

Tramway Topics

States were:—Victoria, 171.30; N.S.W., 163.44; South Australia (including particulars relating to motor buses), 79.99; Western Australia, 69.59; Queensland, 62.93; and Tasmania, 29.44. (2) In 1939, the last year for which figures are available, the trams, buses, trolley buses, subways and "river trams" of Moscow carried 2,578,122,000 passengers. Of that total, much more than half, 1,837,000,000 to be exact, were conveyed by tram. In that year, 9,822 trams were operating in 76 Russian cities.

RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue the under-noted retiring gratuities have been authorised by the Board:—

Conductor K. M. Hall (49), £226; Tradesman's Assistant W. J. McLean (58), £208; Con. D. S. Giroud (43), £226; Track Repairer J. Jordan (64, Returned Soldier), £396; Dr. R. C. King (65), £452; Night Telephonist A. D. Herd (65), £440; Pitman J. Law (61), £285; Dr. A. E. Giles (65), £452; Dr. P. J. West (48), £197; Con. J. A. Byham (60), £301; Dr. A. Thompson (48), £226; Leading-Hand Painter J. McGuire (65), £528; Dr. C. W. H. Nixon (45), £226; Con. E. A. Chalice (47), £208; Con. H. D. Neville (58), £226; Tradesman J. Cuthbertson (65), £499; Foreman Tunnel Cleaner H. A. Bellman (65), £510; Leading-Hand Lab. J. P. Bassett (65), £484.

Death gratuities have been paid in respect of Con. J. T. H. Merison (61), £301; Depot Starter A. K. Smith (63), £351; Dr. A. C. Morgan (64), £301; Paint-Mixer J. Appleby (54), £230; Rev. Clerk R. B. Smith (54), £292; and Pitman D. A. Turner (60), £309.

THE CHAIRMAN'S REFLECTION.

The Chairman was rather surprised over the number of people who hastened to point out a typographical error in our last issue, which resulted in the passengers carried being shown at 250,083,082 for the year, instead of 350,083,082.

The incident occasioned the reflection by the Chairman that if all those so anxious to report a mistake were one-tenth as keen to send in contributions, he would have to at least treble the size of "Topics."

Mr. Bell takes this opportunity to again remind the staff that he will welcome contributions to "Topics" from all Departments.

PRESIDENT'S LAST APPEARANCE.

Following upon the vote of the members of the A. T. & M. O. E.'s Association, the Board reciprocated by agreeing to resume those round-table conferences which have resulted in so much gain to the industry during recent years. The meeting to hear the representations on the five requests made by the Association was held on the 16th November last. As the Chairman made the notes of the deputation available to the "Tramway Record," it is not necessary to publish them here.

There is no question that the conference was one of the most agreeable yet held, and was made notable by the very fine speech by the President (Mr. Cousland)—a speech which evoked generous and genial applause from the members of the Board. Mr. Cousland thus capped his years of great service to the members of his Association with a performance which he can look back upon with unstinted pleasure.

Mr. Broadby (to whom congratulations on his election as President) also impressed the Board by his speech and the manner in which he presented his case indicated that the high standard set by Mr. Cousland is to be maintained, to the advantage, it may be certain, of all concerned.

THE FAWKNER TRAM PROPOSAL.

Some comment has been made over the fact that, notwithstanding that the Board, in addition to the Railways, has expressed opposition to the proposal to extend the North Coburg line to Fawkner Cemetery, the Board has presented a special construction scheme to the Minister of Public Works.

The actual position will be understood when it is pointed out that the Board has no option in the matter; the Tramways Act provides that when the Minister asks for such a scheme, the Board must comply with the request. That submission in no way commits the Board, for the matter must then be the subject of an inquiry by the Parliamentary Committee on Public Works. That Committee may recommend the rejection of the proposal, in which event it is dead; but if it recommends it, a special Bill authorising the work must then be passed. Even then it does not follow that the work will be tackled at once; other projects may be of greater importance and urgency. An instance is the St. Kilda Beach via South Melbourne route. That line was authorised years before the Board was constituted. Construction did not take place until 1925.

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The Official Bulletin of The Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board

Volume 3

January, 1945

Number 25

THAT REJECTED OFFER.

Already Two Employees Have Lost £242.

While it is highly probable that the majority of the 483 members of the A. T. & M. O. Employees' Association who attended the general meeting on the 14th inst. did not appreciate the extent of the offer by the Board of long service leave and greatly liberalised retiring and death gratuities, it is doubtful if they imagined that the rejection of the Board's scheme would so soon affect materially two members of the Association who, unfortunately for themselves and their families, have been certified medically unfit for further service and have been retired.

Member A, with 36 years' service, goes out with a retiring gratuity of £211, while Member B, after 25 years' service, leaves with £226.

But had the Board's offer been in operation, Member A's cheque would have been £384, while Member B would have received £289.

The rejection of the Board's offer, then, has deprived these two members of £179 and £63 respectively.

THOSE RESERVE FUNDS.

Why They Are Raised and How They Are Used.

It is extraordinary how some people seem to take perverse delight in exposing their own lack of knowledge of the particular subject they happen

to be discussing. A speaker at the general meeting of the members of the A. T. & M. O. Employees' Association on the 14th inst. made the astounding assertion that the Board's Reserve Fund—which he placed at £3,500,000—could be used to give improved working conditions. A few seconds devoted to the Tramways Act, and another few to the Board's accounts, would have shown him

- (1) That the Board's Reserve Funds can be accumulated and used only for certain specific objects. (See Sections 24, 25, 26 and 27); and
- (2) That the Board has no Reserve Fund out of which it could finance higher wages or improved working conditions, and has no power to establish such a fund.

As there appears to be a general lack of understanding in connection with the Reserve Fund, it may not be unprofitable to explain just what it is, how it comes to be established, and just how it is used. In the first place, the Board's assets are purchased, or constructed. Naturally these assets are subject to depreciation; trams, buses, tracks, machinery and other plant, overhead gear, all wear out. One method adopted generally to provide for the replacement of those wasting assets at the appropriate time is to set aside each year a specific percentage of the original cost, the idea being that when the asset has reached the end of its life the amount at the credit of this Depreciation Account will be sufficient to purchase new equipment. In the case of the Board, the method adopted is that which is laid down in Section 24 of the Tramways Act, by which provision for depreciation is made,

not by writing down the value of the asset from year to year, but by building up reserve funds for the specific purposes mentioned in the Sections referred to. During this period, the assets remain on the books at cost price; but when the time comes to scrap them they are written off to the Renewals Reserve Fund, which naturally is then reduced to that extent.

During the years when heavy deficits were being experienced, and during the financial depression, the amount of depreciation provided in this manner was short of the amount which should have been allocated by no less than £1,504,000. The larger amounts appropriated during the last three years, thanks to the action of the Government in amending the Act, have only enabled the Board to build up the reserves to something approaching their proper level. Since 1939, rolling stock, overhead gear, all plant and machinery and the permanent way have all depreciated far above the normal rate owing to the strain of increased traffic and inability through lack of man power to maintain the regular overhaul and maintenance schedules. The renewals in these directions, other than rolling stock, will mean, it is estimated, an expenditure of up to £1,000,000 as soon as circumstances permit.

So far as rolling stock is concerned, the Board proposes after the war to replace 600 of the existing trams with vehicles of the latest type, which will mean a capital expenditure of about £2,500,000, and a debit to the Renewals Reserve Fund of approximately £1,750,000, which latter sum represents the value of the trams to be scrapped. In addition, many of the buses now running are just about at the end of their economic usefulness, and will have to be written off the Renewals Fund at the end of the war, which will absorb a further large portion of the Fund.

From what has been written, and from a perusal of the Sections alluded to, it will therefore be clear that neither the Renewals Reserve Fund nor the General Reserve Fund can be debited with expenditure relating to wages or improved conditions. The expenditure on the latter heads can only be a charge against current income, and if unreasonable and extravagant improvements were granted, the cost would absorb such a great proportion of the income that there would be no balance left to place to reserve to provide for future depreciation and reconstruction.

FUTURE OF BUS BODY DESIGN.

London Transport Experiment.

In 1938, the chief engineer (trams and trolley buses) of the London Passenger Transport Board (Mr. G. F. Sinclair) suggested the re-designing of the conventional motor or trolley bus with the pay-as-you-enter system of fare collection. His idea was a double-decker vehicle with a central staircase, a front entrance and a centre exit, both equipped with air-operated folding doors. The idea of the former under the control of the driver, and the latter operated by passengers, would, he thought, offer the solution of the problem of quick turnover of alighting and boarding passengers. The conductor would sit at a desk with his ticket-issuing and cash machines, and would be solely a fare collector with no responsibility for passengers boarding or alighting.

It was not practical then to proceed with the design and construction of a vehicle embodying these ideas; but recently, to ascertain data on the pay-as-you-enter working in practice with double-deckers, while retaining the existing faretables, the Board has taken the opportunity of reconstructing a standard body as an experimental central-entrance vehicle, the normal rear entrance being eliminated. The centrally-placed boarding and alighting platform, which can accommodate eight persons, is equipped with a pneumatically-operated door, which excludes draughts and rain and makes platform accidents practically impossible. Amidships on the offside a staircase leads to the upper deck. A counter is provided facing the central entrance at which the conductor sits to collect fares, issue tickets and operate the door. The interior arrangements require the passenger to follow a new procedure. On entering the vehicle, the passenger first goes to the counter and purchases a ticket. He then passes to his seat either by going to his left to the front of the bus, to his right and so to the rear, or up the central staircase to the upper deck.

So far as operating is concerned, the principle is that on approaching stops the conductor causes the sliding door to open. Alighting passengers leave the vehicle first. When those waiting for the bus have boarded the vehicle, the conductor closes the door and the passengers then tender their fares before making for their seats. The bus, the design of which is purely experimental, is equipped with a fare-recording register with nine classification

keys which on being depressed issues a card which records the date, the stage at which issued, the fare paid, the class of fare, the serial number and the route.

FLYING BOMBS.

How Two Transport Magazines Were Produced.

Mr. Churchill once described London as "the unique target of the world." Descriptions and pictures have told the story of London's ordeal by bombs from aircraft, and magazines for October and November now coming to hand indicate the extent of the trial suffered in 80 days during the summer and autumn.

Two magazines which have reached us regularly notwithstanding the worst the Huns could do are "The Transport World" and "The Overseas Engineer." The experiences of the editors and staffs of those journals are typical of what was so imperfectly hinted at in official communiqués, and they are summarised here so that we may have some sort of idea of what the people of London and south-east England have endured with so much fortitude and courage, though it is difficult for us in our security, and in our pre-occupation with our petty squabbles, to visualise smoking and flaming buildings, under the ruins of which people are trapped alive, streets closed with huge piles of debris, steel girders unbelievably twisted into grotesque shapes, the rescue squads busy with the mangled and the dying.

The homes of every member of the staff of "The Transport World," from the editor downwards, suffered to a greater or less degree; some were reduced to mere heaps of rubble. At the offices, doors were blown off, windows were shattered, the roof was badly damaged, the composing room was partially wrecked and the type scattered. Yet not a single member of the staff left the job; they went on with their work and turned out the weekly and monthly editions to time.

The offices of "The Overseas Engineer" were hit twice before being destroyed completely with their contents, while the private homes of the staff without exception were unroofed, re-roofed and unroofed, again and again in some cases; not a home escaped. "Yet our readers are aware," remarks the editor with justifiable pride, "that The Overseas

Engineer' has never failed to reach them . . . thanks to London tenacity and to the tenacity of the Royal Navy and the Mercantile Marine, who delivered this journal through all the seven seas."

During those 80 days, 78 members of the staff of the London Passenger Board were killed and 1,140 injured. Yet they, too, carried on with a superb disregard of danger. There were some freak incidents. At West Ham 108 buses were put temporarily out of commission by blast, while when a bomb exploded in Tottenham Court Road the top deck of a bus was blown off and wrapped round a lamp-post.

THE SICK PAYMENT TOTAL.

Some confusion appears to exist in the minds of some people over the sick payments by the Board for the year which ended on the 30th June last.

When giving certain figures in a recent issue, the total shown referred only to the £1 per week sick allowance. Payment for sickness in other directions was, of course, very much greater, the total for the year being £28,268.

For the twelve months the disbursements by the Board for sickness thus amounted to £36,816.

OUR UNIFORM DEPARTMENT.

If ever a department justified the optimistic anticipations of its sponsors, it is the Uniform section of the Stores Branch. The financial advantage to the Board, leaving out the fact that we have been able to provide better material and more skilled workmanship, has been such as to make one wonder why on earth private manufacturers allowed such a gold mine to go by default—either that or speculate upon the precise measure of profit they are getting for the work they are now doing.

In four and a half months—the latest period for which figures are available—the workrooms at Hawthorn have turned out 3,624 garments for the Board's staff, 767 for the Victorian Railway Commissioners and 164 for the Police Department, a total of 4,555. Included in that total for ourselves were such items as 867 pairs of trousers, 858 coats and skirts, 609 men's coats, 500 khaki drill coats and 180 shirts.

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PRODUCER-GAS OPERATION.

Why it was Abandoned in the United Kingdom.

An anonymous correspondent, writing from the Malvern Depot, reproves us for what he calls our "prejudice over producer-gas operation." It has been stated in these pages that producer-gas is dirty, inconvenient, inefficient, and results in marked waste in tyres and man-power. These are not prejudiced views but cold, hard facts, recognised at last so far as the British Government is concerned by the withdrawal of the order which enjoined the owners of passenger and commercial fleets to have 10 per cent. of the vehicles fitted with producer-gas.

Apart from the fact that the transport industry fought that order because of the demonstrated inefficiency and wastefulness of producer-gas, why was it withdrawn? Let Mr. G. Lloyd George, speaking on behalf of the Ministry of War Transport in the House of Commons, answer. "It was felt," he said "that the small additional consumption of petrol involved was justified by the saving in man-power required for operating, maintaining and servicing public service and commercial vehicles propelled by producer-gas."

On the operating side alone the saving in man-power is substantial. The largest road transport concern in Scotland, the Scottish Motor Transport Co., stated that it took three buses fitted with producer-gas to do the work performed previously by two petrol-driven vehicles, and that even then they had to be used on the easiest routes, while the maintenance and servicing staffs had had to be increased by 25 per cent. Several concerns reported a 300 per cent. increase in tyre consumption, so that the small savings in petrol and diesel oil were swamped by the waste in man-power and rubber.

There is another important factor in the use of producer-gas in an engine not suited for its use, and that is the marked deterioration of the engine. Some engines, in our own experience, have had to be re-bored after covering only 5,000 miles on producer-gas, while an English concern has put it

on record that with their buses re-boring has had to be done at an average of from 15,000 to 20,000 as against 80,000 when petrol was the fuel. This serious deterioration is recognised by the British Board of Inland Revenue, which allows 50 per cent. depreciation.

CALCUTTA TRAMWAYS EXTENDING.

"Threatened folk," says an old Scots proverb, "live long." In happy ignorance of the doom which, it is alleged in some quarters, is hanging over tramways, the Calcutta Tramways Co. proceeds on its prosperous way, and last year actually reduced the number of buses in service and put more trams on the road. Two extensions were carried through, the second of which, across the new Howrah Bridge, connected the chief railway systems of the city.

When the famine caused food prices to soar, the company came to the aid of their employees and purchased food at market rates, re-selling it to the staff at pre-famine prices.

DEATH AND RETIRING GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue the under-noted retiring gratuities have been authorised by the Board:—

Dr. J. J. Reddan (57), £226; Dr. G. H. Turner (51), £226; Car Cleaner H. P. Wells (42), £128; Pitman W. B. Rodgers (65), £462; Con. J. T. Clack (65), £452; Dr. J. C. Hawley (63), £452; Traffic-Inspector J. J. McHutchison (65), £585; Lead-Hand Boilermaker W. J. Brennan (56), £284; Car Cleaner H. A. E. Wherrett (59), £208; Dr. F. W. Adams (65), £452; Dr. W. Burleigh (65), £452; Con. M. J. S. Henshaw (53), £226; Insp. G. W. Rhodes (65), £585; C. A. Anderson (58), £211; and Dr. E. H. Y. Nicholls (44), £208.

Death gratuities have been paid in respect of the late Dr. W. R. Mackellar (51), £226; A. V. Mellor (48), £237; and A. J. Dyer (59), £208.

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Volume 3

March, 1945

Number 26

£1,600 LOST TO THE STAFF.

Adoption of Bad Advice Proves Expensive.

Notwithstanding what has appeared in these columns and in "The Tramway Record," it appears that many of the members of the A. T. & M. O. E. A. do not yet realise what has been lost by the rejection of the offer of the Board to introduce a measure of long service leave, coupled with the liberalisation of the Retiring and Death Gratuities, and we have been asked to once again explain in detail what was proposed.

The Board offered long service leave, in addition to annual leave and any accumulated sick leave, as follows:—

- (1) Within ten weeks of completion of 10 years' service—4 weeks.
- (2) Within 10 weeks of completion of 20 years' service—8 weeks.
- (3) Within 10 weeks of completion of 30 years' service—12 weeks.

Those periods of leave were to have been at the option of the individual concerned, and it is important to remember that fact in conjunction with the changes which were proposed in the Retiring and Death Gratuity Regulations.

Under the Regulations, an employee who resigned from the service voluntarily in order to engage in other employment went out with no recognition of his service. (An example is that of the ex-President of the Association, Mr. Cousland, who after 20 years' service resigned to take up an appointment with the Port Melbourne Council). Desiring to recognise such cases, the Board proposed to amend the Regulations by providing for a grant of one week's pay for each year of service up to a maximum of 13 weeks' pay to those under 60 years of age who retired voluntarily with the

Board's approval. In a case such as that of Mr. Cousland, the retiring gift would have been approximately £80.

For those of from 60 to 64 years of age, upon retirement, or under 65 years of age upon retirement on account of total incapacity or death, the existing maximum is two week's wages up to a maximum of 52 weeks. Under the Board's proposal, the two weeks' pay for each year of service would have remained, but there would have been no maximum. In other words, a man retiring at, say, 63 years of age through being certified as medically unfit for further Tramway work, and with 35 years' service, would have received a grant of 70 weeks' pay—an improvement of 18 weeks' pay; in round figures an additional £108.

Then the Board took into consideration those who reach the retiring age of 65 years and who have long service with the Board. The maximum payment under the Regulations is 78 weeks' pay, and it is one to which the man of but 20 years' service is entitled to as well as the man with 50 years' service. In order to recognise length of service, the Board proposed that the individual with 20 years' service would still qualify for the maximum, but that the employee with longer service would receive an additional week's pay for each year beyond 20 years up to a maximum of 26 additional weeks—a total of 104 weeks' pay.

But suppose in the latter case that the employee had, after being employed for 30 years, decided on health grounds to take three months long service leave. It is highly probable that such a spell would send him back to his employment restored in health and able to go on until he reached the retiring age of 65 years. In that event, he would then retire with 92 weeks' pay, 14 weeks better than the present maximum, and in addition he would have enjoyed 12 weeks' long service leave.

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It was decidedly unfortunate for the whole staff that the general meeting, on the motion of Mr. A. Cullen, seconded by Mr. F. Dye, and supported by Mr. C. O'Shea, rejected a proposal which gave all so much without one penny of contribution. In our January issue we showed how two members of the Association had suffered to the extent of £179 and £63 respectively. In the list of retirements given on another page more members have substantial reasons for regretting that the meeting voted for rejection. But for that adverse vote two members would have received the maximum of 104 weeks' wages, two would have drawn 103 weeks, and two 102 weeks, while others would have got the benefit of from 10 to 14 additional weeks' wages. Already those who have retired since the meeting have lost approximately £1,600. Like the Israelites of old, the members of the Association are finding that the penalty for following false gods is expensive.

THE BOARD'S RESERVE FUNDS.

Another matter which seems to require further clarification is the Reserve Funds of the Board.

There is no excuse for ignorance on this matter, nor for misrepresentation, for the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Act is available to all. If it is consulted, it will be seen that Sections 24 to 27 inclusive compels the Board to establish (a) a Renewals Reserve Fund, and (b) a General Reserve Fund, and lays it down specifically how those Reserve Funds shall be used. The Renewals Reserve Fund is applicable only to meet expenses incurred in renewals, reconstructions or conversions, while the General Reserve Fund can be drawn upon only to meet a deficit, to pay for the construction, improvement or widening of a bridge or road, or to meet expenditure incurred in any cable conversion. In addition, the Board is given permission to establish a Maintenance Reserve Fund to meet expenses for special works of maintenance, a Fire Insurance Fund, and a Public Risk Insurance Fund. Under this provision, the Special Maintenance Reserve (Buses), the Fire Insurance Reserve and the Public Risk Insurance Funds have been established, and the money in them can only be used for those particular purposes.

From the above it will surely now be realised that the Board has no Reserve Fund out of which to meet the expense of increased wages and improved working conditions, and that under no circumstances can such expenditure be debited against the Renewals Reserve Funds, or indeed any

of the other Reserve Funds authorised by the Tramways Act; they can only be a charge against current revenue.

TROLLEY BUSES IN PARIS.

One of the interesting achievements of the French during the Hun occupation has been the introduction of trolley buses in Paris. While the decision in 1941 was to introduce 19 routes with a total length of 130 kms. (80½ miles, or 73 miles after discounting sections common to one or more routes), the equipment for the first route, that from Porte de Champerret to Bezons by Courbevoi and Charlebourg, was not delivered until 1943, and the service did not come into operation until the middle of January last year. The second route will be from Courbevoi to Colombes and Argenteuil.

This is not the first, or even the second, attempt to establish trolley buses within the Parisian metropolis. The first was in 1900, and the route was from Fontainebleau to Samois. Technically it was a success; financially it was a failure, as were other small experimental efforts on the outskirts of the city. The vehicles now running have seats for 28, and standing room for 24, passengers, so apparently the reputation held previously by the public service vehicles of Paris, whether trams or buses, for discomfort, is to be maintained.

IF BUSES REPLACED TRAMS.

The Board's Costs Would Advance by £800,000.

It may be remembered that some months ago "The Sun" made the startling discovery that the leading cities of the world had banished, or were in the process of banishing, trams from their main streets. It is true that "The Sun" carelessly omitted to mention even half a dozen great cities which have acted in such a way, and that journals devoted to the transport industry appear, strangely enough, to be wholly ignorant of such a development; but of course these are insignificant details which are, very properly, ignored by "The Sun" when the great task of "stouthing" the tram has to be undertaken.

Nevertheless, it does seem a pity that "The Sun" should entrust the task of writing on transport to some individual who knows nothing of the subject, and is consequently reduced to drawing upon a fertile imagination for assertions whose only effect is to make the paper ridiculous in the eyes of those

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engaged in transport. "Buses," it was written on the 17th January, "cope successfully with London's huge rush hour crowds." To put it mildly, that is one of the most nonsensical statements ever published. Buses do not now handle, and never have even attempted to cope with, London's peak traffic, the burden of which falls almost exclusively on the tubes and electric railways. Broadly speaking, the buses in the central area of London run throughout the day on an even headway for the very good reason that it is impossible to put more service into the already over-congested streets, many of which are not so much wider than Little Collins Street. If you are in a hurry in central London you either take the tube, if a station is convenient, or walk, as the average speed of the buses through the district is a fraction less than 3½ m.p.h.

Before the war, "The Transport World" published a photograph of Oxford Street, of which we have a copy. If "The Sun" cares to publish it and so demonstrate to its readers that our Chairman's assertion that if we attempted to cope with the traffic in Swanston Street with buses the vehicles would be almost touching in the peak periods is more than borne out by what happens in Oxford Street, as well as in Regent Street, the Strand, and other streets in central London, we shall be delighted to make the picture available. In that picture, taken early in the afternoon, by the way, Oxford Street is a solid mass of vehicles stretching from kerb to kerb, the front bumper bar of one bus separated only by inches from the rear bumpers of the bus in front, with private motor cars jammed near the kerb.

The truth is that in no large city anywhere—we mean by large cities with populations of 500,000 and over—are buses called upon to handle peak traffic. They are not designed or constructed to do so. It is equally true to say that if the smaller cities of the old world possessed the wide streets of Melbourne buses would not find a place in the transport picture except as feeders. Their passenger-carrying capacity is so much smaller than a tram that any attempt to handle mass transport is fore-doomed to failure. They cannot, as our experience in Bourke Street has demonstrated conclusively, even equal the performance of the old cable cars, notwithstanding the fact that the buses in use have a seating capacity of 3,344 seats against the 2,814 seats of the cable tram. Chicago, so similar in its lay-out to Melbourne, uses diesel and trolley buses, chiefly as feeders, as does Moscow, which possesses the largest tramway

system in the world. Berlin keeps its buses for suburban routes and to act as feeders to its fine tramway system.

At present the transport requirements in Swanston, Elizabeth, Collins and Flinders Street are met with 480 trams, manned by 2,006 drivers and conductors. It would take at least 960 buses manned by a staff of 3,840 to do the same work—no extra revenue would be gained—while the operating expenses would soar by £800,000 a year.

A GRATEFUL CONDUCTOR.

After 1,508 days in the A.I.F., one of our conductors has been discharged and is back in the employment of the Board. In a letter to the Chairman, he says:—

"Last week I had the very great pleasure of collecting from the treasurer 215 War Savings Certificates. These are the Certificates granted by the Board, free, to every Service man after discharge from the Forces. I would like to express my very deep thanks to you as Chairman, and would ask you on my behalf to thank the other members of the Board for making this splendid gift possible."

STILL MORE P.C.C. TRAMS.

The Chicago Surface Lines are purchasing 385 trams of the P.C.C. type, while Louisville hopes to have an additional 25 in service this month.

SCHEME FOR UNDERGROUND TRAMS.

The General Manager and Chief Engineer of the Leeds Corporation Transport Department has prepared and submitted to the Post-War Reconstruction Committee a scheme for the construction of an underground tramway system in the centre of Leeds at an estimated cost of £4,000,000.

"THE VOICE OF THE INCOMPETENT."

Astonishing Transport Inaccuracies.

Criticism of the chances provided in Australia for incompetent people to voice opinions in public with the wisest was expressed recently by Professor A. F. Burstall, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering at Melbourne University. Professor Burstall was referring particularly to education; but his remarks have an even greater truth when applied to those who are never deterred by lack of knowledge from

commenting on, and criticising the management of, transport undertakings.

For some weeks there has been quite a spate of such letters on our affairs in the Press. One Letter-to-the-Editor gentleman, trying to make out a case for the continuance of buses in Bourke Street, alleged that the buses in London ran 2,869,236,742 miles and carried 2,167,309,552 passengers. He was, therefore, inviting his readers to believe that the London buses handle less than one passenger per mile! Actually the correspondent, in his anxiety to emphasise the task of the buses, increased the mileage by the trifle of 2,580,000,000 miles!

Not to be outdone in inaccuracy, another writer alleged that "there are no trams in London," which will surprise the Passenger Transport Board, as in its last report it confesses to having 1,316 trams, and gave the mileage run and passengers carried. Probably that writer when he refers to London does not know whether he is alluding to the City of London proper, the London of the County Council, the London of the Metropolitan Police, or that area still known as London which embraces all the territory within which the London Passenger Transport Board holds sway.

Next came the statement that all buses in London are owned privately, which accounted for their efficiency. When the L.P.T.B. took over all transport within the area defined by Parliament on the 1st July, 1933, various concerns were paid partly in cash and partly in what is known as "C" stock, the rate of interest on which was prescribed by the Transport Act. So far as we know, the shareholders in these undertakings have never yet received the full rate of interest, so perhaps their views on the efficiency of the buses will not be in harmony with those of the writer of the letter referred to.

Possibly, also, the passengers in those districts served formerly by trams will have opinions on the buses markedly different from those of the correspondent. Eighteen months ago the Transport League reviewed the changes in fares which have occurred since the buses took the place of trams. Summarised, these are:—The all-day fare has gone, the return fare has disappeared, the 8d. all-trip ticket was first raised to 9d and then abolished, transfers have in many cases been withdrawn, as "it is in general not the Board's policy to give such facilities," the 5d. fare has been raised to 6d., the 2d. all-the-way fare for children, with transfer, has been raised to 3d. with no transfer, the 2d. mid-day

fare has been increased to 3d., workmens' fares, formerly 2d. and 6d., have gone to 2½d. and 7d., and the 1d. fare is now 1½d.

These are substantial changes, and to the average working family mean a good deal in the course of a year. They have exchanged the comfort and cheap fare of the tram for the discomfort and higher fares of the bus.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"Inspector," Malvern.—Opinion on retirement can only be personal. Some months before he died, the late Sir John Monash was advised to take things easier "I would rather wear out than rust out," he said, and Sir John was a man of wide interests who would, if he had retired, have had few dull hours. During the last 18 months, many of those who have reached 65 years have chosen to remain in the service, which does not seem to suggest that they would have liked to retire at 60. In any case, both you, and they, had the right to retire at 60 under the Retiring Regulations.

"Historicus," Prahran.—The Edinburgh Corporation cable tramway system was converted to electric traction in 1924. Leith had had electric trams for many years before that, the terminus of the route from the port to Edinburgh being at the east end of Princes Street.

DEATH AND RETIRING GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue, the under-noted retiring gratuities have been voted by the Board:—

Senior Rev. Clerk A. H. Tye (65), 45 years' service, £624; Con. M. J. S. Henshaw (53), 25 years, £226; C. A. Anderson (58), 36 years, £211; Dr. E. H. Y. Nichols (44), 18 years, £208; Pit.-Lab. F. G. World (65), 45 years, £452; Park-Cleaner W. F. Walsh (65), 20 years, £417; Wheel-Grinder S. G. Carter (65), 46 years, £570; Con. E. W. Tinnick (61), 25 years, £452; Dr. H. Watson (65), 34 years, £452; Con. A. H. Scholes (60), 38 years, £301; Car-Cleaner J. W. Swanson (65), 44 years, £417; Dr. A. M. McIntosh (56), 24 years, £226; Con. C. Asling (46), 21 years, £226; Pit. A. E. Jeffree (65), 30 years, £464; Dr. T. Lawson (51), 25 years, £226; Dr. J. J. Barton (65), 34 years, £452; and Con. W. G. Lonie (60), 39 years, £301.

Death gratuities have been paid in respect of the late Special Ganger R. G. Spittall (58), 21 years, £249, and Con. C. Donnelly (49), 29 years, £226.

Tramway Topics

The Official Bulletin of The Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board

Volume 3

April, 1945

Number 27

THE BOARD'S RESERVE FUNDS.

What Happened During the Depression.

In our last issue we set out so simply and briefly the facts concerning the Board's Reserve Funds that we thought the subject would henceforth be free from misunderstanding and certainly free from stupid misrepresentation. We were wrong. "The Tramway Record" of March 30 contained a note from a correspondent who does not yet understand the matter, and who is obviously unwilling to familiarise himself with the truth. He made two ridiculous assertions. The first was that we had endeavoured "to prove that reserve funds must be augmented each and every year," and the second was that our article looked "like an effort to conceal the fact that tramway revenue is now greater than ever." Well!

It seems a waste of time and space to reply to such rubbish; but for the benefit of those members of the Tramway Association who are genuinely interested in the subject, we would point out that in our article we merely set out why the Board maintains the various Reserve Funds and the only directions in which they can be used. Proof of what we wrote was not required, for all who can read can see it in Section 24 of the Tramways Act, which says:—

"The Board shall in respect of its undertakings establish

- (a) A Renewals Reserve Fund; and
- (b) A General Reserve Fund,"

while sub-Section 3 says that "the Board shall in every year carry to each of the said funds such sums as it thinks fit, but so that the total sums carried to the said reserve funds together shall not be less than Four Pounds per centum of the capital cost of its undertakings and not more than Six pounds per centum of such cost."

In accordance with those provisions, the Board, during the years of the financial depression, made appropriations to the Renewals and General Reserve Funds as follows:—

	Renewals Reserve	General Reserve
1931	£120,000	£205,600
1932	176,000	150,000
1933	236,000	86,000
1934	253,000	63,200

During those years the deficits totalled £501,000. They were met by transferring a corresponding sum from the General Reserve Fund which had been built up during the years. That procedure was again in accordance with Section 24 of the Act, which lays it down that one of the three purposes of the General Reserve Fund is "to meet a part or the whole of any deficit."

As for trying to conceal the fact that the Board's revenue is greater than ever, all that need be said is that in the annual report for 1944 it was stated that "the traffic receipts are the highest ever recorded on the Board's system, and exceed the pre-war year (£2,304,946) by £1,636,734"—which surely is a distinctly novel and highly unsuccessful method of concealment.

A PARIS-MELBOURNE COMPARISON.

"Yet Paris, the main streets of which are much wider than Melbourne's, prefers buses," says "The Sun."

But does it? In pre-war days there certainly were buses, but much of the ordinary traffic between the city and the suburbs, and unquestionably the vast bulk of the peak traffic, was handled by the fine Paris Metro, while the 18,000 taxis, with fares only slightly higher than those of the buses, were

speaking generally, used universally except by the workers—perhaps for the thrills, for the Parisian taxi driver seemed to be the direct descendant of Jehu, the son of Nimshi, "who drove furiously."

As for the main streets being wider than Melbourne's—well, "the last time we saw Paris" was on a cold January morning in 1918, and if the streets are now wider than those of Melbourne's, then all we can say is that they must since then have been reconstructed on a wholesale scale and in the utmost secrecy, for nobody beyond the "Sun" leader writer has ever heard of it being done.

TRAMS IN BRUSSELS.

Writing on a visit to Brussels a fortnight after its release, Mr. L. Graham Davies, war correspondent of "The Aeroplane," says:—"The very extensive electric tramway system was functioning normally, as it appeared to have done so throughout the occupation."

TRAM AND BUS MILEAGES.

A Vague Claim for 1,000,000 Miles by a Bus.

Supporting his argument that the effective, economic life of a tram is much longer than a bus, a Caulfield correspondent of "The Herald" mentioned that one of the Board's cable cars completed more than 1,100,000 miles in traffic. The secretary of the Chamber of Automotive Industries retorted by recalling, vaguely, a celebration in England over the completion of 1,000,000 miles by a bus—date, place and name of vehicle alike unspecified.

An extensive search through the files of "The Commercial Motor"—an English journal which gets hysterical at the mere mention of a tram—for the purpose of discovering that incident was unsuccessful; but we did come across the estimated 500,000 miles—estimated because the owner confesses there is no milometer on the vehicle—covered by a motor lorry over 28 years.

But it could scarcely be described as the lorry which left the works of the makers in May, 1917. Solid rubber had given place to pneumatic tyres, servo-type rear brakes had been fitted, the cylinders had been re-bored and new pistons fitted on six occasions, while of course many other parts had been renewed time and time again. But if it took a commercial motor vehicle 28 years to run an estimated 500,000 miles, how long would it take a passenger bus to cover 1,000,000 miles? We have the suspicion that that bus must have been operated by "Mrs. 'Arris."

Many of our trams have great mileages to their

credit, and these vehicles are practically the same as when they were delivered. No. 102, for instance, has run 787,906 miles, while No. 219 has covered in all 734,494 miles.

WELLINGTON TRANSPORT BUSY.

Wellington's trams and buses had a busy time last year, the revenue reaching the record of £675,372, the bus share of that total being £25,915.

The passenger increase of 5,396,000 to 64,521,000 is attributed mainly to the presence of Allied troops.

THE P.C.C. TRAM.

Although it is seven years since the P.C.C. tram made its appearance in the United States, there is no slackening in the appeal it makes to operators. The Philadelphia Transportation Co. has just ordered 100 from the St. Louis Car Co., which will bring its fleet of this type up to 360.

THE CONTROL OF TRANSPORT.

Wide Differences in Britain.

There are in Britain just now many varying opinions as to how internal transport—railways, trams, buses, road services, canals and airways—should be controlled after the war. In his Presidential address to the Institute of Transport, Mr. Robert Kelso sketched briefly some of the varying views which have been expressed during the last year.

Sir Osborne Mance had advocated a pool of fixed costs and competition for the other costs; Sir William Wood had proposed a system of correlated charges, not necessarily uniform, with competition in services but not in price; "The Times" had suggested a reconciliation of the differences in fixed costs as between the different forms of transport, and that all subsidised transport charges should be abolished; "The Economist" wanted all transport concerns to remain financially independent but linked on the capital side in a national pool, of which the State, as owner of road tracks, would be a member, and insisted on complete technical integration on operational functions; Sir Arthur Griffith-Boscawen proposed two alternatives, either to give the railways the "square deal" proposed in 1939, and then see what co-ordination could be effected with road interests, or to unify all forms of transport under a Public Board; the Labour Party favoured nationalisation with compensation for owners.

Where so many doctors differ, it is likely that transport authorities will suffer not a few shocks before a solution is reached. Perhaps that solution will be reached by the slow, if sure, process of evolution. During the last few years, indeed, we have seen the process at work. Since the war began, for instance, all the different forms of transport have been used as if they formed one system, each being utilised for the job it best could do. A distinct move has been noticed towards unification. The four main railway companies have been operating as one; the numerous members of the road transport industry have succeeded in arriving at a substantial measure of unity; various municipal and company transport undertakings have reached working agreements with the railways; while coastal shipping and canal companies have been doing a lot to eliminate or reduce, where practicable, all unnecessary duplication.

A NOVELIST DROPS A BRICK.

Isn't it marvellous how success in one direction invariably infects a man with the delusion that he is a Heaven-sent transport expert? The latest example is Mr. J. B. Priestley, the author of so many delightful books. Over the B.B.C. recently he broadcast his opinion that trams should be replaced by "an absolutely up-to-date system of public transport—motor buses, or trolley cars, or trolley buses."

Poor Mr. Priestley! His ignorance of the subject is such that he is not even aware that in suggesting "trolley cars" he was advocating the use of the trams he hates so much; for trolley car is just the name our U.S. friends give to the tram.

PRESTON WORKSHOP'S MALE CHOIR.

At the annual meeting the Hon. Secretary presented his 12th annual report, which showed that the choir had fulfilled 185 public engagements since its inception in 1932.

Many charitable and patriotic organisations have benefited by the time and hard work put in by the members of the choir. Although visits to country centres have been restricted owing to transport restrictions, a good few trips have nevertheless been made, and the branches of the Red Cross at Albury, Maffra, Yarragon and other places have had their funds increased substantially as the results of the concerts given by the choir.

Owing to war conditions, male chorus music has not been available; but this difficulty was overcome by the ability of the conductor (Mr. Reg. Penrose), to compose and write the music required.

Not all the members of the choir are employees at the workshops; the membership includes employees from the head office and the depots. Mr. J. R. Patterson, who has been President of the choir all along, has by his keen and never-ceasing interest and knowledge of music been a tower of strength, while the Hon. Secretary (Mr. H. Hood) has grudged neither time nor labour for the advancement of the choir. The choir hopes to repeat its feat of 1939 at Ballarat by again winning the male chorus contest.

WHERE THE TRAM SCORES.

"Even more surprising is Mr. Bell's suggestion that one advantage buses possess over trams is that whereas only 70 persons can be crowded into a bus designed to seat 54 passengers, at least 100 can be jammed into a tram intended to seat 52."—"The Sun," criticising the Chairman's article in "The Age."

To which we would say that it is still more surprising—or isn't it?—to find "The Sun" turning the Chairman's argument round about and so making its own comment stupid. For, of course, the predominance of the tram in the field of mass transport is due largely to the fact that it is 48ft. long, as compared with the 28ft. of the bus, and has a floor area of 292 square feet available for passengers as against the 160 square feet of the bus. The 70 persons in a bus, therefore, have less space than the 100 on a tram.

HE LAUGHED TOO SOON.

A Brunswick man to-day does not love quite so much as formerly his particular brand of humour. He thought it was excruciatingly funny to produce some 40 or 50 tickets when a ticket examiner boarded his tram, and he laughed with whole-hearted abandon when the official went through the lot searching for the correct ticket.

But he didn't laugh at all when the Magistrate, convicting him of the charge of having failed to produce the correct ticket for the journey then being travelled, fined him £2 with £1/14/- costs.

When you come to think of it, 74/- for a laugh does make merriment a shade expensive.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

R.S.M., Preston.—Your references to the trials of infantry in the last war have not the slightest bearing on our words, which were, "No former Service man in the full enjoyment of good health wants the choice of retiring so early." The governing words are those which are italicised. There was no reference, suggested or implied, to those whose health has been undermined by war service; and in fact you should know that those former members of the Services whose health makes it necessary for them to retire before 65 do now receive, if 60 years of age, the full gratuity of four weeks' salary or wages for each year of service up to a maximum of 78 weeks.

M.E.S., South Melbourne.—You win. The Act authorising the construction of the line was passed long before the Tramways Board was in existence; in 1912, to be precise.

THE COMFORTS FUND.

Our fellow employees away in the various Services were not forgotten at Easter. Those in the Army and Air Force received Canteen Orders to the value of 10/-, while the pay books of those in the Navy were credited with a like amount. The total cost to the Tramway Employees' Comforts Fund was £310. To date, the value of the Canteen Orders distributed since the inception of the Fund is £1,002.

The Fund's main source of income continues to be the monthly raffle. More than £900 has been raised by this means to date. Hundreds of appreciative letters have been received from the boys expressing their thanks for the orders. To many of them, particularly those in far-distant and unfamiliar surroundings, the fact that they have not gone forgotten by those back home means far more to them than the monetary value of the gift.

"FULL" SIGN ON GLASGOW TRAM.

As an experiment, the Glasgow Corporation Transport Department has fitted an electrical device to one of its trams which, when all the seats on the upper deck are occupied, automatically illuminates the words, "Full Up," on a small screen on the platform.

RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue the under-noted retiring gratuities have been passed by the Board:—

Bodymaker W. Peters (65), £499; Dr. D. Bauchope (65), £452; Ticket-Examiner F. J. Hitchins (53), £273; Dr. E. Greaves (51), £220; Dr. M. J. Fanning (65), £452; Battery-Fitter W. A. Jones (65), £499; Con. F. Schwind (46), £226; Dr. J. S. Cuttriss (65), £452; Wood-Machinist W. Wolfrenden (65), £475; and Watchman R. Cummins (65), £432.

Death gratuities have been paid in respect of Watchman J. Little (59), £216; Track-Cleaner C. E. Kidney (59), £203; Ticket-Clerk J. T. Foletta (64), £403; and Telephonist E. C. E. Thomas (61), £380.

Since the Board's offer of liberalised retiring and death gratuities was rejected, more than £2,000 has been lost by those who have retired since then.

BLOWING HOT, THEN COLD.

Tramway Association Executive's Changing Policies.

There is not a doubt that the reasoning governing some recent decisions of the Executive of the A. T. & M. O. Employees' Association is difficult to follow and understand, looking to the oft-repeated assertion that the desire of the Executive is to work in friendly conference with the Board.

That assurance received proof when the Executive, on the 12th March, decided to seek further conferences with the Board, and again on the 26th March, when it agreed to the Board's stipulation that the Association at that conference be represented by the General President and five members of the Executive. That conference was held on the 5th April, and it is more than probable that it would have resulted in a renewal of the Board's offer of long service leave, coupled with liberalised death and retiring gratuities and the continuance of the bonuses for six months after the war, but for the surprising action of the Executive on the 9th April in deciding to threaten to instruct the staff at Footscray not to man the cars unless two-man operation was commenced in 15 days.

That decision, so much at variance with the resolutions adopted on the 12th and 26th March, and with the pleas put forward at the conference on the 5th April, naturally inspired a feeling in the Board that it was useless to proceed with the attempt to negotiate with the Association. Obviously, a plea for the continuance of friendly relations one day followed the next by a threat to throw a depot idle do not harmonise; and the Board cannot be blamed if, before proceeding to consider the claims of the Association further, it seeks some guarantee that such tactics will cease.

Tramway Topics

The Official Bulletin of The Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board

Volume 3

June, 1945

Number 28

SICK LEAVE IS CUMULATIVE.

A Misapprehension Which Should Not Exist.

Notwithstanding all that has been written on the subject, both in these columns and in the "Tramway Record," there still exists the misapprehension that if sick leave is not taken before the 30th June each year it is lost. For the benefit of those people, then, it is emphasised that sick leave is cumulative up to 10 years, and can then be taken in conjunction with annual leave, with payment in advance. That means that if an employee works for 10 years without any sick leave, he will then be able to enjoy 10 weeks' leave, with pay, plus his annual leave. On the other hand, if sickness has been suffered during that 10-year period, the employee will be able to add the unexpended portion, 10, 20, 30 or 40 days, or whatever it may be, to annual leave.

The regulations go even further than that. For instance, in those cases where employees by reason of their age or permanent incapacity are retired, the sick leave at the credit of the individual will be added to their accrued annual leave and taken immediately before their retirement from the service. Again, employees who resign or who are discharged (except for misconduct) after completion of one year's service subsequent to the 1st July, 1944, will be entitled to payment also on the same lines. Finally, in the event of the death of an employee who has completed not less than 12 months' service, the Board may, in its absolute discretion, grant to the widow or dependent children payment for all accumulated leave standing to the credit of the deceased.

It will thus be seen that the fear that if sick leave if not taken is lost has no foundation in fact; that, indeed, to expend sick leave just for the sake of getting rid of it is to deprive oneself of a 10 weeks' holiday with pay at the end of 10 years.

PRAMS ON TRAMS.

There has recently been a recrudescence of the agitation against the ban of prams on trams, and the Chairman, while admitting the hardship experienced by some mothers, has been obliged to reaffirm the Board's decision prohibiting their carriage.

The ban was imposed when it became obvious with the abnormal increase in passenger traffic that to continue to allow prams to be carried was to invite accident and injury to mothers and children alike, and it will be continued until such time as traffic during the off-peak hours decreases or until the Board is able to run special trams for mothers at fixed times during the forenoon and afternoon.

Before the practice was stopped, both conductresses and conductors were most helpful and sympathetic, although not a few of the former had their stockings torn or smudged with grease, while passengers sent in complaints arising from the same cause.

BOARD'S OFFER ACCEPTED.

Ballot Exposes Strength of Bellicose Minority.

On the 14th January last, fewer than 350 of the 4,400 members of the A. T. & M. O. Employees' Association imposed their will on their fellow members and rejected the Board's offer of long service leave, combined with greatly liberalised death and retiring gratuities and the continuance of the war loading and bonus of 11/- per week for six months after the war.

On the 25th May last, the Association, in accordance with the Board's condition, took a ballot, as the result of which the offer was accepted "in full settlement of all demands for the duration of the present war" by a majority of 2,474 votes, the exact strength of the bellicose minority being thus revealed at 344.

As the Board decided, magnanimously, in connection with the ballot, to make the increase in the death and retiring gratuities retrospective to the 5th April, all that the belligerents achieved by their "victory" of the 14th January was to deprive those of their comrades who retired during January, February and March of the extra money they would have received under the scheme.

The long service leave provisions will not be operative until after the war.

A LONDON OPINION ON TRAMS.

"A survey of traffic requirements has forced me to look upon tramways as the only suitable known solution to the chaos and congestion of London thoroughfares. The petrol bus, developed and expanded to saturation point, has proved entirely unsuited to London's congested ways, and has failed in its efforts to meet an ever-increasing passenger demand."—C. W. Sturman in "Modern Transport."

RESERVE FUNDS.

What Happens when they are not Maintained.

What happens when a transport undertaking in the years of plenty fails to make appropriate allowances for depreciation and neglects to build up its reserve funds for use in the lean years, is strikingly demonstrated in the case of the Leeds Corporation Transport Department, which had a deficit of £45,000 for the year which ended on the 31st March last.

That loss has to come out of the Reserve Funds, which amount to but £107,000. The balance, £62,000, is now all that is available for tackling the arrears of repairs, maintenance and renewals, estimated to cost £500,000.

Thanks to the foresight of the Board in getting from the Government an amendment to the Tramways Act extending for the duration of the war and one year thereafter the maximum to be carried to reserves to 9 per cent. instead of 6 per cent., we in Melbourne will have ample funds for the replacement of wasted assets, for reconstructions and for the arrears of maintenance, thus ensuring continuity of profitable employment for many years after hostilities have ceased.

Those who have carped so persistently, and unintelligently, over the reserve funds will then, if they have the necessary wit to do so, appreciate the value of the policy pursued by the Board.

TRAM POPULARITY IN BUENOS AIRES.

Since last we referred to transport in Buenos Aires, there has been a further remarkable growth in tram travel. The Municipality, in its report for September last, states that the 1,877 trams in service represented 83.8 per cent. of the transport fleet, and that they carried during that month 52,800,000 passengers, as compared with 36,700,000 for the corresponding month in 1943.

The bus position continued to deteriorate. Five years ago 1,519 were in service; in September last there were but 344.

In the following month, October, the Transport Corporation carried 122,962,827 passengers. Of that total, 63,000,000 were transported by tram, 26,000,000 by the Underground (proposals for the extension of which are under consideration), 23,000,000 by minibuses and colectivos, and 10,000,000 by buses.

THE VALUE OF STAGGERING.

And, Conversely, the High Cost of Congestion.

During the "blitz" winter of 1940-41 in England, transport groups were established throughout the London area because it was obvious to everybody that only united planning and effort could overcome the dislocation which was occurring in the passenger transport services.

So successful were these groups in achieving their objective that the London and South-Eastern Regional Transport Board of the Ministry of Production decided to create more permanent machinery. Permanent transport groups were then set up for each district. By June, 1941, 32 such groups were functioning, while to-day the number is 53, upon which 600,000 workers are represented. The group for each area is composed of executives from the chief industrial establishments, representatives from the various Trade Unions, the London Passenger Transport Board and, when necessary, the Railways.

At a complimentary luncheon given by the Ministry, the L.P.T.B., and the main line railways to the transport group leaders, it was mentioned by the Regional Controller (Mr. C. B. Colston, M.C., D.C.M.) that the local knowledge of each group leader had been invaluable, and had enabled the groups to put forward valuable suggestions as to modifications and improvements that could be made in the transport services. The most important thing the groups had done was to negotiate and introduce schemes for staggering working hours. These had been magnificently successful, because man-

TRANSPORT IN PARIS.

In our last issue we quoted a paragraph from "The Sun" to the effect that "Paris prefers buses," and pointed out that before the war the weight of Parisian transport fell upon the Metro. "Modern Transport" of the 3rd February last, under the heading "Public Transport in Paris," says:—

"The Metro is the only means of transport in the city, and is consequently subject to heavy operational strain. In December, 120,503,254 passengers used the Metro, and the receipts were 168,261,436 francs."

So Paris, at the moment when "The Sun" was broadcasting its transport inaccuracies, didn't even have buses!

AN EXPENSIVE REMARK.

"Hullo, the Gestapo; it's getting as bad as in Germany," shouted Lindsay McIvor, 10 Redan Street, St. Kilda, as one of our Inspectors boarded a tram in Brighton Road for the purpose of ticket checking.

As the Board is determined to protect its officers from abuse, Messrs. Slater and Gordon was instructed to prosecute McIvor, who at the St. Kilda Court was fined £1, with £1/3/6 costs.

THE LATE C. H. W. GOSLIN.

A tramway identity in the person of W.O. C. H. W. Goslin died suddenly on the 20th May last. Joining the service in September, 1912, the late W.O. Goslin was a conductor before going to the last war, in which he was so badly wounded that in all he had to undergo 21 operations. When he resumed with the Board, he was placed in the office of the late Mr. Hilton before coming to the Head Office 20 years ago. Although frequently in bad health, he never allowed pain to interfere with his activities, and he was always prominent in the social life of the office, where his flair for organisation was a distinct asset. This was seen when the affairs of the Tramways sub-branch of the R.S.S. & A. League got into a bit of a tangle. Taking the Presidentship, he took hold to such purpose that in a short while the sub-branch was in a healthy state.

Shortly after the 1939 war started, Mr. Goslin joined the Army Medical Corps, and his promotion to the rank of Warrant Officer was rapid. Some months ago he was transferred from Geelong to Portsea, and it was there, while talking to his Captain, that he collapsed without warning and died.

agements and workers alike had recognised that if too many factories in the same locality commenced work at the same time there was bound to be delay, confusion and congestion, with resulting inconvenience and discomfort to the workers concerned. The schemes of staggering put into force had been to the substantial benefit of all concerned, but particularly to the employees, who had been enabled to get to and from work in much more comfort and in less time than would otherwise have been the case.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of War Transport (Mr. P. J. Noel Baker) paid a tribute to the men and women of the L.P.T.B., but particularly to the conductresses, whose work during the "blitz" and flying bomb periods had "been magnificent, beyond all praise," and then went on to commend the staggering schemes, contrasting what had been accomplished in the London area with conditions in Birmingham. On one route in that city, he pointed out, 112 buses were required between 7 and 9 a.m., but for the rest of the day until the evening peak only 26 were necessary. The results of such ill-balanced traffic was devastating in four ways: they undermined financial prosperity; they reduced the use of many vehicles to 19 miles a day, although they had still to pay full vehicle tax and full cost of cleaning; the overhead went on just the same; and there was a general waste of capital assets as well as of extra running costs which were spread over the final operating cost per vehicle mile.

Those four points could be applied directly to our Fishermen's Bend services here in Melbourne in order to show why the Board is suffering a weekly loss of more than £1,000. For the morning peak we have to put on 62 buses; but from 9 a.m. to noon two buses are ample for the traffic offering, while between noon and 2 p.m. only five buses are required. The evening peak commences at 4.20, and from then until 6 p.m. we have 67 buses in commission. It will thus be seen that the Board has the liability involved in the capital necessary for the purchase of 67 buses, most of which can be used for but little more than four hours per day. Moreover, the starting and finishing hours of the various establishments in that area are so arranged that they mean undue spreads for the Board's staff, resulting in increased costs through the payment of penalty rates. Increased comfort to the workers, reduced capital and operating charges for the Board—these things would have followed had our Chairman's proposal for staggering hours been adopted.

Tramway Topics

The military funeral took place to the Springvale Crematorium. He is survived by his widow, son (R.A.A.F.) and daughter, to whom all sympathy is extended in their bereavement.

WHENCE "STAGGERING."

A New Meaning for an Old Word.

Doubtless most of our readers are familiar with the story of the English innkeeper who, during the battle of Britain in 1940, captured a German after that individual had parachuted from his aeroplane and, having procured civilian clothes, strolled into the bar for a beer. "Blimey," the publican said when asked how he knew the man was a German, "the blighter couldn't speak English! He asked me about last night's air raid. Why couldn't he say 'blitz,' like we all do?"

The worthy innkeeper was unconsciously demonstrating the incurable British habit of adopting a particular word and applying it in a new way. Who, for instance, first started talking about "staggering" the hours of employment? To stagger is to reel, totter, shake, move unsteadily, waver, sway, and the word has been used in that sense from time immemorial, for in Job we find the phrase, "He maketh them to stagger like a drunken man." In the mechanical sense, 80 years or so ago, the word was used to describe the spokes of a wheel radiating from the hub; they were said to have a "staggered" formation.

So far as it applies to transport, our first recollection of the use of the word dates back 20 years, when the then General Manager of the Birmingham Transport Department appealed eloquently, if despairingly, to employers in a certain district to stagger their hours so that the abnormal a.m. and p.m. peaks could be handled with comfort to the workers and with profit to the Department. (Incidentally, the appeal, both then and since, fell on deaf ears). Then the London Underground some 15 years ago said that their station name plates were staggered, as they were fixed at alternate but regular heights. In the course of the years, therefore, an ancient word has gained a new meaning, so that in all probability when a new edition of the Oxford Dictionary makes its appearance we shall, as a correspondent of "Transport World" suggests, read under "staggering" the definition "A spreading of the hours of commencing and ending work, designed to fit industry to the transport available."

IDENTIFIED THROUGH A TICKET.

Calling at the Board's publicity department one day recently, a Press representative was politely sceptical of the assertion that in making a complaint it was not necessary to have the numbers of the conductor and of the tram concerned—that the tram involved, with its conductor and driver, could all be traced by the production of a punched ticket, whereupon he was told how a man found dead in a London street was identified through the Adelaide tram ticket discovered in his pocket.

Scotland Yard sent the ticket to the Adelaide C.I.B., which in turn got from the tramway authorities the date on which the ticket had been sold, the approximate time and the sections the purchaser had travelled. Inquiries in the district led to the discovery of a lady whose son shortly after the date of issue of the ticket had gone to London, and the description of the body sent by Scotland Yard enabled her to establish identification.

TRAMS IN RESERVES.

Plans for the immediate post-war development of the Leeds Corporation Transport Department have been approved by the Council. The most important item is that which provides for the construction wherever possible of tram lines in reserved tracks to serve the new large housing estates, and the widening of another route by a dual carriage-way with a centre reservation for tramways.

Certain other tram routes which are being affected adversely by the rapidly-diminishing populations through the respective areas will be changed to bus operation when circumstances permit.

RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue the under-noted retiring gratuities have been passed by the Board:—

Dr. E. A. Fish (37), £127; Bodymaker S. Thomas (65), £499; Car Cleaner G. C. Dudley (65), £452; Depot Foreman G. H. Hill (65), £624; Builders Lab. J. Mee (65), £429; Elec. Cach. D. W. R. Elrington (48), £212; Watch. A. W. Shearman (73), £318; L.H. Car Cleaner A. P. Motherwell (65), £440; Car Cleaner A. J. Frampton (50), £203; and Bus Cleaner J. J. Hollak (65), £556.

A death gratuity of £230 was paid in respect of the late Tradesman W. Taylor.

A compassionate grant of £50 was also voted.

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July, 1945

Number 29

£210,675!

Total of Board's Gifts in Five Years.

With its gift to the staff of War Savings Certificates on the 11th inst., the Board realised two objectives—recognition of the work performed by all sections of the staff, which resulted in new record revenue figures being established, and aid to the Federal Government in the task of financing the war.

Only the incurable malcontents will refuse to admit that we in the service of the Melbourne Tramways Board are fortunate indeed in our employers. We can search in vain in the transport journals of Britain and the United States for any similar generous treatment to their staffs by the owners of transport undertakings in these countries, or indeed in Australasia for that matter; in fact, the sole reference we have seen so far was the decision of the Gateshead Corporation to entertain the staff of the Transport Department to a social after the war with Japan ends!

Ignoring the war loading and war bonus and numerous concessions, the latter nothing very much taken separately, perhaps, but the value of which in the aggregate mount up to quite a tidy sum, the Board has during the last five years recognised the service rendered by making gifts to the staff, including those in the Services, amounting to no less than £210,675.

AUSTRALIAN-MADE RAILS.

A Thirty-Years-Old Dream Comes to Fulfilment.

Sample templates for the rolling of the 102-lb. rail and fishplates have been submitted, and as

soon as these sections have been approved by the Permanent Way Engineer the word to go ahead will be given Broken Hill Pty. Ltd., who will commence rolling at an early date, thus fulfilling a project which has been in the mind of our Chairman (Mr. H. H. Bell) for 30 years—the manufacture of tramway rails in Australia.

The history of this matter, which has culminated in the Board placing an order for 11,000 tons of rails and 235 tons of fishplates with the B.H.P., the Victorian Railways, the N.S.W. Department of Road Transport and Tramways, the Adelaide Municipal Tramways Trust, the Brisbane Transport Department, and the Hobart Municipal Tramways joining with us in the order, goes back to the days of the Hawthorn Tramways Trust, of which Mr. Bell was one of the original members. Then, as now, the Chairman was keen on the manufacture of goods and materials in Australia, but at that time the B.H.P. was not interested in the proposal, being of the opinion that the demand would not justify the expenditure on the necessary plant.

After the formation of the Board in 1919 the proposal was revived by an officer then at the Coburg office, and again it fell through. Five years later two of our officers conducted extensive investigations, the result of which was the design and specification of the 102-lb. rail. On being shown the design, the Chief Engineer and General Manager of the Adelaide Municipal Tramways Trust (Mr., now Sir William Goodman) suggested a modification, which was adopted, and a blue print of the amended design, together with the specification, was forwarded to Adelaide and approved on the 15th July, 1926. Although it now had the assurance of custom from both Melbourne and Adelaide, the B.H.P. still could not see its way to tender, and

once more the contract for hundreds of tons of rails found its way to England.

We come now to more recent times. By the winter of 1943 it had become painfully obvious that buses could not cope with the transport demands of Bourke Street. Realising that the Bourke Street-Nicholson Street-Northcote lines would have to be converted, and that the Port and South Melbourne lines would follow if a unified system was to operate throughout the city, the Chairman resolved to approach B.H.P. once more. Recognising that the appeal would be more likely to be considered if he could show that the proposal would have the support of the tramway authorities of Australia, he on the 3rd September wrote Sir William Goodman, the opening paragraph of his letter reading:—

"I am enclosing for your information copy of letter sent to the B.H.P. on the subject of grooved tramway rail. You will notice that I am endeavouring to interest this Company in the manufacture of rail in Australia after the war, and it has occurred to me that it may be possible for you also to consider this question."

Sir William replied five days later that he would be very pleased to join effort in inducing the B.H.P. to roll the rails, and Sydney, Brisbane, Hobart, Christchurch (N.Z.), and the Victorian Railways Commissioners followed suit. The Permanent Way Engineer visited Newcastle and Port Kembla in order to discuss with, and settle finally, the design for the rail with the officials of the Company, and visited Sydney and Brisbane also in order to convey personally to the Chief Civil Engineer and the General Manager respectively the latest information on the subject. On the 26th May, 1944, the Chairman received the decision of the B.H.P. in the following terms:—

"In confirmation of the interview with your good self concerning rolling of grooved tramway rails and fishplates, we have investigated the proposal, and are now pleased to advise that our Company is prepared to undertake the rolling of 102-lb. grooved tramway rails, together with two sections of fishplates, subject to an order for 10,000 tons of rails being placed by your Board for execution over a period to be mutually agreed upon. We also desire to take this opportunity of thanking you and your officers for the information and assistance which has been made available during the preliminary discussions."

ANOTHER TRANSPORT CANARD.

Melbourne is not the only city which has to suffer from the publication of inaccurate and misleading "news" about transport in general and trams in particular.

Recently a London daily newspaper described an electric traction system which, it was alleged, was the invention of a Russian engineer named Kanssler. The account was most circumstantial, purporting to describe the actual demonstration at Cleveland, Ohio. Electric cables, it was stated, had been laid under the roadway, and from these power, through some unexplained means, was transmitted to the vehicles on the road.

From beginning to end the story was a sheer invention, as the paper could easily have discovered for itself by seeking confirmation from either the Cleveland Transit System or the American Transit Association. Neither the Cleveland transport or municipal authorities had ever heard of the invention or the inventor, and both were equally unknown to the Association.

MANCHESTER WANTS A TRANSPORT BOARD.

Another attempt is to be made by the Manchester Corporation to set up a Transport Board for the city and the surrounding districts on the lines of the London Passenger Transport Board. The Corporation is inviting the Chairman, Deputy Chairmen and Managers of the municipal undertakings of Salford, Stockport, Oldham, Bury, Bolton, Stalybridge and Ashton-under-Lyne to attend a conference to discuss the possibility of setting up such a Board and to consider the post-war transport problems of the areas concerned.

A similar attempt some years ago was unsuccessful.

WHAT OUR TICKETS COST.

What is the Board's printing bill for the tickets issued to passengers? The answer is that the cost just now is, in round figures, £11,500 a year.

We understand that the machines which print the tickets are the only ones of their kind in Australia, having been imported specially for the purpose by Sands & McDougall Pty. Ltd. That firm has held the ticket printing contract ever since

there were trams in Melbourne, and only the other day secured the Board's contract for another three years.

"SAN FRANCISCO'S PRIDE AND JOY."

Yes; Cable Trams Are Meant!

Most of us in Melbourne cherish memories of the old cable trams; some people would really like to see them back again, as they regard the fret and worry and rush of modern life and recall leisurely journeys down St. Kilda Road in the genial sunshine of a summer evening. San Francisco goes a step further, for the citizens rise in their wrath when any proposal for the abolition of their cable trams is put forward.

Last autumn, when San Francisco merged its transit lines, there was a hint that the cable trams were doomed. Just the bare suggestion almost provoked riots. Women's clubs, school children, civic authorities, Marines in Saipan, gentlemen of the infantry, people in other States who had never seen the four lines in Market Street, even the taxpayers who have to bear the losses, denounced the proposal, and a popular magazine published an illustrated article under the heading "San Francisco's Pride and Joy," in the course of which it was declared:—

"The cable cars are to San Francisco as Notre Dame is to Paris, as Westminster Abbey to London, as the Parthenon to Athens. Take away, if you will, Golden Gate Park, or Fisherman's Wharf, or the Trans-Bay Bridge, or even Lefty O'Doul, but lay no impious hand on the cable cars, for, when you do, you defile a city's soul. Raucous and impractical, the cable cars are the last link to a glorious past. Gone are the Barbary Coast, the clipper ships and the gold-dust scales on shop counters. Only the cables remain of the lustiest period of American history, and San Franciscans vow that they must endure."

We have a connection with those San Francisco cars, for it was their success in the seventies of the last century, followed by the installation at Dunedin, New Zealand, that was responsible for their introduction to Melbourne, the first tram from the city to Richmond beginning operations on the 11th November, 1885. Recollections of our trams are heightened when we read the magazine's description of the corner turn. "Here the gripman," it says, "releasing the cable, depends on the car's

momentum to carry it to the next pick-up point. To complete this free run, the car should have right of way, but occasionally a heedless motorist causes a stall. The rules call for a town truck at this point, but custom is more powerful than rules, so the gripman blithely observes that it is a bright day, and suggests that a spot of exercise would benefit torpid, car-riding livers! At once the car is voluntarily emptied of passengers, who push happily until the stalled car rolls above the free cable, whereat they return to their seats and the journey continues on a high note of communal understanding!"

"SAFETY BUS" NOT FAVORED.

Three municipal transport managers in England—Mr. Pilcher, of Manchester; Mr. Morland, of Leeds, and Mr. Watson, of Sheffield—tested during April what has become known as the Blackpool "safety bus," a double decker with an entrance in the centre of the vehicle, with a sliding door operated by the driver or conductor. The managers have formulated a report for submission to the Ministry of War Transport and to their respective Councils.

Whatever that report may be, the Chairman of the Manchester Transport Committee (Cr. Barratt) does not appear to be impressed, his main objection being the reduced loading capacity. "Central loading," he said, "means that eight of the Blackpool type would be needed for each seven of the present kind now operated by the Corporation. We should not only have to get from 100 to 200 more vehicles on the streets, but also a corresponding number of workers."

The "present kind," it is interesting to note, are double-deckers, exactly the same as we use in Bourke Street. The objection voiced by Cr. Barratt really comes back to the old point—that a vehicle which is wholly admirable for a big town is inadequate for the heavy traffic of a large city.

THE GLEN IRIS ROUTE.

Camberwell Council is anxious to extend the Glen Iris line from its present terminus to Warrigal Road, and a deputation from the Corporation argued the case with much ability before the Board as well as emphasising that it is willing to erect, in conjunction with the Malvern Council, a new bridge over the creek and widen the acute turn.

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On a previous occasion strenuous opposition to the extension of the tramway to Ashburton was expressed by the Railway Commissioners, and there is no reason to suppose that their views have altered, looking to the fact that the area proposed to be served has two railway stations, Ashburton and Hoimes Glen.

As the Commissioners have announced as part of their post-war plans the duplication of the railway, the Board has informed the Council that the augmented service which will result, allied with an improved bus service acting as a feeder to the Railways and the High Street tram, seems to provide adequate transport facilities for most of the area involved in the Council's proposal for many years to come.

GLARING HEADLIGHTS.

The Executive of the A. T. & M. O. Employees' Association has appealed to the police and the headquarters of the Services to impress on drivers of motor vehicles the necessity of dimming headlights when approaching trams.

With the utmost diffidence it is suggested to the Executive that it might go a step further and hint tactfully to those members of the Association who drive buses that undimmed headlights on those vehicles are as obnoxious to private motorists as the glaring gleams from the cars are to tram drivers. Mutual help and courtesy in this matter would be a boon to all road users.

TROLLEY BUSES IN ENGLAND.

So far as we can discover, Newcastle-on-Tyne is the only large city in England outside London which is planning to increase its trolley bus fleet after the war. At a special meeting in April, the Council decided to promote a Parliamentary Bill to obtain powers to operate such vehicles on 16 routes in place of trams at a cost of £825,100. Of that total £570,000 will be for buses and £215,000 for electrical equipment.

The decision has been practically forced on the Council by reason of the fact that since 1939 the tracks, overhead and rolling stock have deteriorated so badly through lack of replacements and maintenance that to renew now 50 miles of tracks and overhead gear and purchase 200 new trams would cost £2,000,000.

THE INCREASED GRATUITY.

As a result of the decision of the Board to make the new scale of retiring gratuities retrospective to April 5, five members of the staff have received substantial additional amounts to the sums they had collected previously.

Driver J. S. Curtis has now received another £104; Bodymaker S. Thomas, £121; Car Cleaner G. C. Dudley, £116; Builder's Labourer J. Mee, £38; and L.H. Car Cleaner A. P. Motherwell, £67.

TRIBUTE TO DRIVERS.

When the lights went on again in London, "The Times" paid this tribute to the drivers of the London Passenger Transport Board:—

"When the blackout was most intense, the hardships of the journey were mitigated for millions nightly by the courage, cheerfulness and skill shown by the drivers of public vehicles. To them a debt of gratitude is due and assuredly is acknowledged."

RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue the under-noted retiring gratuities have been passed by the Board:—

Dr. J. H. Wilkinson (65), £533; Dr. G. H. Rayson (51), £301; Con. A. G. Shannon (42), £232; Con. J. McDonald (61), £371; Con. H. V. McVeigh (61, returned soldier), £487; Blacksmith E. P. Morney (55), £438; Pitman S. Wightman (65), £493; Con. N. J. Collins (59), £255; Car Cleaner D. J. Murphy (65), £428; Pitman W. H. Turner (58), £464; Car Cleaner E. E. Knowles (59), £406; Bus Parker P. E. Walker (40), £65; Con. O. J. Rankin (62), £475; Dr. E. McSweeney (58), £266.

A death gratuity of £273, plus War Savings Certificates for £176, was paid to the widow of the late Traffic Clerk C. W. H. Goslin.

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Volume 3

August, 1945

Number 30

PEACE!

It is perhaps appropriate that in this first issue after the war with Japan has ended that I should, writing on behalf of the Board and for myself, express to the staff our thanks for the efficiency shown by all Departments during those years of stress and strain and difficulty. Despite all our troubles over lack of spare parts and staff and shortage of essential materials we kept faith with our public and so maintained our faith in ourselves. You know that the Board has not been unmindful of the work performed, and that it has shown its appreciation in tangible form.

More than 1,000 members of the staff have served with credit in the Navy, the Army and the Air Force. We did not forget them in their absence, either as individuals contributing through the Tramways Comforts Fund or as a Board by the purchase of War Savings Certificates; and within the next few weeks we hope to see them return to us in rapidly-increasing numbers.

Alas! certain of our colleagues will not return. They lie, to use the tender phrase of the Scottish historian, Patrick Walker, in "their resting graves" and in the sea; they have gone into the shadows so that we who remain may abide in the sunshine, none daring to make us afraid. Through them we escaped "the terror that flieth by night and the pestilence that walketh by noonday." In their memory we can (although written for Britain many years ago) quote Tennyson's lines:—

"Thank Him who isled us here and roughly set,
His Britain in blown seas and storming showers;
We have a voice with which to pay the debt
Of boundless love and reverence and regret,

To those great men who fought and kept it ours!"

H. H. BELL,
Chairman.

STATIC ELECTRICITY.

How It Is Generated By Buses.

One of the broadcasting stations of Melbourne informed us recently that complaints had been received from Bourke Street bus passengers to the effect that they had suffered severe electric shocks while clinging to the stanchions and had been thrown from rear platforms—though just why a commercial broadcasting station should receive such complaints, or what it could do about them, was not made clear.

While it is quite credible that on occasion passengers have received shocks, the chance that these were strong enough to throw the recipients to the street is remote; at the worst they would be no more than momentarily unpleasant. Bearing in mind the demands which are being received constantly by our Claims Department, it is a safe bet that if any passenger had been thrown to the roadway we would have received promptly a claim for financial recompense. As a matter of fact, an investigator from the University, armed with sensitive recording equipment, tested many of our buses during two days and failed to register the slightest shock.

Such shocks, as was pointed out in "Distribution of Electricity" for January last in an article headed "Electrical Problems Associated with Rubber-tired Vehicles," are due to static charges carried by the vehicles and generated by the running of the pneumatic tyres on the streets. When similar shocks were experienced by toll collectors on Sydney Harbor Bridge, Mr. G. H. Briggs, who investigated the phenomenon, found that while the charge occurred under normal conditions of operation, it was most marked on the new, clean asphalt surface. Professor Robin Beach, head of the Electrical Engineering Department of the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, spent two years in research work on

the generation, behaviour and methods of control of static electricity on rubber-tired vehicles, explained in a magazine article four years ago how static electricity is generated,

Professor Beach wrote that when two substances like a rubber tire and a highway are pressed together, the rubber acquires electrons—the smallest possible indivisible particles of electricity—each bearing a single negative charge, and holds them fixed in the treads of the tires by virtue of their insulating properties. The positive charges lie in the surface of the roadways and are held there as the result of the insulating properties of the materials used in modern road construction. The result is that the inner surfaces of the fenders and the rims and hubs of the wheels display positive electrification, the positive charges being held there "bound" by the negative electrification on the treads of the tires.

The negative electricity distributes itself on the body of the vehicle as "free" charges, meaning that if a wire is connected from the car body to a grounded object, say a hydrant, the "free" charges would flow to the ground and be neutralised. If, on the other hand, the wire was connected to an insulator, such as the road surface, no reduction in the amount of "free" charges would occur.

The Professor concluded by expressing the opinion that the permanent solution to the problem of eliminating static electrification on rubber-tired vehicles rests with the ability of the civil engineer to devise materials for road construction that will be electrically conductive.

FATIGUE DEFINED.

What is fatigue? Discussing the subject which after nearly six years of war conditions is a topic of interest to most of us, Dr. F. A. E. Lawes, in the Medical Journal of Australia, declares that the labouring man, after a heavy day's work, is physiologically tired, and a business man or doctor psychologically weary, while a typist or a man who has driven a motor car 400 miles are both mentally and physically tired. He therefore defines fatigue as "a reduced capacity for work as a result of work," and he is of opinion that recovery from physical fatigue is easier than from mental fatigue.

As with so many other troubles which afflict us, the treatment and cure of fatigue is simple—when circumstances enable one to apply it. It is, as Dr. Lawes remarks, Nature's own remedy—peace of mind and rest of body.

THE WAY TO PROMOTION.

Sound Knowledge of English Essential.

Emphasising the importance of English in the preliminary notes which describe the examinations, the Institute of Transport declares that "to be able to express oneself clearly, concisely and vividly in good, clean English is an enviable gift."

It might easily have been added that while the road to promotion from conductor and driver to Depot Master, Inspector, District Superintendent and Traffic Manager is open to all bright, ambitious young men, the road is rendered ever so much easier if the candidate possesses, or has acquired, that gift of expression. The Manager drafting memoranda for the direction of his subordinates and staff, or dictating a courteous reply to some complaint the Depot Master drawing up a report; the Inspector detailing the causes of a traffic block and the steps he took to restore normal running; the conductor or driver describing an accident—all and each require an adequate vocabulary and the ability to use words in their appropriate sequence if they are to present facts and opinions succinctly, lucidly and logically.

Of course, it is quite possible to use the English language and yet be incomprehensible—a thought which was doubtless in the mind of General Eisenhower when he told a London theatre audience that he was glad to be back among friends "whose language I can almost speak!" We felt that way also the other day when we received the Chicago journal, "Mass Transportation," and read this about the Acting General Manager of the Chicago Surface Lines (Mr. Ewan McIlwraith):—

"There is no doubt that McIlwraith is as well informed as anybody on urban transport in this big country and if he can take a few pointers from Johnny Wilson of St. Louis on how to get the boys to gather round in a circle on the 50-yard line and shake hands for dear old Siwash just before the kick-off, he could be the Knute Rockne that transit management has been looking for."

We certainly recognised all the words; but the whole context, beyond the notion that Mr. McIlwraith was being paid a compliment, just didn't make sense to us, though no doubt the meaning was crystal clear to transport men in the States.

MONARCHS OF FOUR GERMAN VILLAGES.

During April, an Australian sergeant, an English sergeant, a Scots private and the son of Mr. F. J. Cusack, Head Office, were the Allied High Com-

mand so far as four of the villages in the area in Germany which had been over-run by the American 7th Army were concerned, with the use of the car of the Burgomaster, a rabid Nazi, who had been promptly confined in his own "hoosegow."

Mr. Cusack's son escaped from a camp of 1,500 prisoners on Easter Monday, and made for the village at which he used to work, where he was taken in, fed and sheltered by his former employer. "On the following Monday," he writes, "the Yank fighters came over and strafed all round the town, but never a bullet fell in it. They did knock the Jerries around though, and these kept coming in with arms and legs off and all sorts of wounds . . . The Yanks rolled in about 3 p.m. and stayed for about a week. It was better than a Christmas holiday. I tasted my first white bread for nearly four years, and it seemed like fruit cake. When the Yanks left, they put us in charge of the village, and now we are running four. The Burgomaster's car broke down; but we have got a better one. A Jerry officer ran out of juice and left it, continuing his retreat on a horse which he commandeered from a farm."

THE "GOOD OLD DAYS."

Writing in "The Outspan," Bloemfontein, Mr. John Hagan, who has retired after being associated as driver, motor examiner and despatcher with the Cape Town Tramways Company for 43 years, tells of the "good old days," which to some of us seem suspiciously like the "bad old days."

When he commenced driving trams in 1902, Mr. Hagan worked 10 hours per day, seven days a week, for £2/2/-. Eventually, as driver, he reached the maximum of 11½d. per hour, which worked out at £3/10/- per week. The only uniform supplied was a cap—gloves, goggles, capes or mackintoshes and top boots had to be bought by the individual with his own cash. As for leisure, he got one day off per month.

Yet from his article he apparently led a contented life, perhaps because, happy fellow, he was never subjected to the intolerable strain inseparable nowadays from a week of 44 hours.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

How the British System Operates.

Intrigued by our reference last month to the decision of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Corporation to promote a Parliamentary Bill to obtain powers to operate trolley-buses on 16 routes in Newcastle and

district, a correspondent asks in what way such procedure differs from that in Victoria, where usually legislation relating to municipalities or to bodies such as the Tramways Board or Board of Works is enacted after a favourable recommendation from the Public Works Committee has been received by the Government.

The answer is that private bill legislation in Britain is sponsored in the first place by the municipality, County Council, Company, Board or Trust concerned. A Bill is drafted, and in due course the proposals are inquired into by a Joint Committee of the Lords and Commons, notice of the intention to hold the inquiry having been given to all interested parties, who are represented by counsel. In big inquiries, the hearing is at Westminster, but in minor matters, such as the Newcastle Bill, it is customary to hold the inquiry locally. After the hearing, the Committee finds "the preamble of the Bill proved," or "the preamble of the Bill not proved," or, perhaps, proved with certain exceptions or amendments. If the preamble is not proved, then that is the end of the Bill for a period; but if found proved, or proved with amendments or exceptions, the Bill is presented to Parliament as an agreed measure, and it goes through all its stages quite formally.

Only on very rare occasions does a Bill found proved by the Joint Committee meet any opposition in the Lords or Commons. The inquiry into the proposal to bring all transport in the London area under one control was a tremendous affair, with an imposing array of counsel appearing for all the many interests concerned. In this case, the Government of the day introduced the Bill, and it was piloted through the House by the Rt. Hon. Herbert Morrison, who in doing so clinched the big reputation he had made for himself on the London County Council, and which his work since as a member of the late Churchill Cabinet confirmed so strikingly.

OFF-PEAK FARES.

A writer in the "Sun" on the 31st July last stated that the off-peak tram and bus fare in London is 2d.

Wrong. Many suns have risen and set since the fare was increased to 3d. And even when the fare was 2d. it is doubtful if it ever attracted a single additional passenger; all it did was to carry people travelling between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. at a rate which was much less than the cost of the journey being taken, to the detriment of the fare structure as a whole and to the loss of the unfortunate holders of "C" stock. After all, people use public transport

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because it is a necessity for them to do so; they don't board a tram or a bus for pleasure. The idea that they can be induced to leave their homes in the middle of the day by the offer of a ticket for 2d. or 3d. has always seemed to us childish.

Off-peak fares, periodical tickets, transfers, workmen's tickets—all are anachronisms on a sectional fare system, which is based on the principle of each passenger paying the appropriate fare in return for the transport provided.

STOPPED BY A SUBSIDENCE.

Unlike buses in the heavy fogs and snow experienced occasionally in Britain, trams remain unaffected; but trams do have to admit defeat when the road subsides. Bolton Road, Pendlebury, suffered such a happening in April last, with the result that the Salford Corporation has been forced to apply to the Regional Transport Commissioner for permission to run buses. It is thought that the street will not be safe for tram traffic for 18 months.

WATTLE PARK.

From the golfing point of view, the year which ended on the 30th June last was the most successful on record, the players reaching the extraordinary total of 32,179, while over 6,000 putting tickets were sold. Notwithstanding the long dry period, the course was maintained in first-class condition; in fact, its appearance was in itself an inducement to passing golfing-motorists to stop and enjoy a round.

As usual, the city's hospitals received benefit from the vegetable plots, 30 dozen cabbages, 72 pumpkins and one ton of onions being distributed among the institutions.

LEEDS ABOLISHES 1d. FARES.

Faced with a loss of £46,000 in 1944, and an estimated loss of £86,000 this year, the Leeds Corporation Transport Department has received permission from the Ministry of War Transport to abolish 1d. fares on the trams and buses and charge 1½d. In a full year it is hoped that the revenue will increase by £90,000.

LENGTH OF ROUTES.

During the last four years it is amazing how many letters have come in from troops in Australia and outside the Commonwealth requesting information which will settle arguments—and doubtless bets! In their hours of ease, transport is apparently a

favourite subject for debate among the lads, and from their letters it seems as if arguments most frequently centre round the length of routes, the dates when cable trams ceased running on particular lines, the total passengers credited to the various routes for a year and the difference in operating costs in the capital cities. Regarding the length, here is a list of our longest tram routes which will satisfy curiosity:—

East Preston-South Melbourne, 10.107 miles; Darling Road-Victoria Street, 10.088; West Preston, South Melbourne, 9.980; Camberwell-Victoria Street, 9.949; East Brighton-Victoria Street, 9.430; Moreland-St. Kilda, 9.418; East Coburg-St. Kilda via South Melbourne, 9.394; Carnegie-Victoria Street, 9.104.

The longest bus route is the North Kew-Garden City run, 11.137 miles.

IT WAS A BLACK-OUT.

Some idea of what the black-out meant to the London Passenger Transport Board is gained from the intimation that good progress is being made with removing the blacking and protective netting from 381,591 windows on trams, buses and trolley buses. During the war a total of 549,122 square yards of netting was used, and many thousands of drivers, conductresses and passengers were saved from serious injury by its agency.

RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue, the under-noted retiring gratuities have been passed by the Board:—

Driver R. V. West (40), £75; Watchman W. H. Millbourn (54), £232; Dr. G. F. Congle (42), £208; L-Hand Car Cleaner A. W. Laidlaw (61, returned soldier), £519; Lab. C. A. Richmond (45), £209; Bus Mechanic A. H. Cocks (53), £53; Dr. G. W. Hansen (45), £243; Shift Electrician A. O. Cobble-dick (65), £499; Con. J. H. Taylor (60), £336; Con. L. J. Davey (47), £243; Dr. W. S. Mockridge (47), £243; Con. R. C. Mason (52), £278; Con. F. L. Crowley (45), £278; Dr. G. E. Dobson (53), £266; Con. W. R. Moulton (37, resigned), £58; Con. J. M. Dynan (37, resigned), £58; Con. D. J. Howe (65), £597 (103 weeks); Acting Starter L. Purcell (41), £263, plus War Savings Certificates after five years with the A.I.F.

Death gratuities of £336 and £387 were paid in respect of the deaths of Dr. E. W. Coombes (58), and Depot Foreman W. Currie (60).

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Volume 3

September, 1945

Number 31

THE YEAR'S WORK.

New Records for Revenue, Passengers and Expenses.

As was only to be expected, the rate of increase in revenue earned and in passengers carried during the year which ended on the 30th June last, while far below the levels of the four previous years, was sufficient to set up new records in these directions. Due to the reductions in staff at various establishments in the Fisherman's Bend and Mary-byrnong areas, the revenue earned by the buses fell quite a bit below last year's figure. The substantial losses sustained in operating the bus services in these two districts, coupled with a new high record in expenses, meant that the net improvement for the year was but £11,010 on operation.

All the indications since the start of the current financial year conduce to the belief that we are approaching, if we have not already reached, the high water mark in revenue and passengers. Certain it is that we may expect from now on a most substantial reduction in the bus traffic to the aircraft and munition plants. There will be no sad tears shed over that, however, for the transport of aircraft and munition workers has been the most unprofitable form of activity ever undertaken by the Board. It may be that as the months go on and more peace-time industries get into production that the general traffic will increase; but that seems to depend upon how soon materials of all sorts will be available. At the moment there is nothing to suggest that even the small increase reported for the last year will be maintained this year. With the extra petrol now available for private users, along with the possibility that rationing will be ended before very long, it is certain that more people will be using their cars to get to and from business. During the past

year, the number of motor vehicles of all classes on the roads went up by 11,770, and it is only reasonable to anticipate a further increase this year. During the period under review, 273 private buses operated over 84 routes, while 36 motor cabs were running over 11 routes.

The very marked reliability of the tram as compared with the bus was again strikingly evident. While the number of trams withdrawn from service because of defects amounted to 3,429, the number of buses withdrawn was nearly three times as great, 9,232, although the average maximum number of trams in service daily was 581 as compared with but 229 buses. On a percentage basis, the trams withdrawn per 1,000 miles was .15 as against 1.13 for the buses. The miles lost per 1,000 miles were .0007 for the trams and 2.56 for the buses. The dependability of the tram meant more regular service; the frequency of breakdowns in the case of the buses meant frequently additional overcrowding and delay for those buses remaining to carry on the service.

During the year 136,353 trips were checked, and from these no fewer than 15,479 irregularities were reported. The extent to which over-riding of sections is being practised is glimpsed through the fact that 5,902 passengers were discovered doing so. Unpaid fares numbered 5,566. For the last few years ticket examiners have had to perform many other duties, and so the trips checked are but a fraction of those run. Assuming similar irregularities on the unchecked trips, it is clear that on a very conservative basis the Board is losing £250,000 a year.

While the letter-to-the-editor addicts burst frequently into song over the number of traffic offences they see committed by our drivers, it is apparent that the police do not see much cause for complaint.

During the year they felt it necessary to launch prosecutions against but 16 of the Board's employees. On the other side, we had 58 prosecutions for infringements of the Board's by-laws. The fines totalled £116, and the costs awarded against the defendants £48.

To mark the conclusion of a most successful year, the Board voted a bonus to all employees, including those in the Services. The cost was £27,900.

VIENNA CUTS ELECTRICITY TO KEEP TRAMS.

Vienna Town Council decided recently to cut electric supplies to private consumers still further in order to maintain the tram services.

Electricity in the Austrian capital will be in short supply until the large hydro-electric stations, so efficiently bombed by the Allied airmen, have been repaired.

THANKS FOR THE BONUS.

Many expressions of thanks, especially from men in the Services, have been received by the Board in connection with the bonus of six £1 War Savings Certificates. Typical of all is the following from a Sergeant in the A.I.F.:—

"I can say without fear of contradiction that there is no other business—Government, semi-Government or private—that has done so much, or considered their employees more, than the Melbourne Tramways Board . . . It is my ambition to return to my job when I have completed my work with the A.I.F., and show my gratitude by giving the Board the best that is within me."

GLASGOW'S RECORD FIGURES.

For the year which ended on the 31st May last, the 1,207 trams of the Glasgow Corporation Transport Department carried 571,600,000 passengers, the 544 buses dealt with 136,260,000, while the 50 underground cars served 34,200,000 passengers.

The Department is easily the most successful of its kind in the world. Although capital expenditure on the system up to date has reached £10,600,000, the outstanding loan debt is but £200,000, and against that there is £1,600,000 at the credit of the Depreciation and Per. Way Renewals Fund. At £4,572,000, the revenue for the year was a record.

Although not yet permitted to make bus bodies—an application on the subject will be dealt with

shortly—the Department is otherwise self-contained, and is one of the few municipal undertakings allowed to operate its own power station. That station is so efficient that, notwithstanding the present high price of coal—treble the pre-war cost—the expense of generating current was only 0.485d. per unit.

OUR CLOTHING FACTORY.

The continued receipt of orders for uniforms from the Railway Commissioners and the Police Department is a pleasing compliment to the quality of the work turned out by our Clothing Factory. During the year, 1,253 garments were supplied to the Railways and 204 to the Police, while 9,955 were manufactured for our own staff.

When a private contractor was making the uniforms there were never-ceasing complaints about delay and quality, both from individual members of the staff and the Tramways Association. Since the Stores Branch has been running the factory, these complaints have been eliminated. Workmanship and quality are alike excellent, while the manner in which the garment production is controlled enables uniforms to be manufactured and held in stock prior to the replacement dates.

The factory nowadays does not confine itself to uniform manufacture; roller towels, coin bags and filters for gas producer units are some of the other items which are now being turned out at Hawthorn, and which all help to make us independent of outside suppliers. Included in the uniform list were such items as 1,971 tunics, 2,575 pairs of trousers, 947 coats and skirts for conductresses, 525 summer jackets, 350 overcoats for conductresses and 800 for drivers and conductors, 633 khaki drill tunics, and 440 khaki cloth shirts for conductresses.

The establishment of the clothing factory has been a highly profitable venture for the Board. After allowing for the increased costs for labour and materials, there was for last year an estimated saving to the Board of £12,300 compared with the charges which would have been made by the previous private contractor.

TROLLEY BUS EXTENSION OPPOSED.

When a recommendation by the Transport Committee to extend the trolley bus system was submitted to the South Shields Council, opposition so strong was experienced that the plan was remitted

back for further consideration. One Councillor contended that within 10 years trolley buses would be obsolete.

THE "OLD 'UNS" CARRY ON.

It was only the other day, when examining the records of the Medical Department, that we realised fully that during the last few years the greater portion of the task of keeping the services going fell upon the shoulders of the older employees, men with 20 years of service and upwards. Five of these "old 'uns" were examined during the year, their astonishing records being:—

(a)	Joined Service	1909.	No days lost through sickness
(b)	"	1911.	" " "
(c)	"	1912.	" " "
(d)	"	1912.	" " "
(e)	"	1913.	" " "

Another member of the old brigade went off injured on duty in June, 1944, after 45 years' service without one day lost. He was not happy until marked "fit for duty" after seven days of idleness. Joining the service in 1899 as a boy in one of the cable power houses, he is still fit and active and going strong.

TROUBLE FOR NEWCASTLE.

The Newcastle-on-Tyne Corporation is meeting with opposition and expense over its desire to take its trolley bus system into neighbouring municipalities.

Wallsend Corporation considers that the Newcastle plans are prejudicial to Wallsend, and the Trolley Bus Bill is therefore to be opposed before the Select Committee of Parliament.

OUR S.W. 6 TRAMS.

While during the year Preston Workshops turned out 10 trams of the S.W. 6 type, bringing up the number in service to 50, with another seven on the point of completion, and six under construction, our programme in this respect is well behind schedule, due to shortage of staff and lack of space. In connection with the latter factor, major repairs, due mainly to collisions, to 192 trams, were chiefly responsible for the congestion, while the staff difficulty will be evident when it is pointed out that the number engaged throughout the year, notwithstanding the higher demands for repair, maintenance and construction, was below the 1938 figure. So far as space is concerned, some relief will be

gained when the extensions to the paint, carbody and truck shops are completed.

Notwithstanding all difficulties, however, the Workshops succeeded in maintaining the high standard of efficiency exhibited in former years. The number of trams available for traffic during peak periods averaged throughout the year 95.43 per cent. of the total stock—a remarkable figure. Just the other year an undertaking in the United States got a medal or something for an average of 87 per cent. Another efficiency test is the mileage per change-over for defects. There were 2,952 change-overs, the mileage per change-over being 22,960. For causes other than defects, 435 trams were changed over for broken windows, 549 for collisions, 711 through being soiled by sickness, 147 for flat wheels, and 120 for miscellaneous reasons.

With the fitting of 311 air-operated windscreen wipers, the total now fitted has advanced to 677, while 79 trams have been supplied with opaque glass to counteract the effects of glare.

BUSES CONSIDERED FOR A SHIP CANAL.

The Manchester Regional Town Planning Committee is considering a plan for the operation of regular water bus services, utilising DUKW's on the Manchester Ship Canal.

The proposal is to establish regular services across the canal between Irlam and Partington, at a point near the present Flixton ferry, and along the entire length between Manchester and New Brighton, the Merseyside seaside resort. Ramps to enable the buses to by-pass the canal locks by travelling overland for a short distance before re-entering the canal again could, it is claimed, be built at a small cost.

BERLIN TRANSPORT SITUATION.

With the re-opening of 64 of the underground stations, all put out of action by bombing, the transport situation in Berlin is improving. While it has been found possible to restore 27 of the bus routes in the outer suburbs—used as cross-city and feeder routes—much work has yet to be done in Berlin proper before the fine tram system can function as before.

MAINTAINING THE PERMANENT WAY.

Few people realise the amount of work which goes into the maintenance of the per. way, even if motorists show their appreciation by using it

wherever possible. Despite all difficulties the tracks were maintained last year to a standard which, if less high than in pre-war years, nevertheless was at a much higher level than the rest of the road, the responsibility of the municipalities.

To mention just a few of the items—3,249 feet of double track was lifted and packed, 272,882 feet of double track was surface-patched alongside the rails, 424,223 feet were top dressed, and 9,343 feet of rails were re-fastened. Then 79,983 feet of rails were ground for removal of corrugations, 636 miles of single track were scrubbed, while the mechanical track cleaner operated over 16,965 miles of single track.

TRANSPORT TO PAY—AS USUAL.

All the world over, when a Government or a Municipal Council experiences a spot of financial bother, the street surface transport undertaking becomes the milch cow. Which is why such concerns support from their profits such totally-unrelated things as fire brigades and banquets to distinguished strangers, and hospitals and public parks. Cape Town City Council is the latest Corporation to use predatory fingers on transport funds. It proposes to balance its budget by raising the omnibus passengers' licence fee from 10/- to 12/6, for bus control tax from £2/10/- to £5, the licence fee for trolley buses from £40 to £50, the licence fee for motor cars plying for hire from £3 to £4 for a five-seater, and from £3 to £5 for seven-seaters, bicycles used for delivery purposes from 2/6 to 5/- with private bicycles at 2/6, while bus drivers and conductors' licences will be raised from 5/- to 10/- a year.

THE WIND BLEW—AND 438 MILES WERE LOST.

Mileage lost last year due to interruptions of power supply totalled 593. Footscray suffered to the extent of 438 miles, a very high wind causing a bad short circuit on the high tension line from Angliss' sub-station to the Board's sub-station.

The Board's automatically-controlled power supply system ranks high among the larger installations throughout the world. Altogether, there are 24 sub-stations, of which one of 600 KW. is portable, of a total capacity of 32,800 K.W.

RADIO FOR MONTREAL TRAMWAYS.

The Montreal Tramways Company is installing short-wave radio equipment on its breakdown and

service vehicles. Nine sets will be fitted in tower waggons and other vehicles used in the maintenance of electrical equipment, seven sets on tram and bus breakdown lorries, and two sets in the cars used by travelling inspectors.

It is something like 14 years since the Board commenced to use radio. Our tower waggons and the rolling stock emergency breakdown waggon are fitted with reception equipment, while at present we are receiving equipment for the night inspector's car.

A PEACEFUL INVASION.

The invasion of England by the Scots continues, and has extended into the field of transport. Within the first six months of this year four young Scotsmen have gone into England, three to become the General Managers of municipal systems, while the fourth was appointed Deputy General Manager. A London pressman once watched in the House of Lords the introduction of an Archbishop of York to the Lord Chancellor by the Archbishop of Canterbury. All three were Scotsmen. "How the devil do they do it," he asked gloomily.

RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue, the under-noted retiring gratuities have been passed by the Board:—

Con. A. S. Hollow (37, resigned), £69; Con. C. J. Ryder (41, resigned), £75; Con. K. D. Rene (36, resigned), £58; Car Cleaner W. J. R. West (65), £417; Insp. E. C. Sherer (65), £585; Pitman G. W. Long (61), £606; Track Repairer J. C. McKenzie (65), £440; Watchman J. A. Peden (65), £527; Car Cleaner H. S. Greenwood (52), £331; Con. J. E. Lowther (43), £220; Shed-Lab. J. W. Sharpe (65), £565; Dr. W. E. Haley (49), £75; Dr. K. R. Elliott (34), £58; Elec. Mechanic A. J. Bradley (38, resigned), £81; Shed-Lab. A. E. Wright (65), £545; Con. E. R. Hallam (46, returned soldier, £290 and War Savings Certificates; Dr. A. E. Simmonds (65), £562.

Death gratuities were paid to the next of kin in respect of:—Dr. L. V. Newman (59), £313; Con. E. D. McLeod (56), £394; Con. M. J. Donnellon (48), £185; Dr. C. E. Perry (56), £278; and Control Room Supervisor F. O. Aumann (49), £331.

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Volume 3

November 1945

Number 32

THE 6-DAY WEEK.

Chairman's September Forecast Realised.

When reviewing the man-power position on the 12th September last, the Chairman (Mr. H. H. Bell), looking to the number of applications for employment and the gradually-increasing return of men from the Services, forecast that it would be possible to commence working a 6-day week and open the new line from St. Kilda road to William Street via Queen's Bridge before the end of October.

While resignations—mostly from conductresses whose husbands have returned from the Forces—were greater than anticipated during the following weeks, the staff position improved to such an extent that it was possible, with only minor mileage adjustments at certain depots, to begin a 6-day week on the 15th October. Since then, unfortunately, resignations and retirements have just about balanced those returning and those coming into the industry, with the result that the second part of the Chairman's prophecy cannot be realised. For the fortnight which ended on the 20th October, for instance, the net gain to the staff was but three. In the last week, out of 27 resignations and retirements, 19 were conductresses.

One result of the stoppage of work on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th October, and perhaps one not anticipated by those who so blithely staged that useless and abortive demonstration, is that there has been a persistent and substantial decline in revenue ever since. Inquiries made show that the decrease has been brought about for the most part by incensed patrons, left stranded without notice, transferring their daily custom to the railways. If the trend continues a revision of the services will be inevitable.

TRAMWAYS APPEAL BOARD.

The election for a representative of the employees on the Tramways Appeal Board resulted in a personal triumph for Mr. G. P. McGee, of the Stores Branch, Preston Workshops.

There were four candidates, and on the first count Mr. McGee with 1,674 votes led the field easily, the next best being Mr. O'Shea with 988, while Mr. Maxwell had 755, and Mr. Henderson 222. Mr. McGee got 111 of Mr. Henderson's first preferences, Mr. Maxwell following with 61 and Mr. O'Shea securing 50. The totals at this stage were thus—McGee, 1785; O'Shea, 1,038; Maxwell, 816. The latter's preferences were then distributed, McGee taking 658 and O'Shea but 158. With his total of 2,443, McGee defeated O'Shea's 1,196 by 1,247.

BUS ACCIDENTS.

There was a Decrease Last Year.

Although there were more vehicles in service, there were fewer bus accidents during the year which ended on the 30th June last than for the previous twelve months. What is equally important is the fact that really serious accidents were not experienced from the public point of view, the majority of the mishaps being of a minor character, though, of course, each meant a loss of man-power.

On the maintenance side the position improved also, thanks in large measure to the adoption of the practice of doing all minor repairs ourselves instead of sending them to outside firms. Engine overhaul outside also was practically discontinued, to the betterment of the general position. Everybody would be much happier, however, if the problem constituted

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by failures of Diesel engine crankshafts could be solved.

Probably few in the service outside the staff of the Central Bus Garage realise the varied extent of the work being carried through in that department. In the Clock and Instrument Shop, for instance, 999 overhauls to recorders, clocks, ticket punches, tapes, speedometers, time switches, carburettors, vacuum and oil gauges, locks and padlocks, and strong-rooms and safes were carried through, while 1,012 were repaired. In addition, many articles were manufactured, these including springs of numerous types, special bolts, washers and screws, Bundy recorder parts, needle valves, locks, punches, fuel pump parts, gear wheels, cotter pins and brackets. During the year also 39 clocks and 110 watches belonging to members of the staff were repaired.

MANCHESTER'S BUSES EARNED £2,377,000.

For the year which ended on the 31st March last, the buses of the Manchester Corporation Transport Department earned £2,377,684, and had a surplus over operating expenses of £297,565, which is in marked contrast to the bus result in Glasgow.

The tramway revenue showed an increase of £3,528 at £713,167, but a loss on operation of £103,594, while the trolley bus income was £461,383, with a surplus on operation of £59,388.

Over the whole system there was a surplus of £240,507. After providing for the charges for converted tram routes, the balance of £158,373 was reserved for income tax on profits earned during the year. From the published figures, there is no indication what appropriations, if any, were made to the depreciation and renewals funds.

GLASGOW'S £376,000 LOSS.

Loss on Glasgow's transport undertaking for 1944-45 was less than expected. It had been estimated that the deficit would be £500,000, but the actual figure was £376,984, compared with a loss of £145,586 the previous year. Both deficits were caused by the refusal of the Ministry of War Transport to permit a revision of fares, notwithstanding the advance in wages and the very much higher cost of all materials used in the industry.

For the year which ended on the 31st May last, the income was £4,576,131, an increase of £22,793 over the previous year. Working expenses, however, at £4,322,941 were £182,273 higher. The net revenue was £253,190, reduced to £18,878 after sinking fund, income tax and other charges had

been deducted. The appropriation of £395,772 to depreciation and permanent way renewals fund created the deficit shown above, which was met by a transfer from reserves—another illustration of the wisdom of building up depreciation funds in times of prosperity.

The following were the revenue and working expenses of the three sections of the undertaking:—Tramways, revenue, £3,211,556; expenses, £2,943,531; buses, revenue, £1,156,719; expenses, £1,197,642; underground, revenue, £207,856; expenses, £179,768. After allowing for income tax and depreciation and other charges, the net result showed a deficit on the tramways of £257,708, a deficit on the buses of £140,899, and a profit on the underground of £21,623.

EXPANDING THE MOSCOW METRO.

Construction of the Moscow Metropolitan Railway, the first sections of which were opened before the war, continues with energy, and good progress is now being made with the fourth section. This is a circular line of more than nine miles, which is to have 12 stations, six of which will connect with the present radial lines.

A feature of the new stations is that they will be at a deeper level than those on the lines already operating, though some of the latter are more than 130 feet below the surface.

The longest Metro line is eight miles, and runs from Sokol in the north-east to the Stalin Works in the south-west.

CONTROL OF ALEXANDRIA TRAMWAYS.

It is safe to say that most members of the 6th, 7th and 9th Divisions of the A.I.F., as well as other Australian units, know the Alexandria tramways well; but probably few are aware that while the undertakings have been owned by the Municipality since 1929, the Corporation has allowed the Alexandria City and Ramleh electric systems to remain under the management of the Societe des Tramways d'Alexandrie and the Alexandria and Ramleh Railway Company.

Now the Corporation is to assume direct control next year, and the Legal Committee has recommended that the management should be invested in a board which will control all the transport services from headquarters in Alexandria, with the right to spend £E20,000 annually on new works. Expenditure above that amount would require the permission of the Municipality.

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NEW L.T.P.B. POSTERS.

In the years before the war the posters of the London Passenger Transport Board were works of art and provoked admiring comment from visitors from all parts of the world. The Board has commenced the issue of a new series designed to show the public the difficulties which confront the Board in its work of making good the enormous amount of damage sustained in bomb raids and "doodle-bug" visitations.

Four posters in from eight to ten colours comprise the series, and they show men at work removing blast walls and floodgates; replacing some of the 59,750 broken windows in trains, buses and trams and repairing damaged garages, stations and other buildings.

PLAYING HAVOC WITH BUSES.

Lack of spare parts and tyres has played havoc with the bus fleet of the Transport Department of Buenos Aires Municipality. In March, 1944, the number in service daily was 594; in March last the total had sunk to 125.

For the quarter which ended on the 31st March last, the tram and underground services had to tackle the job of transporting the passengers no longer carried by bus. The passenger total increase for the period was 10,457,414.

MANUFACTURING UNREST.

A Newspaper's Imaginative Story.

On the 20th October "The Argus" caused unrest among quite a number of the traffic staff with the yarn that Depot Masters had been instructed during the week to re-institute the 7-day week, and a further burst of imagination resulted in the picture of officers of the Employees' Association rushing to the Board demanding the reason, and being told that such instructions were necessary because the curtailed services which had been put into operation on the 15th October in order to comply with the demand for a 6-day week were to be restored.

There would have been no story at all if "The Argus" had taken the precaution of verifying the rumour supplied to it, either by addressing a query to the Association's Secretary (Mr. Abfalter), or to the Board's Publicity Officer. Both would have said at once that no Depot Master had issued any such instruction, and that naturally no officer of the Association could ask for an explanation of something which had not happened. "The Argus" was

supplied with a contradiction from the Chairman on the same date, but it was not published. In that statement Mr. Bell said:—

"During the course of the proceedings on Thursday last, the Federal President of the Association (Mr. Cousland) stated that the members of his Association were perturbed over the slight reduction in services, 1.6 per cent., which had been introduced in order to facilitate the working of the 6-day week. On behalf of his Association, Mr. Cousland requested the Board to restore the services, and emphasised that if any Depot Master found that he could not provide the necessary crews for any particular day that he could cancel a man's day off on giving the usual notice. Mr. Cousland assured the Board that that was what his members wanted, and that no difficulty would be experienced in getting men to man the trams. Mr. Butler, the delegate from Kew, and others, in reply to questions, were positive that that was the arrangement which was desired, and the Board through its manager issued instructions on Friday that services were to be restored. I emphasise," Mr. Bell said, "that the restoration of the services, with the operation of the cancellation clause of the award, has been done at the urgently-expressed desire of the Association, and that the allegation that we had given instructions for the re-institution of the 7-day week is a mischievous statement without foundation."

THE FLAT FARE SYSTEM.

Inaccurate Comment Causes Amusement.

Life for us would be much more amusing if only the "Sun" would give us one of its funny leaders on transport once a week. After a silence of some months the "Sun" returned to the transport arena on the 18th October and, using an old, moth-eaten trick, set out words our Chairman (Mr. Bell) had never used in order to demolish the case he had presented to "The Herald" against a suggestion that the sectional fare system should be abandoned in favour of a flat fare of 3d. for adults and 1½d. for children. It was represented that Mr. Bell had said that such a system would be "impossible." Of course Mr. Bell could never have said anything so stupid. What he did say most clearly in "The Herald" was that a system which would penalise 179,000,000 in order to confer a benefit on 75,000,000 would be most unfair.

Far from being impossible, it would be the easiest thing in the world to put a flat fare system into operation. It would not only give the Board quite a

sizeable fortune each year, but it would save our conductors quite a lot of work and worry, and it would simplify our ticket printing. But we have the notion that the leader writer's present enthusiasm for a flat fare would wilt considerably when he left the "Sun" office and took a tram for Elizabeth Street and found he had to pay 3d. for the journey that now costs him 1½d. Always assuming, of course, that he is an adult, and not one of the bright little chaps from some elementary school who write us saying that they are engaged on a project on transport, and would we be good enough to forward all information on the subject (stamped addressed envelope enclosed).

The "Sun" writer then went on to expose his astonishing ignorance of Melbourne's fare system by remarking that the Chairman would "presumably have no difficulty in explaining that overlapping sections, as in London and elsewhere, would be equally impossible." Of course Mr. Bell wouldn't, for the simple reason that, unfortunately, we have far too many of such overlapping sections, relics of the bad old days when the adjustment of sections by the various Tramway Trusts was based, not on any logical plan, but was delicately susceptible to local pressure and influence. Like transfers, overlapping sections are an anachronism on a sectional fare system, which is based on the principle that a passenger should pay the economic value of the transport service which is being rendered.

AUSTRALIA'S TRANSPORT BILL.

When you read a statement sponsored by the Chamber of Automotive Industries it is quite safe to assume that it is wrong, especially in any reference made to trams.

Recently the Chamber indulged in one of its periodical calculations, and fixed the annual transport bill of Australia at £170,000,000, showing how that amount was arrived at by detailing the expenditure under railways, tramways, motor vehicles, shipping and road transport. We recognise that the totals given for motor vehicles, shipping and road transport can at the best be only wild guesses; but the railway and tramway figures ought to be accurate to the last £1, for they can be secured from the official annual reports. Yet tramway fares—leaving the railways to speak for themselves—were set down at £5,783,000. In Melbourne alone the tram revenue for last year was £3,233,102. The figures for Sydney are not yet available; but as they are always at least £1,000,000 more than Melbourne, we have a combined tram revenue for the two cities

of £7,233,000, or £1,450,000 greater than the Chamber shows for the whole of Australia.

If the tram revenue of the Adelaide, Brisbane, Hobart, Perth, Fremantle, Newcastle, Bendigo, Ballarat, Geelong and Launceston systems was added, the grand total would probably be double the amount stated by the Chamber.

SOMETHING LIKE A CONTRACT.

The Chairman receives all sorts of weird communications in his daily mail, most of which engender the suspicion that the number of people who have "bees in their bonnets" is surprisingly large. There is, for instance, the gentleman who fancies red ink and who starts off his charge that the lack of safety in our streets has resulted from the Chairman's overseas visit in 1938 with the words: "Man, Mr. Chairman." The most astonishing, however, was the letter which arrived on the 13th October. It was from the "Manager for the Heiress and Successor to King William IV. and Stamford Estates," and read:—

"I have to demand the removal of all Tramways from the King's Highways (i.e., all Roads and Streets), as these obstructions are unauthorised and they must be removed this day."

RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue, the under-noted retiring gratuities have been passed by the Board:—

Con. L. L. McGown (51), £313; Dr. J. C. Davey (65), service 39 years, £452; Dr. W. Campbell (65), 32 years, £522; Con. S. V. Kift (56), £313; Fitter W. T. Smith (65), 34 years, £588; Dr. A. H. Moscrip (65), 25 years, £481; Tradesman's Assist. W. McDonnell (65), 33 years, £488; Con. H. S. Thompson (41), £75; Parker-Cleaner L. R. Burt, returned soldier, £224, plus War Savings Certificates; Dr. H. Hillman (60), £348; Car Cleaner A. A. Frimley (47), £214; Tradesman's Assistant H. H. Major (65), 43 years, £540; Pitman A. J. Rickwood (65), 30 years, £576; Con. J. H. Phipps (60), £406; Con. S. Clark (59), £278; Con. W. F. Kennedy (37), resigned, £63; Dr. J. F. Dunne (65), 23 years, £452; and Dr. A. E. Green (65), 38 years, £557.

Death gratuities were paid in respect of—Trimmer E. E. Banks (63), £125; Track Cleaner A. G. Fawcett (56), £267; Welder F. A. Hayes (55), £262; Dr. D. G. McGillivray (42), whose death as a prisoner of war in Japan took place in 1943, £246, plus War Savings Certificates.

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December 1945

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TO THE STAFF.

Greetings from the Chairman and Board.

For myself and my colleagues on the Board I take this opportunity of wishing all members of the staff a Happy Christmas and health and prosperity in 1946.

While the year that is dying has seen the Empire's arms victorious in all the fields of war, the cessation of hostilities does not seem to have induced the world to take a more peaceful view of life. How far the prevailing unrest in the industrial arena is "a species of war neurosis," as the Victorian President of the A. T. & O. Employees' Association put it to the Board recently, it is not for me to say; but what I do know is that you cannot divide an industry such as ours—or any industry for that matter—into separate compartments labelled respectively, employer and employee. The interests of both are identical; the well-being and prosperity of the one means the well-being and prosperity of the other. In all its planning during these years of war my colleagues and I were animated with a twofold desire—to give all a fair share of the increased revenues and, by building up the reserve funds, to safeguard the future so that when the bad time comes along we shall be able to keep the staff in full employment. If, on occasion, some of you, taking no thought of the morrow, have been disposed to think that we have been penny foolish, the future will perhaps demonstrate that we have been pound wise. What the conditions may be like generally a year hence no man can say; but so far as we are concerned we can face the next few years with the comforting and sustaining knowledge that we have the financial resources necessary for all the electrifications and reconstructions we have in contemplation.

Most sincerely do I wish you all the best of luck.
H. H. BELL, Chairman.

PLASTIC ARMOUR.

This Will Interest Preston Workshops.

In the "Overseas Engineer" for September the writer of the article on plastic armour told how during the Dunkirk evacuation it was noticed that little ships whose decks were covered with a bitumen compound resisted to quite an extent the impact of s.a. bullets. The discovery created considerable interest and became the basis of many experiments in bitumen plastic.

All quite interesting, the reader may say, but where does Preston come in? Well, 10 years ago the Board wanted a new cash van, one which had to be reasonably proof against the bullets of covetous gentlemen with designs on either the wages or revenue. The problem set before the Workshops staff was to find an armour sufficiently resistant and yet light enough so as not to limit the load to be carried. After much target practice on various make-ups with the Board's revolvers, it was decided to try a piece of Malthoid, three-sixteenths of an inch thick, between two pieces of 20 gauge ordinary sheet iron. It was thought that while a bullet might penetrate the outer skin of iron, the last of its energy would be absorbed by the plastic. These expectations were realised, and so we have the armour-plated cash van as we know it to-day. It is interesting to reflect that a similar idea regarding bitumen five years later should have been the means of saving lives off Dunkirk.

WHAT IS A RETURNED SOLDIER? Board Adopts the Army Interpretation.

There has been quite a lot of discussion as to the definition of the words, "returned soldier," in relation to the resolution of the Board to pay gratuities at 60 years of age on the maximum basis to those concerned who are certified by the Medical Officer

as permanently unfit for further tramway work. To avoid any possibility of misunderstanding in the future, the Board desires it to be known that it has adopted the definition on which "Returned from Active Service" badges are issued to members of the Australian Military Forces, viz.:—

- (1) A returned soldier is one who has served on full time duty in any area outside Australia and the Mandated Territories of the Commonwealth at any time since the outbreak of war (Middle East, Malaya, British Isles);
- (2) In the Mandated Territories of New Guinea at any time after and including the 4th January, 1942;
- (3) In Papua at any time after and including the 2nd February, 1942;
- (4) Torres Strait Islands at any time after and including the 19th March, 1942; and
- (5) In the Northern Territory, north of and including Katherine, at any time after and including the 19th February, 1942, up to 14th November, 1944.

The latter is the only prescribed operational area on the mainland of Australia which will be included; service elsewhere in Australia will not be taken into consideration. The above definition applies also to the Navy and the R.A.A.F.

It should be added that the Board records the number of each returned serviceman's "Returned from Active Service" badge issued in connection with both the 1914-18 and 1939-45 wars, and recognises it for the purposes of the retiring gratuity and the Anzac Day concession.

AN OFFICIAL'S THANKS AND PRAISE.

After spending some days in Melbourne on business connected with the Department of Munitions, an official of the Sydney office wrote the Chairman:

"The courtesy and assistance I was afforded by your employees during my recent visit was so much appreciated that I wish to take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude and thanks.

"The assistance given to the general public as a course of duty by your staff is admirable; and a great advantage to strangers in Melbourne is the practice, on which you are to be complimented, of announcing the names of stopping places prior to arrival. This is something which could be introduced to advantage by the Sydney Transport Department; but, of course, the adoption of this facility in the whole of the metropolitan area would be impossible until either the majority of antiquated tramcars are remodelled to the corridor types, or relegated to the scrapheap and replaced with modern cars."

AUSTRALIA'S ANNUAL TRANSPORT BILL.

Fantastic Errors by Automotive Chamber.

In our previous issue we referred to the inaccurate figures supplied to the Press by the Chamber of Automotive Industries in connection with Australia's annual transport bill, and remarked that while some of the amounts mentioned were only wild guesses the railway and tramway figures ought to have been correct to the last £, as, apart from the annual reports of the various undertakings, which are always available, the figures in detail are set out in the bulletins issued periodically by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics. It is interesting to compare those official totals with the figures given by the Chamber. Here they are:

	Official	Chamber
Tramway Fares	£11,237,655	£5,783,000
Railway Revenue	78,850,189	40,720,000

In these two items alone, it will be noted, the Chamber erred to the extent of £44,500,000; substantial enough, of course, but really a poor performance in inaccuracy for a Chamber whose Secretary a month or two ago over-stated London's bus mileage by 1,500,000,000 miles.

So far as motor transport is concerned, the Chamber, curiously enough, gave no estimate of revenue. We are happy to repair that omission by stating that the Government and municipal bus services earned £2,458,476, and that the working expenses were £2,353,472, leaving but £105,000 for payment of interest on borrowed capital, loan redemption, and depreciation. In one State, the return given does not show anything for administrative and general charges. Neither the revenue nor the working expenses of the private bus operators and haulage contractors are shown, because such figures are not available to the Statistician. On the 30th June, 1944 (figures for the year which ended on the 30th June last have not yet been published), there were 493,391 motor cars, 274,269 commercial vehicles and 52,560 motor cycles registered in Australia. The Chamber put the cost of registration and driving licenses for the lot at £7,000,000. The Statistician disagrees; he says the cost was £5,683,928. So that the estimate by the Chamber, far from being "on the conservative side," was grossly exaggerated.

Making another wild stab in the dark, the Chamber puts the wages of transport drivers at £30,000,000 for the year. In this case, we hope that the estimate is very much on the conservative side, for even if we assume that not a single motor car or motor cycle driver got a penny piece, the Chamber's wages would not be sufficient to give the unfortunate commercial drivers £110 a year! After that,

it is easy to read without a blink that the Chamber's estimate of the cost of maintaining horses used in road transport is £6,000,000 a year.

DURBAN TRANSPORT INQUIRY.

Durban City Council has asked the Provincial Administrator to appoint a Commission to investigate the working of its transport undertaking, the terms of reference to include the subject of the advisability or otherwise of establishing a public utility transport corporation.

SYDNEY'S TRANSPORT.

Serious Financial Losses.

Following upon a loss of £95,027 on Sydney's tram and bus transport for the year which ended on the 30th June last, with an estimated loss for the current year of £300,000, the possibility of increasing the fares is being discussed by members of a special committee appointed by the State Parliamentary Labor Party. The members of the committee are the Labor Parliamentary representatives of metropolitan electorates, the Chairman being the Minister for Transport (Mr. O'Sullivan).

The Commissioner for Road Transport and Tramways (Mr. Neale) has, the "Sydney Morning Herald" says, pointed out that the transport services cannot pay on the present scale of fares. To many outside observers, however, it has often appeared that the main cause for the unsatisfactory financial position is the abnormal ratio of expenses to revenue, the worst in Australia. Detailed figures for the last year are not yet available, but for the year which ended on the 30th June, 1944, 90.579 per cent. of Sydney's revenue went in expenses, as contrasted with but 62.982 per cent. in Melbourne. That difference explains why, although the Sydney undertaking that year had earnings of £5,169,451 as against Melbourne's £3,957,073, the earnings in excess of working expenses in Sydney were but £487,029, while in Melbourne they amounted to £1,465,424. It also explains why the appropriation for depreciation and other reserves in Sydney was as low as £174,000, while in Melbourne we were able to tuck away £750,000 into the Renewals and Maintenance Reserve Funds.

It is said that before the committee are suggestions that there should be a flat fare of 3d. on all tram and bus services, or that the 2d. minimum fare should be retained, but that the fare for the second section should be increased to 4d. The introduction of a flat fare of 3d., it is thought, would enable a profit to be made. Probably it would, but at the expense of scores of millions of passengers who now

pay the minimum of 2d. It cannot be doubted that many of these would walk rather than pay a fare which has been increased by 50 per cent. Sydney, in 1944, dealt on the average with 1,565,000 passengers daily. Assuming that, as in Melbourne, about 60 per cent. pay 2d. or less, the question arises as to the number who would pay the fare of 3d. and so make good the loss in revenue caused by the reduced fare of 3d. to all those who now pay above that figure.

The committee has been informed officially that the non-collection of fares is costing the Department annually £50,000, and that the effective collection of fares is dependent upon the appointment of many more inspectors and 600 additional collectors. It would be surprising if that figure of £50,000 could not be multiplied by six. Certainly from our knowledge £300,000 is a highly more probable estimate than 50,000.

A DUBLIN VIEW OF TRAMS.

Says Stephen Gwynn in "The Irish Press":—

"The big stately trams seem to be appropriate to the spacious streets of Dublin . . . they are far less likely to run over you than the more temperamental buses. It is fine to see one of these big vehicles sweeping down majestically from Stephen's Green, not to be turned aside or interrupted. Majesty does not permit of interruption, but has its own fine courtesies, and in many ways serves the public convenience very well . . . Buses dictate to us the places where we may compete for the privilege of trampling on other people's toes or having ours trampled on. Such inconveniences have, indeed, been known to occur in trams, but on the whole this majesty has a certain spaciousness about it."

MOSTLY THEY WERE TRAMS!

In an English newspaper the other month appeared the heading "Brazil Asks Us For Buses." Tramway-men, well aware that the motor industry is one of the best advertising customers possessed by papers, were not surprised on reading the paragraph to learn that what Brazil had asked for was 200 modern tramcars and 150 Diesel-engined double-deck buses!!

£180,000 TROLLEY BUS ORDER.

The City of Durban has just placed an order for 52 trolley buses in England at a cost of £180,000.

This is the fourth order for such buses placed with the same Wolverhampton firm in 11 years. The vehicles are of the six-wheeled type and are seated for 70 passengers.

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RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue, the under-noted retiring gratuities have been passed by the Board:—

Dr. R. Rothwell (63), service 31 years, returned soldier, £516; Bus Cleaner G. Sharpe (65), 31 years, £417; Tradesman H. A. Powell (61), 31 years, £396; Dr. E. C. O'Rourke (60), returned soldier, £516; Blacksmith's Striker W. Beattie (65), 28 years, £460; Dr. R. Ellis (62), 24 years, £278; Pitman V. Ritchfield (63), 25 years, £297; Signalman J. F. Burke (59), 32 years, £390; Leading-Hand Car Cleaner A. G. Wagland (65), 38 years, £542; Starter E. A. Fryer (65), 33 years, £526; Con. T. C. E. Cuttrins (61), 38 years, £440; Pitman E. R. James (62), 21 years, resigned, £248; Anglesmith W. J. Spain (65), 25 years, £543; Dr. T. G. Hill (34), 11 years, £63; and Bus Cleaner L. Wimmer (65), 21 years, £434.

Death gratuities were paid in respect of:—Dr. H. C. Grosvenor (40), 19 years, who died when a prisoner of war, £22, plus War Savings Certificates; Con. J. R. C. Hartley (59), 39 years, £452; Night Watchman H. T. Raverty (55), 33 years, £407; Track Repairer W. C. Stanton (64), 28 years, £308; Con. W. Ross (44), 21 years, who died while a prisoner of war, £226, plus War Savings Certificates.

THE FIVE DAY WEEK.

As far as is practicable, the Board has decided to put into operation as from the 1st January a five-day week for the official, clerical, workshops and daily-paid staffs, other than those directly concerned in traffic.

In making the announcement to the Press, the Chairman (Mr. H. H. Bell) emphasised that there would be no reduction in the weekly hours, and that the employees concerned would take it in turn to provide the necessary staffs which will function for essential services on Saturdays and Sundays.

Arrangements for the re-allocation of hours from Mondays to Fridays inclusive, and for the adjustment of work on Saturdays, are now being made by the respective departments.

DEVELOPMENTS THROUGH THE WAR.

Discussing developments which may occur in the transport industry through experiences during the war, "The Commercial Motor" says that these include such things as new fuels—petrol of 100 octane, triptane with an octane number of 130, and engines to use them; internal cooling of water units by water or alcohol injection, incidentally increas-

ing their power; transmissions of a type which will release a man who earns his living on the road from changing gear 3,000 times or so a day, thus relieving him from much drudgery and fatigue; and the incursion of light metals, grudgingly, into constructional applications to enable things to be moved at less cost.

"It may be that new vehicles and the reconstructed roads upon which they will run," remarks the journal, "will have to conform to certain standards to eliminate those twin irritants of modern existence, noise and vibration. With a great excess of rubber likely, we may even have an inch or two on our roads. The possibilities seem almost endless."

TRAMS OR BUSES?

Sydney is agitated just now over the question of transport. An extremely vocal section is agitating for the replacement of trams by buses; but the tram is not without supporters. One of the latter is the "Daily Mirror," and the editor of that paper invited the Chairman to contribute an article on the subject. The result was a full-page illustrated article in which Mr. Bell detailed our own experience with trams and buses. Mr. Bell refrained carefully from expressing an opinion on Sydney's problem, "not because I am in any doubt as to which is the best vehicle from the point of view of the Melbourne Tramways Board, but because arguments which are valid in the case of Melbourne may have no application at all when applied to some other city."

Mr. Bell stated in a sentence the reasons why the Board is of opinion that trams are best for Melbourne. "Trams," he wrote, "are cheaper to run and to maintain, they are infinitely more reliable, they are indifferent to climatic changes—changes which add so much to bus maintenance—they have a much greater earning capacity." These points received a sudden emphasis a day or two later when it was announced that Sydney's transport for the year which ended on the 30th June last had operated at a loss of £95,000, followed by the assertion by some people that the deficit had been caused wholly by the bus section of the undertaking. As the report of the Commissioner does not, unlike ours, show the expenses and earnings of trams and buses separately, we have no means of checking up on that allegation, though, looking to our experience with our munition services, it would not surprise to learn that it was correct.

J. S. McClelland Pty. Ltd., 42-44 Lonsdale Street, C.I.

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Volume 3

January 1946

Number 34

THE AUTOMOTIVE SECRETARY AGAIN.

Confuses "Balance on Operation" With Profit.

The Secretary of the Chamber of Automotive Industries (Mr. H. W. Harrison) has bobbed up again, this time in "The Daily Mirror," Sydney. It will be recalled that in our last issue we mentioned briefly that the Chairman (Mr. H. H. Bell) had contributed an article to that paper in which he gave a factual comparison of the operation of trams and buses as we know it here in Melbourne. Annoyed that even the Chairman of a Tramways Board should have something good to say about trams, Mr. Harrison declared that Mr. Bell's statement that the profits from the trams kept the buses on the streets was "remarkable," and he went on to quote from our annual reports for the last eight years the various sums we had carried from our operating account to the net revenue account, the inference, of course, being that these amounts represented profit. In an effort to lighten Mr. Harrison's darkness, Mr. Bell replied:—

"I observe that the Secretary of the Chamber of Automotive Industries has, with that inaccuracy which seems to be an ingrained passion with him, been representing to your readers that from 1938 to 1945 inclusive our buses made profits ranging from £21,723 in 1938 to as much as £210,977 in 1942. Mr. Harrison's misrepresentation of the position arises from his inability to understand what "a statement on operation" means. It is just a table showing the actual revenue and operating expenses. The "balance on operation" for buses, £77,624, for the year which ended on the 30th June last is not shown as profit, any more than the "balance on operation" of the trams, £1,397,563, is shown as profit, a fact which I have tried, without success, to impress upon Mr. Harrison on various occasions during the last 10 years. I do not propose to waste your space by going over the years

mentioned by Mr. Harrison; it will be sufficient if I refer only to last year, as it is typical of all the others. The operational balance on buses was, as stated above, £77,624. Against that balance has to be placed all the many non-operational expenses such as municipal rates, contributions to the Employees' Benefit Society, sick pay, death and retiring gratuities, interest on loans, interest on reserves, hospital payment (third party), Metropolitan Roads Fund, pay roll tax, loans redemption fund, public risk insurance reserves, and the proportionate contribution to the Consolidated Revenue of the State. When provision has been made for all these things, the bus portion of our undertaking showed a loss for the year of £132,000—a loss which was met out of the profits made by the trams."

Apparently Mr. Harrison was troubled with an uneasy suspicion that he had slipped somewhere, for he went on to say that "Mr. Bell did not state that the average fare was 2.731d. per passenger per tram against the lower fare of 2.573d. per passenger per bus." Quite true; but then, neither did the Chairman state that the fares on the buses range from 1d. to 9d. against the 1d. to 6d. of the trams, nor that you travel fractionally further on a bus for 1d. than you do on a tram, nor that the percentage of operating expenses to revenue is 89.745 as against but 56.876 for the trams.

"Mr. Bell did not state," Mr. Harrison proceeded—and that seems to be his favourite method of dodging replying to uncomfortable facts which have been stated—"that the buses were, with one exception, run on routes carrying very small traffic." It is all very well for Mr. Harrison to write such rubbish for the mis-information of the readers of "The Daily Mirror," but he would be in strife if he tried to tell the people who use our buses to North Kew, Collingwood, Garden City and East Brunswick that these routes carry "very small traffic. Why, last year, between the City and North

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Kew, we dealt with 12,258,000 passengers, to East Brunswick with 10,329,000 passengers, and to Garden City 6,560,000 passengers. Even to Mr. Harrison, who tosses millions about with light-hearted abandon, twenty-nine million passengers on three routes—79,000 passengers daily—surely cannot be described as "small traffic."

THE P.C.C. TRAM.

Principal Features of the 1946 Model.

Since their introduction in the United States in 1936, extraordinary success has been achieved by the P.C.C. tram, the patents on which, but for the war, would long ere this have been incorporated into the design of our SW6 cars. Seventeen of the largest cities of the States and Canada have now 2,572 of these trams in operation, the list including Pittsburgh with 465, Washington with 436, Toronto with 290, Baltimore with 275, Montreal with 260, St. Louis with 200, Boston with 171, Los Angeles with 155, and Brooklyn with 100. Louisville, Minneapolis, Johnstown, Cleveland and the Chicago Rapid Transit Line are in process of putting them in to the number of 136; while in addition Boston has ordered an additional 100, the Chicago Surface Lines 200, Kansas 75, Montreal 20, Philadelphia 100, Pittsburgh 101, St. Louis 100, Toronto 20, Vancouver 15 and Washington 53, a total of 784.

Meantime, the Transit Research Corporation, in whom all the patents are vested, is not allowing the success of the original model to interfere with its plans for development. During last year four meetings of the Car Design Committee were held at the offices of the St. Louis Car Company (the concern which built the trams we have running on Point Ormond-Elsternwick) and the Pullman Standard Car Manufacturing Co., as the result of which new P.C.C. models are under construction by both companies. The principal new features of the 1946 trams are:—

- All electric control and brakes (no air on car);
- Extended dynamic braking and easy shut off;
- Pressure ventilation to produce evaporation cooling;
- Two-side heat distribution;
- Standee windows; and
- Greater interior width with arm rests.

A most interesting comparison between P.C.C. trams, older trams and motor buses, all belonging to the one system, was contributed to the August issue of "Mass Transportation," Chicago. The trams of the city in question run in and through the more thickly-populated districts, while the buses run out into the well-developed adjacent communi-

ties. (While the identity of the city is not revealed, we would hazard a guess and say that it is Boston, the transport facilities of which serve a city population of three-quarters of a million, but which are also at the service of adjacent smaller cities and towns, all within the metropolitan area, with a population of two millions and a half). Naturally the buses operate, owing to the distances traversed, at a much higher fare level, the average fare being 9.19 cents, as against 7.31 cents. for the trams. After providing for operating expenses, taxes and depreciation, each individual P.C.C. tram showed a balance at the end of the year of 11,493 dollars, almost treble that of the buses, 4,502 dollars, and more than five times that of the older trams, 2,234 dollars. As could be expected, the operating expenses for the older trams were much heavier than for the P.C.C. trams. The comparison is as follows:

Per Vehicle Unit	P.C.C. Older		
	Trams	Trams	Buses
	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
Passenger Revenue	29,728	21,476	23,125
Operating Expenses	14,615	15,605	14,652
Depreciation	2,090	1,997	2,156
	Cents	Cents	Cents
Av. Rev. per passenger	7.31	7.41	9.19
Av. Rev. per Mile	76.39	57.75	45.00

After allowing for interest, there was a net balance of passenger revenue of 32% in the case of the P.C.C. tram, of 18% in the buses and 2% in the other trams. There was a net balance on each unit in the order given of 9,693, 4,160 and 494 dollars respectively.

SICK PAY FACTS AND FIGURES.

The Board Has Now Paid £205,000.

Statistics prepared for the year which ended on the 30th June last in relation to sick pay reveal the surprising fact that out of the total staff of 3,767 connected with the electrical side of the undertaking, no fewer than 1,812, or 48.15 per cent. received the £1 per week sick pay. Curiously enough, the percentage in the bus section was exactly the same, 560 employees out of 1,163 receiving payment.

Taking all sections of the staff, 2,400 were paid the sick allowance, the number of days involved being 56,351, at a total cost of £8,004, figures which show decreases of 3,158 days and £454 compared with the previous year. Of the days mentioned, 1,139 were taken by officers, 39,289 by men, and 15,923 by women. Those on the electric section received £6,108, the bus £1,710, and the staff £186.

So far as the men in the service are concerned,

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the total sick days paid worked out at an average of 3.24, the average for women being 5.7 days. Twenty-eight traffic employees (including three women), 10 belonging to miscellaneous and two of the staff received the maximum of six months sick allowance.

From the 1st December, 1920, until the end of June last, the Board under this heading has paid to its employees the sum of £206,052, that total including 26,015 paid in wages in lieu of sick pay—all without one penny of contribution from the beneficiaries.

OUR NEW BUSES.

Shipments Will Probably Start in April.

Bus chassis ordered from Leyland Motors in 1940-41, but whose export was prohibited by the British Government, will, it is hoped, begin to be shipped from England by the end of April next. As soon as possible after the first 30, the balance of the order will follow in weekly instalments. The first lot to come to hand will replace vehicles in service, while the remainder will be used on feeder and other routes now under consideration.

While the firm concerned means to put a chassis with a wheel-base of from 19 ft. to 19 ft. 6 ins. on the road, this is not yet in production. The Board has, therefore, had to confine its selection to the standard 17 ft. 6 ins. wheelbase chassis. When these arrive, we intend to place on them single-deck bodies built at our Preston Workshops. The bulk of the vehicles will have bodies suitable for two-man or one-man operation, with front and rear side doors of the sliding type controlled by the driver. To that end, an air compressor will be part of the chassis equipment.

SOVIET BUS DRIVERS.

In Australia, the Trade Unions have always been hostile to employers recognising individual merit and exceptional skill. Other countries, other methods. In the Soviet Union, for instance, bus drivers are graded into three categories according to their experience, skill and knowledge, each man's category being determined by a State Qualification Commission, of which there is one in every city. There is 20 per cent. difference in the pay of the various classifications, while in addition to the wage there are bonuses paid monthly for running exactly to timetable, for petrol saving, for tyre economy and for running a vehicle for a month without stoppages due to technical defects. Finally

there is the bonus paid to the driver for having been able to exceed the mileage norm without having to dock their bus for repair.

CHICAGO'S £22,000,000 PURCHASE.

The citizens of Chicago have voted in favour of a State enabling Act to create a municipal authority for the public ownership of the transport systems in the city and surrounding area. A Board will be set up under the plan prepared by the City Council, and the Chicago Surface Lines (the concern which has always been most emphatic in asserting that for mass transport in a great city the tram stands alone), and the Chicago Rapid Transit Company will be purchased for £22,000,000.

QUEEN'S PARADE.

Councils Agree to Open Ballast Track.

Negotiations between the Councils of Fitzroy and Collingwood and the Board having been concluded to the satisfaction of all concerned, the three bodies are making a joint application to the Governor-in-Council to direct that Queen's Parade be set apart as a tramway reserve, thus permitting the construction of an open ballast track with plantations on each side.

When the work is completed, there will be a double tram track of 3,111 ft. in length in Queen's Parade, with plantations of 20 ft. on each side, four road crossings and seven foot crossings. Comfort in riding and silence in operation are all accentuated by an open ballast track, while delays due to other traffic are reduced to the minimum. There was at first some thought of planting hedges, as in Victoria Parade; but the Councils eventually concurred with the Board's suggestion to dispense with these in the interests of the safety of children.

In conformity with its usual practice when getting the benefit of a reserve, the Board will construct the new plantations and maintain them for a year after their construction. Up-to-date track and street lighting will be a feature of the plans.

No date can yet be set for the commencement of the work of converting the Bourke Street-Northcote route to electric traction; but the detailed survey is going ahead rapidly, with the plans and working drawings keeping pace.

STREET TRANSPORT PLANS IN U.S.

Hundreds of millions of dollars worth of trams, oil and trolley buses and rapid transit cars are to be purchased during the current year in the United

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States and Canada for the modernisation of street transport facilities. In some instances the vehicles will replace worn-out rolling stock. Chicago, Detroit, Washington and Boston in addition plan the construction of subways. According to "Bus Transportation," some of the expenditures in the larger cities are:—Detroit, 240,000,000 dollars; Chicago, 97,000,000; Cleveland, 65,000,000; Washington, 56,000,000; Toronto, 51,000,000; Boston, 46,000,000; and Philadelphia, 11,000,000.

FIRE SNUFFER FOR BUSES.

"Bus Transportation" states that carbon-dioxide fire extinguishing systems are now being extended to the bus field. Flame detectors are placed at such hazardous spots as near the carburettor, and discharge nozzles are situated so as to flood the entire engine space. The detectors contain two organic filaments which disintegrate instantly upon contact with flame, closing an electrical circuit which flashes a red fire signal in an indicator panel on the dashboard. The driver then operates the extinguisher by pulling a small, conveniently-located handle. Protection may be extended to other hazards such as fuel pumps, generators and air compressors.

SYDNEY'S STREET TRANSPORT.

Former Premier on Political Control.

Sir Bertram Stevens, formerly Premier and Treasurer of New South Wales, has been discussing the causes of the loss of £95,000 on the Sydney trams and buses, and of the estimate of a further loss of £400,000 this year, and suggests that the strongest influence was the change from control by an independent Commissioner to control by the political head of the service. Sir Bertram urges reversion to the method of independent control, and argues that the public inevitably pays dearly for the luxury of political control, the benefits of which are enjoyed by a relatively small handful of men.

Examining the available accounts, Sir Bertram expresses surprise that the more passengers the system carried the worse became the financial position. Heavier passenger loads, he points out, yielded 41d. per additional passenger; but the extra cost, in working expenses alone, in carrying that extra passenger, was 1.38d. Thus the enterprise, which was losing £1,860 per week in 1944-45, is now losing £6,000 per week! Yet Sydney, pays but 3/- a week war loading as compared with Melbourne's 6/- a week, and does not give the war bonus of 5/- a week. That difference of 8/- a week

would mean at least another £5,500 per week to the existing loss of £6,000.

But it is in relation to reserves that Sir Bertram gives the greatest surprise. "During the war years," he says, "the undertaking built up reserves to cover deferred maintenance of plant and tracks . . . These reserves at the end of June, 1945, amounted to approximately £250,000. At the present rate of loss these have possibly already been eliminated." For such a large, sprawling system, £250,000 for maintenance in six years seems an utterly inadequate sum; we in Melbourne would regard £250,000 as only a reasonable amount for such a purpose for a year. We have, indeed, gone much further. Recognising how much plant, rolling stock and tracks and overhead were depreciating under the stress of abnormal loading, we increased heavily our appropriations to the Renewals Reserve Fund, the total for the six war years reaching not £250,000 but £3,741,000. Although we gave during the same period £195,000 to the Municipalities and £708,333 to the Consolidated Revenue—liabilities which are unknown in Sydney—we were nevertheless able to decrease our loan indebtedness and show a small overall profit.

DEATH AND RETIRING GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue, the under-noted retiring gratuities have been passed by the Board:—

Con. E. J. Mason (55), service 30 years, £348; Bus Driver F. A. Bracken (42), 11 years, £111; Con. A. V. Boxshall (60), 37 years, £551; Dr. F. A. Pigot (56), 25 years, £290; Con. G. J. Townsing (49), 23 years, £266; Roller Driver G. C. Bentick (43), 21 years, £240; Track Repairer F. C. Morris (52), 21 years, £231; Paint Shop Foreman J. M. Delaney (65), 46 years, £663; Senior Clerk J. W. H. Peck (65), 20 years, £702; Pitman W. H. Ross (62), 27 years, £319; Dr. F. W. Smith (49), 26 years, £301, plus War Savings Certificates as returned soldier; Sig. W. B. Booth (65), 32 years, £549; Dr. D. S. Reeves (65), 32 years, £522; Dr. C. D. Harricks (65), 42 years, £580; Con. W. A. Kemp (43), 18 years, £208, plus War Savings Certificates as returned soldier; Dr. F. J. Salisbury (57), 22 years, £254; Pitman W. H. Ross (62), 27 years, £319; Con. O. V. Plane (40), 10 years, £113; Shift Elec. E. T. Jeffs (60), 25 years, £499; Shift Elec. J. E. Veale (65), 20 years, £499.

Death gratuities were paid in respect of—Inspector H. J. Ferguson (62), 30 years, £390; Con. H. T. Mann (55), 26 years, £301; and Tradesman A. W. Croll (46), 22 years, £281.

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ONE SYSTEM . . . TRULY EFFICIENT."

A Tribute from Sydney to Melbourne.

An article in a recent issue of "Truck and Bus Transportation," Sydney, headed "The Transport Scene for 1946," says, inter alia:—

"In the metropolitan street transport field, where Governments control tram, bus and trolley bus services, only one system can be considered operating on truly efficient modern lines, and that one, of course, is the tramway section of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board."

Let us all blush with modest pride over that "of course!"

TRAMS OR TROLLEY BUSES?

Sections in the Madras City Council are in disagreement over transport policy.

One group want the Council to urge the Government to introduce trolley bus services in those parts of the city where trams do not at present operate, and to extend such services gradually until all tram lines are replaced. The spokesman for the group (Mr. Damodaram Nayudu) describes the transport facilities as very inadequate, and contends that the Government should permit the Council, or any new company that may be formed, to run trolley buses.

Tramcars, emphasises the speaker (Mr. G. Selvapathi Chetti) for the second group, are the poor man's conveyance, and he comes down strongly in favour of covering the whole city with a network of tram routes.

The outcome of the debate? Well, the procedure sanctified by immemorial custom was followed—the question was referred to a committee!

SYDNEY'S TRAMS AND BUSES.

Unconvincing Explanation of Losses.

A long article in the "Sydney Morning Herald" has attempted to explain just why the Sydney trams and buses lost £95,000 last year and are going to lose £400,000 this year. According to the writer, the losses are due to increased costs, the items being:—

1. Basic wage increases and war loading.
2. Award variations.
3. Payroll tax.
3. Superannuation payments.
5. Price of petrol and fuel oil.
6. Price of tyres and tubes.
7. Difference in pay to staff with Forces.
8. Concession fares to the Services.
9. Uncollected fares.

The explanation can scarcely be said to convince, for all these things applied equally to every transport undertaking in Australia, none of whom have lost, or will lose, on their operations. As a matter of fact, known to all, certain concerns gave, and are giving still, so far as the first two items are concerned, their employees far more than the Sydney men receive. In Melbourne, for instance, the war loading is 6/- a week against Sydney's 3/-. and there is a war bonus of 5/- a week in Melbourne which has no counterpart in Sydney. Under this heading, therefore, Sydney pays no less than 8/- a week below the Melbourne level. With approximately 13,000 employees, that difference means a saving to Sydney of £270,000 a year! Making up the difference in pay to those members with the Forces is a trifle surely scarcely worth mentioning. All it amounted to last year was £16,000. Up to the 31st December last our Board had given in War Savings Certificates no less than

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£167,000, and at that date more than 400 men were still being credited with a Certificate of £1 each week. All told, Sydney has paid £70,000 less than Melbourne under this heading up to date.

With the exception of Sydney, transport systems in Australia during the war years recouped the rise in wages, the cost of concessions and the increased prices for materials through the greater revenues enjoyed during that period, and were able in most cases to put aside adequate sums for depreciation and renewals. On the other hand, the more passengers the Sydney system carried, as Sir Bertram Stevens showed in our last issue, the more money it lost—a topsy-turvy result which is the reverse of all normal business experience. Inevitably, in order to show a paper profit, the appropriations to renewals and depreciation were hopelessly inadequate, and so Sydney is now faced with a programme of rehabilitation without any funds to meet the cost.

A far more likely explanation of the losses would suggest itself if the bus accounts were subjected to detailed examination. In the last year for which figures were shown separately from the trams, the proportion of operating expenses to revenue for buses was 98 per cent. Remembering all the many other items which have to be provided for before the actual result for the year can be arrived at, it was plain then that the buses could not be operating at anything but a colossal loss.

PARIS IS HAVING TO DO WITHOUT BUSES.

Paris is again without buses during its winter because of the shortage of tyres. Figures published in November show that there were but 350 buses in service, and these only in the suburbs not served by the Metro. Although 225 new tyres were being made available each month, 500 have to be scrapped.

The Parisian's transport troubles no not end there, however. Only 250 taxis are operating out of the 14,000 which were on the streets in 1939. How the citizens must be regretting that they abandoned their trams!

THEIR FARES ARE COSTING MORE—WITH BUSES.

Like the people of many other places, the citizens of Glasgow are discovering that it is not exactly profitable to allow a noisy—and more often than not a personally interested—section to get their

own way over transport facilities. For more than a score of years the city has had a good all-night tram service; run at a loss, naturally, as all such services are. Now buses are being used—at a considerable advance in fares!

Abandoned during the war, with the exception of shuttle services to connect with the tram routes, the Sunday bus services on all routes have resumed, the headways varying from 15 to 20 minutes.

Incidentally, the Transport Committee has weakened in its opposition to trolley buses and is to try out a few on a route of four miles. Though what that will prove we doubt if even the Transport Committee has any idea.

TRANSPORT TO THE CITY.

Just How Much It Has Been Improved.

The irrepressibly inaccurate Secretary of the Chamber of Automotive Industries seems to be constitutionally incapable of writing to the Press anything but that which a ten-year-old schoolboy studying civics can contradict.

Trying to ridicule in the interests of his masters the suggestion by the Chief of the Traffic Police (Inspector T. O. Morris) to the City Council that street parking of motor cars in the centre of the city should be prohibited—a regulation which has been in force in most of the large cities overseas for many years—the Secretary declared that "it was ridiculous that something had not been done long ago to improve transport to the city," and that "despite an increased population the number of trams and trains provided was much the same as it was 40 years ago."

Declining to follow the Secretary's habit of putting an argument in inane generalisations, let us take a look backwards for 40 years. The year is 1906. Cable trams bring people into the city from Flemington Bridge, St. Kilda, Toorak, Prahran, Richmond, Collingwood, Northcote, Fitzroy, North and West Melbourne and South and Port Melbourne. There are no electric trams, for the first of these, in Essendon and in St. Kilda from the railway station to Point Ormond, are just in course of construction. The suburbs outside the inner ring served by the cable trams have no direct connection with the city except by the suburban steam railways, which offer but a slow and infrequent service, judged by the standards of to-day.

Contrast that with the position to-day. There is a magnificent network of electric suburban railways which combine to make the Flinders Street

station one of the three busiest in the world. But leaving the Railway Commissioners to speak for themselves, what has been done during the 40 years in the field of electric tram transport? The answer is that the Tramways Board and its predecessors has provided no fewer than 20 of the outside suburbs with through services to the city. It is, for instance, not yet 20 years since Glenhuntly and Elsternwick had no communication with the city except by train; now trams run to Carnegie. Eight years ago the residents of East Brighton got their line extended to Point Nepean Road—a run of nine and a half miles for sixpence. It was late in 1926 when the St. Kilda Road cable line was converted, thus giving the people of East Malvern, Glen Iris and Gardiner a direct run to the city, a convenience which Toorak began to enjoy the following year. Since then all the cable routes have gone, the suburban electric lines of the old Essendon Company and the Prahran and Malvern, Hawthorn and Coburg Tramway Trusts have all been linked up with lines running to the city, the result being through communication for Camberwell, Maribyrnong, Essendon, East Coburg, North Coburg, Moreland, East and West Preston, East Kew and Mont Albert. In addition, two completely new routes have been constructed—to West Coburg through Royal Park and to St. Kilda via South Melbourne, while bus routes from North Kew to Garden City and from the city to Fisherman's Bend deal with tens of millions of passengers yearly. As to the number of trams being much the same as 40 years ago—well, the rolling stock, apart from being able to accommodate many more passengers, has grown in the last 23 years alone from 700 vehicles to 1,050. If all these improvements and additions do not mean that "something has been done to improve transport," then the words used to describe them are as meaningless as most of the transport statements of the Secretary of the Chamber of Automotive Industries.

BUENOS AIRES PREFERS TRAMS.

Believe it or not, but Buenos Aires prefers trams; in fact, the trams of that great city carry more passengers in five months than Melbourne's do in a year.

In the last five months for which figures are to hand, the trams dealt with 285,564,502 passengers, the minibuses with 136,000,000, the underground with 117,000,000, and the buses with 28,000,000. It will be observed that the trams handled more passengers than the other three services combined

DOWN ON THE FARM.

Assisted by four members of the Women's Land Army, 18 of the employees of the London Passenger Transport Board run the farm which supplies all the vegetable needs of the Board's catering services.

CASH DISPENSERS.

Assist Conductors in Giving Change.

Having been tried out thoroughly in service, the coin dispensers designed to assist conductors in giving change have been adopted by the Board for extended trial, and a manufacturing order for 300 is being placed.

As approved, the design consists of five cylinders for coins of the value of 1/-, 6d., 3d., 1d. and ½d., each cylinder with its spring working like the old sovereign cases now, alas! but a memory. The first dispenser was made of aluminium at the Preston workshops, and while satisfactory in operation was on the heavy side, 20 ozs. Nevertheless, half a dozen more were ordered so that they might be tried out thoroughly by the traffic staff. Conductors and conductresses alike reported strongly in favour of the dispenser which, they said, had several advantages over working from the pockets of the bag. Summarised, they found it faster in giving change, cleaner, reduced to the minimum the risk of giving too much or too little change, did away with fumbling for correct coins, and made paying in much quicker. In the latter connection, one conductress reported, "I have paid in while the others were thinking of it," while on the general aspect a conductor wrote, "I am very satisfied with it and would not care to work my change from the bag after using it."

"It is a big improvement in the way of giving change," said another conductor. "I notice this when a passenger hands me 1/- for a fare of 2d. Instead of having to grope in three different pockets of the bag, three flicks with the thumb and I have my change from the container, and it is just as easy to deposit the coins received into the appropriate cylinders."

It may be added that the machines to be ordered will be made of plastics, will weigh but 7½ ozs., and that their use during this extended test will be optional.

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GROOVED TRAMWAY RAILS.

The Broken Hill Pty. Ltd. has intimated that the preparation of all equipment to permit of the production of grooved tramway rails has now been completed, and that the first rolling will take place at the Hoskins Port Kembla Works on the 26th inst.

In view of the fact that grooved tramway rails have not been manufactured previously in Australia, and that the development was due to the action of the Chairman in inducing tramway authorities throughout Australia and New Zealand, and the Victorian Railway Commissioners, to join with the Board in guaranteeing an order for 11,000 tons, the Company invited a number of guests to witness the initial rolling, an invitation which has been accepted.

NEW ROUTE TO WILLIAM STREET.

After long delay due to the staff position, the new route from St. Kilda Road to Dudley Street at William Street via Queen's Bridge was opened for traffic on the 3rd inst., when the 10-minute service between St. Kilda and West Coburg commenced. The opening was inauspicious, a cold day reminiscent of June giving people no encouragement to travel to the beach. The following Sunday saw rain falling throughout the day. There is no doubt that in fine weather this service, giving as it does direct access to the beach from West Coburg, will be very popular.

On the 4th inst., 28 trams in the morning peak and 54 trams in the evening operated from Camberwell, Carnegie, East Malvern, East Brighton, Glen Iris and Toorak, and sensibly diminished the congestion in Swanston Street. Patronage was up to expectation, and has since grown. Doubtless the loading will improve still further as people become more familiar with the times.

BUT IT WASN'T A NEW BUS.

Under a double column heading "The Herald" gave prominence to a message from London proclaiming the first of buses of a new design for the London Passenger Transport Board.

The report was inaccurate. The bus was not new; it was, indeed, merely one of the Board's standard double-deckers which had been altered with the object of conducting the third experiment in the pay-as-you-enter systems. The first two have already been referred to in these columns, and the fact that the Board has gone to the expense of converting a third vehicle engenders the suspicion that the p.a.y.e. equipment, while doubtless perfectly satisfactory for a large town such as Cardiff is not being found so suitable for the conditions in London.

As for new buses—the word new meaning buses of post-war design—all our advice and information go to suggest that these will not be in production for some months to come. All buses which are being exported just now from England are of pre-war design.

RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue, the under-noted retiring gratuities have been passed by the Board:—

Ticket-Examiner F. W. Luxmore (60), service 41 years, £364; Con. W. J. Stapleton (49), 29 years, £336; Dr. H. W. H. Hawley (63), 26 years, £301; Dr. W. S. Manning (48), 22 years, £75; Messenger E. W. Guy (65), 37 years, £508; the late Senr. Inspector S. H. Bayfield, £624; Telephonist F. Moverley (65), 33 years, £448; Assist.-Roster Clerk S. Cole (48), 26 years, £292; Dr. Allen Newell (60), 25 years, returned soldier, £481; Con. G. Maconochie (62), 35 years, £406; Dr. J. F. G. Downie (61), 26 years, returned soldier, £487; Con. C. F. Cochrane (47), 22 years, £255; and Sig. B. H. Sneath (65), 32 years, £549

Death gratuities were paid in respect of Track Repairer F. J. Bombardieri (55), 27 years, £297; and Bodymaker L. S. Gunn (61), 28 years, £358.

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APPOINTMENT OF INSPECTORS.

The Way of Promotion is Open to All.

In the February issue of "The Tramway Record" the Brunswick correspondent wrote that "it would be very interesting to know just exactly how the Board appoints Inspectors," and he went on to wonder why it is that no Brunswick men have received promotion to Inspectorial rank for many years. Well, there is no secrecy about the method; in fact, it is so well known that we doubt whether the correspondent is as puzzled as he pretends to be about the subject.

Dealing with his wonderment over the fact that no Brunswick man has been made an Inspector for years, the explanation is undoubtedly that so few Brunswick men make application to sit for the examination which determines the appointments of Inspectors. Since the 6th September, 1940, only six have applied. One did not take the examination. The remaining five failed to secure the necessary marks. One of the five was subsequently appointed a depot starter.

Now for the method. Men who desire to attain the rank of Inspector make application to sit for the examination. Their names are entered in a register, and when vacancies occur on the Inspectorial staff they are summoned to Head Office to sit for the examination (one such examination is in progress as these lines are being written). A pass having been secured, suitability and seniority are then taken into account. That is all there is to it, and it will therefore be seen that a man's promotion depends entirely upon his ability to answer the simple queries comprised in the examination paper. A candidate, for instance, is asked to submit an accident report; he is invited to detail the orders he would give to remedy a traffic block

following upon an accident; he is expected to reveal a certain knowledge of equipment; and he will be called on to answer some questions involving arithmetical calculations. There are no traps; there is nothing in the paper to puzzle any man who has taken a live interest in his job and who has set out to acquire information with the object of becoming an Inspector. And if he fails at his first attempt he can always apply to sit again.

It may, of course, be argued that the trial by examination does not inevitably produce the best man, just as it has been noted frequently that the men who achieve the most brilliant passes do not always make the best surgeons, physicians, engineers or statesmen—the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill chronicles almost with glee that at Harrow he occupied bottom place in the same lowly form for five consecutive years!—but in favour of the system it can be said that it gives each man the same opportunity, and that the promotions which are the results of the examinations are consequently free from any individual preference.

ANOTHER ATTACK ON MELBOURNE'S TRANSPORT.

A Writer's Surprising Lack of Knowledge.

"Motor Digest"—probably few, if any, of our readers have ever heard of it—a small magazine put out by a Melbourne firm, published in its last issue an article from a motoring journal which, while purporting to be on the 40-hour week, was actually a silly attack on the transport provided for the metropolis by the Tramways Board and the Railway Commissioners, though we admit it was lightened by the unconsciously humorous concluding paragraph, which roundly declared that the only practical way to secure transport reform is

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to remove motor cars from the use of the Minister of Transport and the executives of the Railways and Board and the Railway and Tramway Unions. We confess we would like to see the faces of Mr. Brown and Mr. Abfalter when they learn that their grateful members provide them with motor cars!

The precise value of knowledge of transport possessed by the writer can be assessed on reading the following sentences:—

"Whilst the Railway Commissioners and the Tramways Board control the daily hours of thousands, nothing will be done, because they are not interested in the public welfare. Their job is to see that no one else is permitted to provide transport, and the Governments have learned to accept orders from the Railway Commissioners, the Railway Union, the Tramway Board and that Union."

Assertions like these would be funny if they were not so lamentably stupid. The Board and the Commissioners can only work within the limits of their respective Acts. We can give service only where authorised to do so. We cannot open a new bus route except on the recommendation of the Bus Advisory Committee and the approval of the Minister; we cannot make any new tramway route or extend an old one when the cost of the work exceeds £20,000. Projects over that amount must first be looked into by the Standing Committee on Public Works, and even if approved by that body have still to secure Parliamentary sanction in the form of a special Bill. The Board may desire to import a P.C.C. truck from the United States to serve as a model; but before it can do so it must first obtain the consent of the Commonwealth Treasurer and the Customs Department after the approval of the State Government has been secured.

ANOTHER P.A.Y.E. EXPERIMENT.

The search for a satisfactory pay-as-you-enter arrangement continues by the London Passenger Transport Board. The latest deals with a standard 70-seat six-wheel trolley bus with normal rear entrance which has been altered to a 64-seater with power-operated folding doors enclosing the rear entrance, while the platform has been redesigned and enlarged to provide a circulating area of considerable size. The latter is fitted with a pay desk, at which the conductor is seated in such a position that he commands a view of the platform and step.

Obviously finality has not been reached, for the operating manager described the altered vehicle as "just another phase in the Board's experiments." While no conclusions had been reached, he said

that he was inclined to think that the rear entrance was preferable to either the front or central entrance.

AMERICAN CROSSROADS.

A series of photographs of crossroads, published in "The Transport World," London, showing traffic scenes in Los Angeles, Boston, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and Washington. While the crossroads varied enormously in character, what struck us most about the photos was the fact that the only vehicles in sight were private motor cars and trams! The busiest intersection was that at Los Angeles, with 84,000 vehicles in a day.

TRAFFIC INCREASES IN UNITED STATES.

Figures prepared by the Highway Transport Department of the Office of Defence Transportation from the monthly statements of the American Transit Association show that the number of passengers dealt with by trams and buses and by the rapid transit lines last year advanced far beyond the record figures of 1944.

Analysing the traffic in five metropolitan areas—New York, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia and Los Angeles—the extraordinary fact emerges that the automotive capital of the world, Detroit, compared with 1940, has increased its tram traffic last year by 87 per cent., the highest increase recorded. The Philadelphia Transportation Company carried 65 per cent. more, the Third Avenue System and the Manhattan and Bronx Boroughs 44 per cent., Los Angeles 49 per cent., the Chicago Surface Lines 29, and the Chicago Rapid Transport 34 per cent.

NO TROLLEY BUSES FOR COLOMBO.

The Colombo Municipal Council has accepted the recommendation of its Standing Committee that it would be unwise for the Council to embark on the running of a trolley bus service. Such a venture, the Committee pointed out, would cost the Council about 4,500,000 rupees, which, together with the debt of 3,500,000 rupees already incurred in the purchase of the tramways, would involve the Council in serious financial difficulties.

CALCUTTA TRAMWAYS PRICE DISPUTE.

The dispute between Calcutta Corporation and the Calcutta Tramways Company over the proper purchase price for the tramway undertaking has been referred to an arbiter. This step followed the non-acceptance by the Company of the Corporation's offer of approximately £2,770,000.

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WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MOUSE?

Serious damage was done to the high tension switch and the sub-station cut out when a mouse ran across the 6,600 volt feeder to the sub-station from which the Middleton light railway of Leeds Corporation Transport Department draws its supplies.

The paragraph in "Modern Transport" chronicling the happening tells us how power was borrowed from another sub-station, that to avoid over-loading the trams were kept at least 100 yards apart, and that in addition emergency plans for the operation of a substitute bus service by another route were put into effect but—it does not say what happened to the mouse.

"MEAL FOR A MATE."

Remarkable Success of the Appeal."

Originating with Messrs. Mallon and Maynard, of the Medical Department, the idea of a "Meal for a Mate" in aid of the Lord Mayor's appeal for food for the sorely-trying people of Britain was taken up so enthusiastically, and was organised so effectively by the gentlemen named, in association with Messrs. Watson and Evans, of the Executive of the A. T. & M. O. Employees' Association, that on the appointed day last month the Board's staff of 5,800 contributed no fewer than 7,500 tins of food—1,500 tins beyond the objective.

Mr. T. Stiff, Head Office, designed an official receipt to be awarded the Depot showing the best result, and the work was so distinctive that the Chairman had it framed after being signed by himself and the Lord Mayor. With 1,039 tins Malvern secured the trophy, which now hangs in the library of that depot. Head Office was a close second, with Glenhuntly taking third place. In addition to the tins of food, over £16 was donated in cash.

The successful organisation of the appeal so impressed the Lord Mayor that he invited Mr. Maynard to act as hon. organiser of the Lucky Envelope Drive. The objective here is the sale of at least 50,000 envelopes, each of which will contain a voucher for a prize varying in value from 3d. to £50. As in a "Meal for a Mate," the Chairman is giving this appeal his strong support, and as a practical gesture has arranged for the necessary printing.

TRANSPORT IN HEIDELBERG.

Looking through a book of old cuttings recently, we came across the report of a meeting in Heidelberg in the year of grace 1885. The speakers

appeared to work themselves into a fine state of rage as they pictured other suburbs going ahead in the metropolitan area through better transport, forgetting doubtless that cable trams were being put down because the ratepayers of the municipalities concerned were willing to raise loans on the security of the rates in order to get a tramway system.

Sixty years have come and gone, and Heidelberg still has not got all the transport it desires. There is always, of course, quite a difference between what is desired and what is necessary; the two points rarely get within speaking distance for the reason that optimistic forecasts founded on local pride have never yet been realised in actual working.

Recently the agitation for additional transport in the area has once more become vocal. While the Board is sympathetic, it is compelled to recognise that with the electrification schemes already approved, plus the preparation, at the request of the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Kennelly), of special schemes for the extension of the Whitehorse Road line to Middlesborough Road, Box Hill, and the extension of the Burke Road line to Lower Heidelberg Road, Ivanhoe, via the Burke Road Bridge, the construction of a tramway from West Heidelberg is not just now possible. The Board has, however, intimated to the Council that it is prepared to apply for a bus route commencing in Waterdale Road at Altona Street, and travelling to High Street, Northcote, via Bell Street, Oriel Street, Kitchener Street, Livingstone Street and Darebin Street. That would give the new housing estate a fairly direct line of communication to the city, and if it developed there is little doubt that one day it would be electrified.

3/- AFTER TEN YEARS FOR ALL.

New Payment to Date from 27th November.

Many moons have waxed and waned since a Judge of the Arbitration Court awarded an extra 3/- per week to members of the traffic staff after 10 years' service. The A. T. & M. O. Employees Association never took kindly to the difference thus created between sections of their members; and, looking at the matter broadly, there did not appear to be any valid reason why drivers and conductors should be so recognised in the Award, while those who did work equally valuable in keeping the track open, or the overhead gear in order, or built the trams, or saw to the stores and wages, should be denied that recognition of their service.

However, all heartburnings can now cease, for,

following upon the acceptance of the offer made by the Board, all are now receiving the payment of 3/- per week. The retrospective payment to the 27th November last was made last week.

In due course, also, a uniform penalty rate of 10 per cent. to all non-traffic employees paid under the Tramway or other Awards (other than the Watchman's Determination) where they at present receive less than 10 per cent. for all work performed while on all-night shift commencing not earlier than 10.30 p.m. nor later than 12.30 a.m., will be put into force. This concession will be payable retrospectively to the 18th February last, and in addition to replacing the Award provision of 1/- per shift for continuous all-night shift in so far as non-traffic employees are concerned, will supersede the 15% extra now payable in certain cases to Per. Way employees on all-night work.

TAILORESSES WANTED.

Applications Invited from Conductresses.

Conductresses are a vanishing race nowadays. Although we all knew from the start that their employment was but a temporary expedient to overcome the shortage of staff caused by the absence of men with the Forces, everybody but the misogynists enjoyed their presence among us, just as, we like to think, they enjoyed being part of the undertaking. As they leave us, either voluntarily to take up that home life which the war interrupted or compulsorily so as to make room for the men returning from the Services, we hope that as well as our warmest wishes they will carry with them some pleasant memories of the days they put in so efficiently and charmingly when wearing the uniform of the Tramways Board. They can take with them also the knowledge that we consider they did a first-class job, and that we shall miss their cheerful presence. In all, 2,239 ladies donned our uniform.

At least some of those who worked previously in the tailoring trade can remain with us, to their profit and our content. Our Uniform Department is looking for hands. The work is highly paid and is performed amid congenial surroundings, while, of course, all the privileges enjoyed by the Board's employees of all degrees are the right also of the members of the staff of the Uniform Department, including that continuity of service which qualifies them ultimately for participation in the award for long service. Conductresses who used to be tailoresses are therefore invited to make application for employment in this direction to the Controller of Stores, Head Office, personally.

LONDON TRANSPORT.

Financial State of the Undertaking.

Transport men throughout Britain are wondering what the future holds for the London Passenger Transport Board. The financial position of the Board is far from happy, not, perhaps, wholly the fault of the Board but rather through the conflict of duty really imposed by the London Passenger Transport Act. That Act puts upon the Board the duty of extending and improving the facilities for passenger transport; it also enjoins the Board that it must conduct the undertaking in such a manner and fix such fares and charges as to secure that the revenue shall be sufficient to defray all charges.

It has been for some years all too apparent that the Board, in carrying out the former, has failed in the latter, for the unfortunate owners of "C" stock have never yet received their full dividend. The Board is now in default, while there is also some measure of default with the holders of the prior stocks, inasmuch as the Board has been unable to set aside any sum for redemption. By reason of the continued default, the "C" stockholders are entitled to apply to the High Court for the appointment of a receiver, or of a receiver and manager. The Committee appointed by the stockholders is now being pressed for a promise to take action as soon as this would be appropriate, which means as soon as the Government abandons control.

RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue, the under-noted retiring gratuities have been passed by the Board:—

Sig. B. H. Sneath (65), service 32 years, £549; Dr. J. H. W. Pritchard (35), 11 years, £127; Dr. L. K. Murphy (47), 25 years, £290; Tr. Rep. J. Callaghan (65), 34 years, £533; Tr. Rep. T. A. Middleton (65), 26 years, £487; Shed Lab. T. Mason (49), 21 years, £224; Pitman R. V. Maher (45), 28 years, £334; Dr. G. A. Tucker (53), 25 years, £290; Bus Dr. J. King (47), 20 years, £250; Con. A. C. Campbell (43), 21 years, £243; Dr. L. W. Phillips (46), 26 years, £301; Con. G. A. Dudgeon (52), 27 years, £313; Car Cleaner T. J. Coghlan (38), 10 years, £107; Dr. J. G. Hawkins (42), 11 years, £137; Tr. Rep. W. J. Anderson (67), 13 years, £226; Tr. Rep. F. Carrick (67), 36 years, £452; Tr. Rep. W. S. Brown (65), 25 years, £463; and Con. W. A. Dicker (62), 32 years, £371.

Death gratuities were paid in respect of the late Blacksmith L. G. D. Campbell (56), 26 years, £335; Mr. F. Powell (52), 28 years, £234; and Car Dr. F. C. Hutton (killed in action in H.M.A.S. Perth), £174, plus War Savings Certificates.

Tramway Topics

The Official Bulletin of The Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board

Volume 4

May, 1946

Number 37

SYDNEY'S TRANSPORT.

Commissioner on His Rolling Stock.

"Apart from 250 corridor-type tramcars added to the fleet in the years 1933-36, the rolling stock now in service is of the obsolete footboard type," candidly remarks the Commissioner for Road Transport and Tramways, Sydney, in his annual report, and from an earlier sentence than that quoted it is evident that three-quarters of the vehicles are now more than 30 years old. How has the rolling stock been allowed to get into such a condition? The answer to the question is surely found in the Commissioner's statement:—

"Provision for depreciation of tramway assets was made for the first time in the history of the tramways in the year ended 30th June, 1934, and such charges to the 30th June, 1945, amount to the substantial sums of £2,024,000 Metropolitan tramways and £171,000 Newcastle tramways. Depreciation accrued prior to the year 1934 has not been overtaken, and the capital liability is still in excess of the value of tramway assets."

£2,000,000 is certainly a large sum; but whether it is substantial or not can be decided only when it is regarded in relation to the value of the assets which are depreciating. Our practice, laid down by the Tramways Act, has always been to set aside so much per cent. on the capital value of the undertaking. Before the war it was approximately 6 per cent.; for the last five years it has been 9 per cent. On the same basis, the £2,000,000 referred to works out at but 2.376%, which is quite the reverse of substantial.

For the year which ended on the 30th June last, Sydney's trams, buses and trolley buses were run at a loss of £96,899. Explaining that unfortunate position, the Commissioner remarks that "the cost of providing road passenger transport is now higher

than the earning capacity of the services at the existing scale of fares, and the unsatisfactory financial trend will be aggravated in future because of large capital expenditure which will be necessary to provide new vehicles for the modernisation and improvement of existing transport facilities, thereby increasing the annual bill for interest. Depreciation charges will be heavier because of the present-day higher cost of equipment, and the amounts to be written off in respect of obsolete assets to be scrapped will be substantial."

An immediate effort is to be made to replace some of the antiquated rolling stock with modern vehicles. After examining the possibility of building trams at the Walsh Island dockyards, the State Government has found that the project would be too costly, and has called tenders for the construction of 200 trams. In addition, double-deck buses to the number of 245, to replace vehicles some of which are now 15 years old, have been ordered from England.

During the year, the trams in the Sydney area carried 404,630,000 passengers, buses 110,790,000, and trolley buses 7,357,000, the total of 522,777,000 representing an increase of 8,986,000 passengers over 1944. The revenue at £5,235,699 was £66,248 greater, but the working expenses advanced by £175,867, the proportion to working expenses to revenue being no less than 92.792% as against our figure of 63.159%. That meant that the Sydney undertaking was in the perfectly hopeless position of trying to provide non-operational expenses on but 7.208%.

CONFLICTING OPINIONS.

No. 2008, Malvern Depot, writing in "The Herald"—"Many of the officials, who possess very limited ability (especially the roster clerks), try to justify