gas installations	3·1	101	0·9	93	4·0	194	3	19	1	70	4	89
Candles in contact with curtains, &c.	5·5	479	0·5	2	6·0	480	3	11	2	11	5	22
Lamps, stoves—overturned or exploded	2·1	78	1·1	28	3·2	106	1	17	1	33	2	50
Miscellaneous, due to naked lights	5·1	779	4·2	550	9·4	1,329	13	2,090	14	3,921	27	6,011
Defective chimneys and flues	18·5	1,521	5·1	233	23·6	1,754	30	3,234	12	325	42	3,559
Defective hearths, fireplaces, and furnaces	19·4	786	3·0	282	22·4	1,068	25	281	6	237	31	518
Defective hot-water systems	1·5	254	0·6	69	2·1	324	..	..	..	..	..	..
Lighted match dropped	14·9	2,263	8·9	3,675	23·7	5,938	9	568	4	228	13	796
Children playing with matches	9·2	261	2·5	112	11·7	373	15	651	3	5	18	656
Smoking in bed	4·7	173	..	..	4·7	173	10	212	..	..	10	212
Cigarette or cigar butts dropped	11·9	1,143	11·7	3,430	23·6	4,573	21	1,880	19	1,368	40	3,248
Ashes from pipes, sparks from cigarettes	2·4	282	0·6	46	3·0	327	2	5	1	1	3	6
Rats chewing matches	0·7	11	0·6	138	1·4	149	2	17	1	10	3	27
Miscellaneous causes: Smoking and matches	4·5	312	2·2	8,778	6·7	9,090	5	398	4	63,910	9	64,308
Sparks from fireplaces, furnaces, &c.	36·4	3,448	12·5	1,031	48·9	4,479	70	8,172	27	963	97	9,135
Airing clothes before a fire	4·2	851	1·9	144	6·1	995	9	553	1	116	10	669
Ashes placed in wooden boxes, &c.	10·1	419	4·1	156	14·2	575	16	724	6	354	22	1,078
Heating tar, polishes, &c.	6·7	291	9·1	1,764	15·9	2,055	14	701	8	534	22	1,235
Spontaneous combustion	2·2	387	5·5	3,321	7·7	3,708	4	755	4	200	8	955
Allowing benzine, &c., near naked lights	6·1	304	4·7	563	10·9	867	5	125	7	1,515	12	1,640
Arson	3·4	395	1·7	562	5·1	957	3	400	3	38	6	438
Suspicious origin	8·2	2,640	5·1	6,440	13·4	9,080	8	1,208	3	170	11	1,378
Overheating of and sparks from machinery	..	..	5·6	1,255	5·6	1,255	..	..	8	650	8	650
Sparks from bush and gorse fires	3·4	114	0·9	28	4·2	142	2	7	..	..	2	7
Sparks from rubbish fires	7·9	307	4·5	246	12·4	553	22	663	21	1,888	43	2,551
Sparks from chimneys, locomotives, &c.	9·4	226	8·7	915	18·1	1,141	15	632	12	855	27	1,487
Blow-lamps used for burning off paint	15·6	695	1·4	23	17·0	718	20	1,666	2	24	22	1,690
Fires spread from other buildings	11·7	2,909	6·6	2,126	18·4	5,035	43	11,432	31	16,627	74	28,059
Miscellaneous known causes	13·4	629	18·4	2,231	31·7	2,861	22	1,072	23	4,661	45	5,733
Unknown causes	72·2	22,938	59·5	83,340	131·7	106,278	134	45,732	109	241,908	243	287,640
Total	350·1	49,511	227·3	126,838	577·7	176,349	587	92,594	388	348,895	975	441,489
Loss per fire—												
Known causes	..	96	..	259	..	157	..	103	..	384	..	210
Unknown causes	..	317	..	1,401	..	807	..	341	..	2,219	..	1,184
All causes	..	141	..	557	..	305	..	158	..	899	..	453