

port requirements of the city. When recently it placed the first of its P.C.C. trams in service, it stationed two of the cars in prominent positions inside the inner city and invited inspection by the public.

A notice inside the vehicles read:—It is the hope of the P.R.T. management that the new streamliners will be the forerunners of many new cars for Philadelphia. Philadelphians must have the best in city transportation equipment. These cars will give P.R.T. the chance to study their operation under actual working conditions and gain experience which will be a guide in the purchase of additional cars for Philadelphia."

APPRECIATIONS.

Since our last issue the Chairman has been gratified by the receipt of several appreciative letters, extracts from which are given for the information of the staff:—

From Lieut.-General C. A. Clowes, G.O.C. Southern Command:—On the occasion of the Army Exhibition in Melbourne very valuable assistance was rendered by your Board to the Department of the Army. Personally, and on behalf of the Army, I desire to express my deep appreciation of such assistance, which contributed so much to the success of the Exhibition, and would request that this expression of appreciation be extended to those who contributed in any way to your efforts on our behalf.

Miss F. Olive Book, Combined Girls' School Sports Association:—We feel that the success of our annual sports day on the South Melbourne Cricket Ground was greatly assisted by the way in which schools arrived and left by tram, and all concerned wish to express their appreciation, not only of the organisation, but also of the courtesy and help of the Inspector, drivers and conductors in handling such a large body of girls.

Mr. L. J. Rooke, Store Manager, Foy & Gibson Ltd.:—On behalf of Foy & Gibson Ltd. I would like to thank you and your men for your co-operation in controlling the traffic on Friday during the arrival of Father Christmas.

Mr. Wm. R. Rennie, Hon. Secretary, Victorian Central Schools' Sports Association:—Please accept my Committee's greatest thanks for the magnificent arrangements you organised for the transport of school children from various suburbs to the Fitzroy Cricket Ground, and also the arrangements made for the homeward journey.

I would deem it a favour if you would convey to your Inspector in charge, also the motormen, conductors and conductresses my personal apprecia-

tion for the attention and courtesy they gave to the children and teachers while travelling to and from the ground.

APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS.

The undernoted appointments and promotions have been made during the last month:—

J. W. Hicks, Crombie Lane, Foreman, L. & P. Branch; J. W. Govans, Hawthorn, Driver Sub-Instr.; E. M. Doyle, Hanna Street, Chargeman; J. M. Glenn, Coburg, Traffic Inspector; H. S. Parris, H.O., Distribution Engineer; R. V. Hodge, Victoria Parade, Foreman; T. H. Gill, H.O., Ticket Examiner; D. W. Gray, H.O., Asst. Senior Statistical Clerk; G. King, H.O., Asst. Sub-Station Engineer; E. Nordern, Carlton Sub-Station, Senior Sub-Station Inspector.

THE MERRI CREEK BRIDGE.

As it will be the least expensive, and therefore the better, course to strengthen the Merri Creek Bridge at Clifton Hill and High Street, Northcote, before the electric tracks are laid, the representatives of the Councils of Northcote, Collingwood and Fitzroy conferred with the Chairman and discussed ways and means.

The Chairman indicated that the Board was willing to bear a proportion of the cost, just as it had done when the Victoria Street Bridge had been strengthened, and when the Board had been associated with the Councils of Hawthorn, Kew, Richmond and Collingwood, and the Government.

On the motion of Cr. Towers, M.L.A., it was agreed that the Northcote Council should arrange a joint deputation to the Minister for the purpose of securing financial assistance from the Government.

The estimated cost of the strengthening is approximately £16,000.

RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

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

Tradesman R. Ashford (65), 18 years' service, £568; Painter E. W. Holt, resigned, £70; Depot-Starter C. W. Carter (65), 40 years, £803; Asst. Senr. Statistical Clerk W. M. T. Crosbie, resigned, £122; House Painter D. H. Ross, resigned, £70; Elec. Fitter C. McF. Scott (65), 24 years, £662; and Dvr. D. B. Hood (65), 41 years, £628.

A death gratuity in respect of the late Ticket Examiner E. O'Connor, amounting to £749, has also been paid. Mr. O'Connor served the Board for 46 years.

Mr Russell

Tramway Topics

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CHRISTMAS, 1947.

Chairman Indicates the Work Ahead.

On behalf of my colleagues on the Board and myself, I desire to convey to all members of the staff our best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

The year that is now almost behind us has not, unfortunately, witnessed the improvement we all desired in the conditions with which the world continues to be confronted; indeed, there has been a marked deterioration in Britain, with further hardships imposed on her sorely-tied people, which is having its effect in this country and which will lead inevitably in the near future to a decreased supply of imported goods and commodities which were formerly abundant.

So far as we personally are concerned, I think we have all made the unpleasant discovery that higher wage rates, in whatever form they come, do not necessarily result in greater spending power. Economic verities, it seems to me, have been forgotten in the rush for more money, without adequate reflection on the probable results of the policies pursued. Most people are now earning more money than ever they did before—and most people are finding out that the increased money is more than disappearing with the higher prices of goods, so that actually they are worse off than they were a year ago. Our £1 is buying less than ever it did, and there is no doubt that it will continue to do so until a decrease in high taxation makes possible the production of goods and the provision of services at reduced prices. It must be a legitimate source of satisfaction to us all to reflect that the transit services rendered by us to the community are the only things which have not risen in price to the public during the last 12 months!

Our post-war programme of conversions, extensions and renewals is still held up through the excessive scarcity of materials and to a lack of man power. We had hoped to have the electrification of Bourke Street well under weigh by this time; but instead we have yet no idea of the date we are likely to start. Other conversions and extensions are in the same category. In addition, commitments elsewhere are piling up. The Parliamentary Public Works Committee has recommended the construction of a line in Burwood Road from Power Street to Camberwell Junction; there are schemes for extensions in Burke Road and Whitehorse Road to Box Hill; while Footscray's growing direct transport needs to the city have to be given attention. You will therefore see that when conditions permit we shall have a huge volume of work to tackle. We can only hope that we shall be able to make a start some time in 1948.

Good luck, good health and prosperity to you all.

H. H. BELL,
Chairman.

NEW STOCKHOLM TRAM.

Unusual and Interesting Features.

About every other week nowadays some returning tourist gets the free publicity for which he craves by talking largely, if vaguely, about various un-named large cities overseas which are scrapping their tramway systems. It is an extraordinary coincidence that these people never seem to strike a city which is going in for tramway extensions and reconstructions. For our part, we make a point of stating facts instead of general assertions. In recent issues, for instance, we have given some details of the reconstruction of tramways in every large city

in Germany, from Berlin downwards; have indicated the progress of tramways in Russia; and have described the new trams now in service in Oslo and Gothenburg.

Let us pass now from Germany, Russia and Norway to Sweden. In July last, we learn that Stockholm, which expanded enormously during the war years, put into service the first of a series of 70 bogie trams, specially designed (and this point might be noted by those who have suggested that trams as well as buses should be banned from the city) for central city traffic. These trams, which are single-enders, and therefore similar to those which are now being tried out in Glasgow, provide accommodation for 104 passengers, 34 seated and 70 standing. As in the Gothenburg trams, the driver operates the controller by means of a wheel instead of the usual handle. The overall length is 47 ft. 6 ins., and exceeds our S.W.6 by 1 ft., but the width, 7 ft. 4 ins., is 8 ins. less. Wheels of 28 ins. are the same. There is a big difference in the motors. While we have four of 40 h.p., the Stockholm vehicle has four of 70 h.p., designed for a maximum speed of 38 m.p.h., with an average acceleration on the level of 3.4 m.p.h. per second.

Whereas the new Glasgow car has but the one entrance, the Swedish car has two, at the front and in the centre, while the sole entrance is at the rear. This arrangement will speed up unloading. Two unusual and interesting features are that the driver controls the automatic front door, and the conductor the centre and rear doors, and that the former's starting signal is a green light and the stopping signal a red light. Rubber cushions are used to support the motors on the bogie frame, while the ventilation and heating systems ensure that the air inside is changed completely every two minutes.

While we are on this subject, we may as well pass to another European country and point out that Rotterdam has also been busy developing a new and improved tram for its inner city services. The vehicle is of the stream-lined single-deck centre-entrance type with sliding doors, 41 ft. long, and has seats for 30 passengers, with standing room for 55 passengers. Trailers similar in appearance take 89 passengers, so the complete unit can thus deal with 174 passengers.

ACCORDING TO USE AND WONT.

In September last, Birmingham converted one of its tram routes to buses, with the customary result—the old 1½d. sections of the trams were reduced in length, while the through fare was increased by ½d.

TRAMS IN THE UNITED STATES.

Analysing the traffic returns of all forms of transit in the United States for 1946, as meticulously compiled by the American Transit Association, Mr. Earl E. Kearns, manager of General Electric's urban transit division, points out that while trams during the year accounted for only 27 per cent. of the total of all classes of vehicles, they carried 9,000,000,000 passengers, or nearly 40 per cent. of the total passengers.

Mr. Kearns estimates that 7,500 more P.C.C. trams, 15,000 trolley coaches, and 4,000 rapid transit cars are needed through the United States to-day to add to the present urban transit facilities and replace wornout equipment.

BOARD RE-APPOINTED.

Reward of Successful Administration.

Throughout the staff there was keen satisfaction when the announcement by a Government spokesman early in the month that the Board would be re-appointed was made.

Without any desire to blow a trumpet for the Board—its record as revealed in the annual reports and the day to day services it provides supplies the best testimony in its favour—the writer can express the opinion here that it would really have been extraordinary had the Board not received the appropriate reward of its labours—re-appointment. Under the Chairmanship of Mr. H. H. Bell, whose personality, driving force, initiative, enterprise and imagination has meant so much to the undertaking, the Board has put up a record of efficient and successful administration not even approached, for less equalled or excelled, by any similar organisation anywhere in the world. London, Sydney, Chicago, Buenos Aires, Detroit, and many other of the world's largest cities last year recorded, despite increased fares, losses amounting in the aggregate to over £10,000,000; but our Board ran at a profit after providing liberally for depreciation and after giving £126,000 to the Consolidated Revenue of the State.

During the 12 years the present Board has been in office under Mr. Bell's Chairmanship—incidentally Mr. Bell has been associated with tramway work continuously for 32 years—it has paid no less than £1,400,000 to the State, has distributed £225,000 among the municipalities in the tramway area, has spent £184,948 in the purchase of War Savings Certificates for the members of the staff who served with the Forces during the war, and has brought all the various Reserve Funds—Renewals, General, Maintenance, Public Risk, Fire, and so on—to a

point more than adequate for any possible requirements of the undertaking. Moreover, these things have been achieved while giving increased transit facilities to the public on fares which are fractionally lower than they were in 1936 through the reduction of the maximum through fare from 9d. to 6d. All-night transport, Sunday morning services, the family ticket of 2/6 to Wattle Park and the beaches, the formation of a Stores Department which has saved scores of thousands of pounds, the establishment of a uniform factory which has given the staff a better uniform at less cost, the construction of the large central bus garage, with the most modern equipment for the rapid servicing and maintenance of the large fleet of buses, the extension of the Preston Workshops—these are just some of the more important things which have made our undertaking the most successful transport concern of its kind in the world.

BUSES FEW, SO COACHES ARE HIRED.

Because of the non-delivery of the large orders for buses placed by the London Transport Board, it has been found necessary to hire 350 coaches from the Passenger Vehicle Operators' Association. Out of the 2,500 buses on order and required urgently to replace rolling stock now far from its best, only a few have so far been delivered, while hundreds of buses are off the roads daily because of the acute shortage of spare parts.

The hiring of coaches in this way is unprecedented in the history of London Transport, although buses from various provincial cities were loaned to the Board to make good the shortages occasioned by the "blitz." Obviously a lot of water will flow under the Thames Bridge before the Board will even be in sight of starting on the conversion of the South London trams to buses.

Sheffield is also hiring all the buses it can so as to overcome the non-delivery of vehicles. The abolition of the private basic petrol ration has thrown an added strain on the existing public service vehicles, and as the rolling stock position is deteriorating rapidly all over Britain, it looks as if the Government will be forced sooner or later to give transport undertakings a more liberal share of the production.

TRANSPORT FROM FOOTSCRAY.

Buses to the City Will Precede a Tram Route.

In 21 years' experience of deputations to the Board we cannot recall one which left so satisfied as that which, led by Mr. Shepherd, M.L.A., appeared before the Board early in the month. There

were sound reasons for their satisfaction. First of all, the members came prepared to argue their case, only to find that their requirements were thoroughly understood by the Board; secondly, they found themselves in possession of the perfectly detailed plan prepared by the Per. Way Department showing alternative schemes.

After the Per. Way Engineer (Mr. H. H. Bell, Junr.) had explained the schemes clearly, the deputation had no difficulty in deciding to recommend to the Council the adoption of the third scheme, which will provide a direct route from Footscray Railway Station to Spencer Street via Irving, Hopkins, Cowper and Napier Streets, the Melbourne-Footscray Road and Dudley Street. Buses, the Chairman stated, would be used at first, and the Council's representatives gave the assurance that the Board's application for the route would be supported by the Council before the Motor Omnibus Advisory Committee. When trams take the place of buses, the route will be one of 3.23 miles. Paved ballast construction will be adopted from Footscray Station to the Maribyrnong River, thence open ballast construction, with plantations along the north side of the Melbourne-Footscray Road to Dudley Street, after which there will be wood-blocked construction to Spencer Street. The estimated cost of £263,000 includes £10,000 for a new trestle bridge in Napier Street over the Maribyrnong River, £10,000 for a new trestle bridge on the Melbourne-Footscray Road over the Moonee Ponds Creek, and £22,000 for a new power sub-station, but does not include any necessary alterations to mains, drains and other services.

Two interesting facts that emerged from Footscray's statement were that the local station is the busiest outside Flinders Street, dealing with over 5,000,000 passengers yearly for a revenue of £89,000, and that the Council had been informed officially that the Railways find it impossible to give the Sunshine, Williamstown and Footscray areas any better service than is now in existence. The latter intimation will doubtless be of value to the Council when in due course it submits evidence before the Parliamentary Public Works Committee in support of the special scheme for the construction of the tramway from Footscray.

"PHILADELPHIANS MUST HAVE THE BEST"— SO THEY ARE GIVEN TRAMS!

Philadelphia is one of the largest and most progressive cities of the United States, and in Philadelphia Rapid Transit it possesses a concern which has attracted public attention by avowing its faith in the tram as the best vehicle for the mass trans-