

THE NON-PAYING PASSENGER.

Sydney's Curious Doctrine of "Innocence."

Discussing a recommendation to the State Government that the onus of paying fares on Sydney's trams and buses should, as in Melbourne, be placed on the passenger, the "Sydney Morning Herald" argues that "the responsibility for collecting fares should remain where it properly belongs with the conductor," and that "the modern bureaucratic tendency to oblige the citizen to prove his innocence is indefensible."

Anything more silly than the last quotation is difficult to imagine. What has innocence got to do with a passenger's liability to pay his fare? How can he be innocent if he sits immobile when the conductor comes round, knowing that he has not paid? Is it suggested that Sydney's millions of scalers board the vehicles in a fit of mental aberration, with no thought that a fare is due? When they do realise where they are, should they walk off the vehicle and make no effort to meet their lawful fare obligation? Should the Sydney bus or tram passenger have any different status from that of a railway passenger, who must produce a ticket before he can get on to a platform let alone a train? All conductors all over the world know well the "innocent" passenger—the man who is so absorbed in his reading, with a yesterday's ticket displayed prominently, that he never hears the conductor say "Fares, please;" the lady with 4d. hidden in her glove who is oblivious to everything but the hat she sees opposite her, and who is so frightfully surprised when roused from her stupor and told that her fare would be acceptable; the individual who unconvincingly registers dismay when four blocks past the end of his section; the person who get on liable for a fare of 5d. and manages to dodge tendering his fare until he is in the 3d. zone—these and many more are the types of people who make cynics of conductors, and the only way to cure them of their thieving propensities is to throw upon them the onus of paying and prosecute them when they fail to do so.

People who know nothing of the problems associated with street transport have, both here and in Sydney, scoffed at the idea of the undertakings losing hundreds of thousands of pounds of revenue each year by non-paying passengers. Let us have a few figures on the subject. Last year, our ticket examiners checked 169,244 trips—a small fraction of the trips run—and discovered 23,713 irregularities. Passengers over-riding their sections accounted for 10,782 of that total and uncollected fares for 6,741. On the average, the checks revealed six

irregularities. Taking that average, and applying it on the basis of an average of five miles per trip, we could arrive at a total of 33,300,000 irregularities in the course of a year, which at even 1d. would mean a loss of revenue of £138,000. And when the extent of the fare-dodging practice in the morning peak in the city is observed—one morning recently we counted 24 people who, taking advantage of the conductor's preoccupation with fares in the rear saloon, left the front saloon between Queen Street and King Street in Flinders Street without making the slightest effort to pay—it is practically a "lay-down-misere" that that total of 33,000,000 is an underestimate.

Fare scaling in Melbourne, notwithstanding the figures quoted above, is, according to competent observers, much less than in Sydney, where the opportunities for dodging the conductor are more numerous through the type of rolling stock, and in both cities is not so bad as in places overseas. For instance, the General Manager of the Toronto Transportation Commission, after a three months' tour of British transport undertakings, was astounded over what he had seen and over what he had been told in this connection, and expressed the opinion that "loss of revenue, due to failure to collect fares, ran as high as 15 per cent!"

PROMOTIONS.

F. M. Beard, C. A. Brown and H. E. Johnson, H.O., have been appointed Ticket Examiners.

DEATH AND RETIRING GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue, the undernoted retiring gratuities have been approved by the Board:—

Con. F. G. Lovelock, resigned, £81; Car Cleaner E. V. Bernan (65), 14 years' service, £336; Lab. H. Stenson (42), med. unfit, £148; Dvr. A. G. Spriggs, resigned, £31; Con. A. E. Taylor, resigned, £69; Car Cleaner W. H. Ellis (65), 41 years, £594; Mrs. G. M. Russell, med. unfit, £75; Con. Sub-Instr. J. T. McInnes (65), 47 years' service, £904; Dvr. C. A. Fothergill, resigned, £81; Dvr. C. R. Phillips, resigned, £81; Dvr. J. A. Harris (51), med. unfit, £239; Watchman C. Tatam, resigned, £250; Dvr. A. W. Smith (60), 31 years, £315; and Pitman W. H. E. Bath (65), 47 years, £738.

Death gratuities have been paid to the widows of the late Carpenter T. Keggin (52), £145; F. Washington (54), £206; and Dvr. J. S. Wanstall, who was fatally injured while on duty, £138.

Tramway Topics

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NO INCREASE IN FARES.

Board's Important and Welcome Decision.

With the cost of everything from tomatoes to railway transport, from clothes to cabbages, continuing to rise, the public of the metropolis got a most welcome shock when informed that, despite increased operating costs, which will receive another jolt upwards when the 40-hour week comes in in January, the Tramways Board had resolved to continue in the meantime with tram and bus fares at their present level.

This decision illustrates once again the inherent soundness of the financial policy pursued by the Board. ~~It is~~ ^{It is} an example of putting aside from the seven years of plenty sufficient to make good the seven lean years was repeated, the result being that the Board is now so well buttressed monetarily that it can afford for this current year anyway to chance the risk involved in not advancing fares from January 4.

We are not to be taken as suggesting that there are seven lean years in store for us; what is meant is that by building up the various Reserve Funds to their present gratifying levels the Board has safeguarded the undertaking and its staff to such an extent that if a depression did occur within the next half dozen years the event could be faced with equanimity.

Probably the Board was influenced to some extent to its decision by the fact that the Renewals Reserve Fund is in a very healthy condition, and that it is so soundly invested that it is bringing in quite a nice sum annually and will continue to do so while the scarcity of materials and the difficulty of procuring certain types of skilled craftsmen prevents the implementation of the conversion, reconstruction and renewals post-war programme.

AN UNUSUALLY INTERESTING TRAM.

Glasgow's Single-Ender Front-Entrance Unit.

Methods of loading and unloading public service vehicles have always been a subject for keen controversy. In recent years growing traffic congestion has led to numerous experiments with the object of facilitating loading and unloading. Success has not been achieved, possibly because most of the efforts have been made in connection with the pay-as-you-enter system which, while attractive as a theory, was a dismal failure in practice. Instead of speeding up loading, it was found that loading was delayed appreciably, even in such a small city as Cardiff, while London Transport spent many thousands of pounds before making a similar discovery and abandoning the experiments.

Glasgow has broken away from that pay-as-you-enter idea, and has designed a 72-seater double-decker tram with a front entrance and separate rear exit, which will be able to run on any of the several circular routes operated by the Transport Department; while, if successful, it could be used on other routes with little alteration to the permanent way at one or two termini to provide a turning loop or reversing spur. Advantage has also been taken of the opportunity to try out the most modern electrical equipment manufactured in the country and designed on the lines of that in use on the P.C.C. trams of the United States, from which it is hoped to obtain a higher acceleration, with smooth starting and stopping, than ever before achieved in Britain.

In planning this new type, an effort has been made to give the public the maximum amenities usually associated with luxury travel, says "Modern Transport," London, in the course of its three-column illustrated article, and at the same time

obtain information about the speed of loading and unloading passengers on a vehicle with a front entrance and rear exit, the operation of variable automatic multi-clutch braking and accelerating control, worm drive with high-speed lightweight motors and inside frame bogies, and the usefulness of fluorescent lighting.

Theoretically, again, the idea of ensuring a steady movement through the tram by having all passengers entering at the front and leaving at the rear, is attractive. It should prevent passengers blocking the entrance, for the rear exit ought to induce the passenger to move as far down the tram as possible so that he may achieve a speedy departure. Loading also ought to be quicker, for the intending passenger will not have to wait for alighting persons. These are the two main points in favour of the experiment. It will be interesting to see if in practice they are as favourable as they look on paper.

ALCOHOL AND DRIVING DO NOT MIX.

Police and National Safety Council alike are unanimous in this—that the bulk of the street accidents which take place in the metropolitan area are caused by over-indulgence in alcoholic liquors. We do not need to be "wowers" to deprecate drinking by those who are about to drive speedy vehicles, for nowadays we never know when some drink-inflamed fool is going to come along and endanger not only his own life—which would not be any loss to the community anyway—but the lives of sober, law-abiding drivers and pedestrians.

To be hit by a motor car travelling at only 15 m.p.h. means injury more or less serious to the person struck; at 25 m.p.h. it spells serious hurt, even incapacitation; but at anything from 30 m.p.h. upwards death is certain. When these results follow with vehicles weighing from between 17 cwts. to 2 tons, it follows that the consequences are worse when a public service vehicle, weighing, fully laden, something like 23 tons is involved. It therefore becomes necessary to regard seriously any driver who reports for duty even to a small extent under the influence of alcoholic refreshments. Nothing is to be gained by concealing the fact that during the last 12 months 26 members of the Traffic staff have been dismissed for this offence. No one connected with the management desires to see an otherwise good man lose his job from such a slip; but the risks of keeping such an employee in the service are too fraught with calamitous consequence to permit any lesser penalty. To do so would be to invite an accident which would certainly cause injury, even death, and damage, and even a

criminal charge against the driver concerned.

St. Paul wrote that all things were lawful to him but all things were not expedient. A glass or two of beer, or wine, are quite lawful and distinctly enjoyable in their proper place; but it is certainly not expedient to indulge in them before going on duty.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING CASE.

Court of Appeal's Important Judgment.

Unless penalties in traffic codes are provided to cover the case of pedestrians crossing the street when the lights are against him, a transport authority cannot successfully resist a claim for damages by a person injured in such circumstances.

That, in effect, is the judgment given by the British Court of Appeal in a case in which a pedestrian using an authorised street crossing was injured by a bus and successfully sued London Transport for damages. The Board appealed, pleading that the crossing was controlled by traffic lights, and that the pedestrian had been guilty of negligence in going against them. Lords Justices Cohen and Asquith agreed (the Master of the Rolls dissenting) that while it was the duty of the driver to have regard to the pedestrian traffic regulation, the duty of a pedestrian was left entirely to the common law, as there was nothing in the traffic code to make it an offence for a pedestrian to cross even when the lights are against him.

Leave to appeal to the House of Lords was refused.

HOW WAGES HAVE INCREASED.

Rise of 100 Per Cent. in Eleven Years.

So far as our industry is concerned, there has been nothing more remarkable than the way in which the earnings of the traffic staff have increased during the last 11 years. It will be instructive if they are set out in tabular form, with the reminder that the most recent figures are based on the average for the four weeks which ended on the 18th October:

Average earnings per man at 30/6/36	£3 19 8	per week
" " " " 1/1/38	4 17 8	"
" " " " 10-year man 1/1/38	5 0 0	"
" " " " 3-year man at 16/10/47:		
Tram Conductors	8 1 0	"
Tram Drivers	7 18 0	"
Bus Conductors	7 17 6	"
Bus Drivers	8 11 3	"
Bus-Dvr. Conductor	9 1 0	"
All-night tram Dvr.-Con.	10 9 6	"
All-night Bus Dvr. Con.	11 12 0	"

While wages have thus increased by 100 per cent., our fares are, due to the restriction of the maximum fare to 6d., fractionally less than they were in 1936.

RUSSIA PREFERS TRAMS.

Systems Being Restored; Others Being Started.

Last month we gave some details of the extent of transportation by tram in every city of importance in Germany. The German belief in trams as the ideal vehicle for mass city transport is shared by Russia. This Russian attitude is put by M. Vasily Gusev, Deputy Minister of Municipal Economy. Writing in "Soviet News," he says:—

"The Ministry, after going thoroughly into the economics of the matter, decided that, if only on grounds of economy and convenience, tramways were an indispensable part of the transport service in large towns—even where a good bus service exists."

Answering charges that trams are "antiquated horrors fit only for museums," M. Gusev remarks that he agrees in the case of the clanging jolting trams of yesterday, but that the new Soviet trams—streamlined, fast, comfortable and practically noiseless—are a very different proposition.

From what the Minister writes, it is apparent that Russia is making good progress in the rehabilitation of her transport services. Of 18 city tramway systems wrecked by the Huns, 15 have already been restored, while eight large cities, including Irkutsk, Tomsk and Barnaul, are planning to start tram services.

SYDNEY'S "HONESTY" JOKE.

Sydney's 52 "honesty" boxes on trams are the joke of the year. Between July 28 and October 11 inclusive they collected 2½d. each per day!

The Minister for Transport (Mr. O'Sullivan) has been advised that, despite the increase of 1d. on all fares from July 1, the Transport Department is going to have a deficit of £500,000 for the current financial year. Less, presumably, the "honesty" yield of 10/10 per day.

HIGHER FARES WANTED.

Manchester Costs Continue to Rise.

For the second time within a year the Manchester Corporation Transport Department has applied to the North-Western Area Traffic Commissioners for permission to increase fares. If granted, the rises will put the fares at 49 per cent. above the 1939 level, with a minimum fare of 1½d. for a section of half a mile.

One interesting revelation at the inquiry was the admission by the General Manager (Mr. A. F. Neal) that Manchester has higher working costs than

Edinburgh. Looking to the many steep gradients in the Scottish capital, and comparing them with the drab flatness of Manchester, we would have thought that the reverse would have been the case. Can it be that the explanation is that Manchester was bitten badly by the bus bug, while Edinburgh has been more than content to improve its admirable tramway network? It certainly is true that quite a few districts lost their satisfactory, paying tram services and were compelled to accept shorter sections for bus fares higher than those charged previously on the trams for longer sections. One notable instance of this is the route where a payable 5d. fare on the trams became an unprofitable 8d. ride on the buses. And during the worst of the blizzard which was a feature of last winter, the buses went out of action, while in the adjoining districts the trams plugged along in their customary reliable way. Just the other week, too, when a dense fog settled over London, the tramway services in South London continued to run, while the buses in adjacent areas, when they moved at all did so with the conductor on foot acting as pilot!

TRAMCARS AS HEARSE.

With a view to saving petrol, the municipal authorities of Erfurt, in the Russian Zone of Germany, have decided to allow the trams to be used for funerals.

AN EDITOR ON TROLLEY BUSES.

"It must be remembered that no trolleybus system in the country has stood up to the acid test of being initiated where a tramway or a tramway project did not previously exist."—Editor, "Modern Transport," London.

BUSES LEAD—BUT AT A LOSS.

For the first time in the history of the undertaking, bus mileage operated by Leicester City Transport exceeded tram mileage; but while the buses suffered a loss of £5,954, the trams ran at a profit of £9,482.

FOR SERVICE RENDERED.

Congratulations to Driver L. W. Gardner, who prevented an infant in a perambulator from being run over by a tram at Ascot Vale on the 17th June last, for having been presented with a Certificate of Merit by the Royal Humane Society of Victoria.