

1 1/4 Litre M.G. Saloon

Economical

The M.G. 1 1/4 litre saloon is a traditional English car. The same style has continued with a few modifications, since 1947. Nevertheless, it retains many excellent features and is an economical car to run.

Only a few miles at the wheel of the car, one becomes very deeply impressed by the retention of many virtues which have in large measure been washed into the sea of time by the inexorable flow of progress.

Putting first things first, both driver and front passenger find themselves in individually adjustable seats, well formed to give sideways support, and with an accessible and reasonably efficient hand brake placed between them. The extensible steering column makes it possible to place the wheel in the best position for the driver, and the instruments immediately in front of him are of sensible size with sober inscriptions. They are mounted in a fascia panel made

of what an American salesman proudly called "genuine tree wood," and the whole of the left side of the panel is given up to a really large locker which will comfortably hold a small handbag in addition to other miscellaneous articles.

A glance at the test data shows that it is not outstanding either in maximum speed or acceleration, although all the figures were probably rather worse than normal owing to exceptionally bad weather experienced during the test period. Nevertheless, a genuine maximum speed of practically 70 m.p.h., representing a shade over 80 m.p.h. on the speedometer supplied to us, is certainly adequate for most normal motoring, whilst gradients steeper than 1 in 10 can be tackled at quite high speed if the really excellent gear-change is used for the engagement of third speed. In traffic, second gear is particularly effective, and the performance on this ratio is aided by the ability of the engine to soar up to 5000 r.p.m. with no hesitation.

REAL ECONOMY.

Again postulating free use of the gear box, really high average speeds can be accomplished and, even when driven very hard, the fuel consumption falls below 30 m.p.g. by a decimal point only, so that well over 30 m.p.g. could obviously be obtained if economy of running were thought to be more important than time spent on the journey.

With petrol at present prices, this in itself is an important recommendation, but the merits of the M.G. are certainly not exhausted by a consideration of

the utilitarian aspects of speed, acceleration and fuel economy. It is, above all, an exceedingly pleasing car to drive and in which to be driven. Not only does one welcome the sound-deadening properties of the body, but one also rejoices in the relatively low level of wind noise, these two features together making it quite easy to listen to radio programmes at sustained speeds of 60 m.p.h. The suspension may be thought a little on the hard side by 1951 standards, but there is an agreeable freedom from pitch and only moderate roll.

Driving the car on fast corners demands a certain degree of practice, for the car has over-steering characteristics which verge, perhaps, on the exaggerated. As a consequence, an almost imperceptible nudge on the steering wheel will set in motion a train of dynamic and geometric sequences which will virtually steer the car round a corner of quite modest radius.

SPECIFICATION: Capacity 250c.c., Unladen kerb weight 20½cwt., Fuel consumption 29.5 m.p.g., Maximum speed 69.9 m.p.h., Maximum speed on 1 in 20 gradient 56 m.p.h., Maximum top gear gradient 1 in 12.5, Acceleration 10-30 m.p.h. in top 12 seconds, 0.50 mph. through gears 18.8 seconds, Gearing 14.6 m.p.h. in top at 1000 r.p.m., 61.8 m.p.h. at 2500 feet per min. piston speed.

ENGINE: Cylinders 4, Bore 66.5m.m., Stroke 90m.m., Cubic capacity 1250c.c., Piston area 21.6 square inches, Valves pushrod o.h.v., Compression ratio 7.2/7.4: 1, Max. power 46 b.h.p. at 4800 r.p.m., Piston speed at max. b.h.p. 2835 feet per minute, Carburettor single S.U. 1½ inch semi-down draught, Ignition coil, Sparking plugs Champion L.10S, Fuel pump S.U. electric, Oil filter Own, full-flow.