

## Tramway Topics

### APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS.

Recent appointments and promotions—Official and Clerical Staff—are:—

F. J. Hutchison, Victoria Parade, Sub-Foreman; J. N. Cavanagh, Head Office, Conductor-Instructor; W. Ellis, Wattle Park, Curator; K. F. Lynch, Preston Workshops, Storeman (on probation).

### TRAINER DRIVERS.

#### Good Results Are Expected From New System.

Advertised throughout the service, the notice calling for applications for Trainer Drivers has brought a very large response, and the task of selection will therefore take a few weeks. In the near future, however, all the Depots, with the exception of Footscray (two), will have four permanent Trainer Drivers.

This departure, together with the new training syllabus, is the fruit of investigations and discussions over the last 18 months between the Chairman and his chief Traffic officers, and proceeded from the conviction that 99 per cent. of our driving difficulties were the result of inexperience. Under the new training syllabus, the trainee will have 96 hours' platform training under the one instructor, as against 72 hours, an alteration which should be of great benefit to the student and which should produce satisfactory results. Immediately after he qualifies, the trainee will be allotted three weeks' continuous driving—all Depot Masters will be instructed to adhere rigidly to this order, as continuity is the essential part of the plan—during which period he will come under the direct observation of his local Road Inspector on six occasions. For the following 23 weeks of his probationary period he will be reported on 12 times by the Inspector. From this careful nursing and from the 18 reports in six months, then, it should be known beyond doubt whether the trainee has the temperament and has acquired the qualifications necessary for good and safe driving.

The extended period of training, tuition by the one instructor throughout the training period, careful nursing and follow-up during the six months' probation—all these things combined will, it is expected confidently, eliminate a very high percentage of those accidents which have been so costly to, and wasteful of, our rolling stock.

### RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

During the last month, the undernoted retiring gratuities have been approved by the Board:—  
Elec. Fitter S. Thomas (65), 23 years' service, £688;  
Special Ganger F. A. Croxford (65), 28 years, £645;

Con. A. R. Prince (65), 36 years, £676; Shed Lab. E. N. Parsonage (61), Ret. Sol., 29 years, £528; Drvr. W. C. Newman (65), 29 years, £610; Tradesman W. G. Trafford (56); 31 years, med. unfit, £410; Drvr. L. H. Hellings (56), 30 years, med. unfit, £447; Con. L. Williams (46), 24 years, resigned, £95.

Death gratuities to the respective next of kin have been paid in relation to:—Track Repairer F. A. Rielly (60), 27 years' service, £302; Drvr. L. G. Alexander (58), 25 years, £367.

### THE RAILWAY TRAMS.

#### Alternatives Before the Sandringham City Council

Transport people generally were surprised when they learned that the Minister of Transport (Colonel W. S. Kent Hughes, M.V.O., M.C., M.L.A.) had advised the Sandringham City Council that three proposals relating to the future of the Sandringham-Black Rock tramway would be considered, viz.:—

- (1) Replacement by buses, as suggested by the Railway Commissioners;
- (2) Purchase by the Council; and
- (3) Purchase by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board of both the Black Rock line and the St. Kilda-Brighton Beach route on the basis of present assets, the Board to reconstruct both routes at its own expense, with provision for through routing between the two lines.

Since then the Board has been invited by the Railway Commissioners to express its views on the latter proposal, and will in due course do so.

### DISASTER TO LIVERPOOL TRAMS.

No fewer than 69 trams, most of them of the latest type, belonging to the Liverpool Corporation Transport Department, were destroyed recently by fire at the Green Land Depot.

There were 80 trams in the depot when one burst into flames. Only 11 had been run out of danger when a derailment occurred which blocked effectively the exit for the others.

### MONTE VIDEO TRAMS PURCHASED

Approval of the purchase of the British-owned Sociedad Comercial de Montevideo tramway undertaking at the price fixed when the agreement was signed last February, 11,700,000 Uruguayan pesos (£1,814,000), plus about 2,800,000 pesos (434,000) for other items, has been given by the Uruguayan Senate.

J. S. McClelland Pty. Ltd., 42-44 Lonsdale St., Melbourne.

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The Official Bulletin of The Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board

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### THE YEAR'S WORK.

#### Working Expenses Soar to Over £3,000,000.

From a traffic point of view, the fact that the revenue for the year which ended on the 30th June last declined by only £8,628—£3,839,016 as compared with £3,847,644 the previous year—shows that but for the 13-day strike in January last the record total of £4,004,000 for 1945-46 would have been exceeded. While tram revenue decreased by £108,106, the bus receipts went up by £99,478. The latter figure seems strange until it is remembered that the buses operated for 43 additional days during the year, as compared with 1946-47, when the buses were off the roads for nine days in October, 1946, and again for 47 days from the 23rd March, 1947, as against the 13 days from the 4th to the 16th January last.

Operating expenses reached a new "high" at £3,099,061, or no less than £335,798 above the 1946-47 total. The 40-hour week from January 4, the 5-day 40 hour week (from April 25, and rises in C.O.L. in August, November, February and May, together with the increases in marginal rates accounted for that huge jump. With the cost of the 5-day 40-hour week to be met continually, it is inevitable that there will be another substantial increase in working costs for the current year.

Despite the January stoppage, the mileage run increased by 1,005,145 and the passengers by 2,631,307 to 322,984,876. That number, however, is a long way below our record of 354,803,116 for 1944-45. If an increase of 2,500,000 passengers appears contradictory in view of the decline in revenue, it can be explained by pointing out that the stoppage of trains from the 14th April to the 8th May, 1947, was responsible for a marked increase in the

sale of 3d., 4d., 5d., 6d. and 7d. fares and a considerable decrease in the lower-priced fares. For the corresponding period in 1948, the lower fares increased to normal, while those of the higher denominations were back to their usual, the result naturally being that while the passenger total increased the revenue as a whole decreased.

The difference in the respective reliability as between the trams and buses was again in evidence. Defects caused the withdrawals from service of 4,083 trams and a loss of 194 miles; but 8,481 buses had to be withdrawn at a loss of 10,243 miles. Tram mileage loss per 1,000 miles was but .009, whereas for the buses it was 1.446. Included in the tram defect total was 177 for flat wheels. These figures indicate beyond any doubt that the handling of mass transport does not come within the scope of buses.

There was a big influx of both men and women to meet the new conditions imposed by the 40-hour 5-day week. On the 30th June, the traffic staff numbered 4,003, a net gain of over 500 compared with the previous year, and recruiting since that date has caused a further net increase. The advance meant a lot of work at the instruction schools of Hawthorn and the Central Bus Garage. At the former, 386 conductors took up the driving course, of whom 374 passed, while at the latter 153 out of 161 were successful. Initial tests were given to 173 applicants, and of these 147 were considered suitable for further training. At the Conductors' Training School, no fewer than 1,488, comprising 894 conductors, 310 conductresses, 63 ex-conductors and 221 ex-conductresses passed through the School. Of that total, 25 conductors and 13 conductresses retired during the training period, while 30 conductors and four conductresses failed. At the 30th June last our conductresses numbered 425.

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As the result of the activities of the Ticket Examiners, 24,984 irregularities were reported from the checking of 180,773 trips. The irregularities discovered comprised:—

Uncollected Fares .....	7,306
Passengers Over-riding .....	9,614
Journal Irregularities .....	4,670
Ticket Irregularities .....	1,236
Miscellaneous .....	2,158
	<hr/>
	24,984

Collisions with motor vehicles continue to be responsible for nearly one-half of the accidents in which our trams and buses are involved. Three of the motor accidents were particularly bad. In the first, a truck wrecked the off side of one of our trams, injuring 17 persons; in the second, another truck caused a collision which injured six of our passengers; while in the third a truck tore off the front of a tram and injured 37 passengers. In these three cases the material damage to the trams cost £840 to repair. The driver in the first case was convicted of having caused grievous bodily harm to six persons and was sent to prison for 12 months. Altogether, accidents cost the Board £32,000.

### HOW ABSURD!

Supervisor Maneuso, of the San Francisco transport services, wants to divorce the system from the jurisdiction of the Public Utilities Commission because, he says, "management should be in the hands of a recognised transport expert."

How absurd! Doesn't he know that all real transport experts are the peripatetic shoe factory accountants, auctioneers, architects, grocers, and so on, of each respective city? They are never conspicuously successful in their own spheres, it is true; but they know that all would be well with transport if only they were put in charge.

### ITEMS FROM BRITAIN.

Working expenses of the Nottingham City Transport Department last year absorbed 98.94% of the total income. On the trolleybus side, the expenses exceeded the income by £10,106. While the income averaged 22.120d. per mile, the expenses were 21.864d. per mile.

For last year Manchester Corporation Transport Department had the record revenue of £4,289,322. It is stated that the profit is insufficient to remove the necessity for another increase in fares.

Leeds Corporation Transport Department is con-

sidering a proposal to build a single-deck tram seated for 84 passengers.

Aberdeen Corporation Transport Department has applied for permission to increase the 1d. and 1½d. fares on the trams and buses by ½d.

Thanks to an increase in fares, Sheffield's Transport Department ended the year with a profit of £39,157, as compared with a loss of £146,416 the previous year. Tram operation recovered spectacularly. They returned a profit of £14,043, instead of a loss of £127,769.

### TRAMWAY BAND NEWS.

With only a few weeks left to complete their preparation for the South Street competition, bandsmen have devoted much of their leisure to practice, and have been training assiduously on the oval behind the Hawthorn Depot on Sunday afternoons.

With the resignation of Mr. W. May for business reasons, Mr. D. Roach has been appointed Bandmaster, and he has expressed satisfaction with the all-round progress which has been made recently.

Inspector C. Chamier, the Secretary, has completed a survey of equipment and uniforms, and the band should not be lacking in smart appearance on parade.

All this preparation has naturally been expensive, and there is little left in the band coffers. Consequently, the annual raffle assumes great importance. Tickets for the valuable prizes have been on sale for some weeks, but several depots have yet to be visited by sellers. The financial success of this raffle will do much to meet the commitments of the contest, and all in the service are asked to support this appeal.

### FOOD FROM MELBOURNE ARRIVES OPPORTUNATELY.

Members of the A. T. & M. O. Employees' Association who by their generous subscriptions made possible the purchase of 83 cases of casserole steak have now the satisfaction of knowing that the food could not have reached the old country at a more appropriate time.

A cable to the Secretary from the Food Controller tells the story:—"You will be interested to know that 40 cases of gift food stuffs kindly donated by Tramway and Motor Omnibus Employees' Association have been used to alleviate hardship occasioned by floods in Scotland."

The floods caused deplorably extensive damage to crops and disrupted communications to such an

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extent that the food had to be sent to the south of Scotland district concerned by aeroplane.

Out from Berwick-on-Tweed, the little villages in the vicinity of the river suffered very severely, and the arrival of the food was a blessing indeed. Many of the recipients have been so anxious to tell of their gratitude that they have gone to the expense of sending their letters by air mail. "My house was flooded when the river burst its banks and caused the worst flood since 1831," goes one note from Coldstream. "When I tell you that I am over 70 years of age and live alone you will understand how much this beautiful gift has meant to me." "I cannot tell you how much this generous gift and kind thought has meant to us," writes an Eyemouth lady, while several letters from Paxton tell of the delight and help occasioned by the parcels.

### LONDON'S EXTRAORDINARY TRAFFIC.

Remarkable statistics for the three months which ended on June 12 last have been published by the London Transport Executive. During that period, 1,097,000,000 passengers travelled on the Underground, trams, Diesel and trolleybuses and coaches, an increase of 10 per cent. over the previous highest figure for a corresponding period.

The rapidly-developing habit of travelling more at week-ends, one of the results of the 5-day week in industry, accounts for a large proportion of the increase. What has meant more leisure for many has therefore increased the work of the transport men, who in the first five and a half months of this year have operated some 11,000,000 miles of extra services despite the acute lack of new vehicles.

### APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS.

The under-noted appointments and promotions are notified:—

C. L. Steel, H.O., Asst. Design and Communications Engineer; H. Steele, H.O., Electrolysis and Lighting Engineer; J. W. Green, H.O., Stores Checker; C. E. Sheldrake, H.O., Stationary Storekeeper; and R. S. Stewart, South Melbourne Store, Senior Stores Clerk.

### NEW TRAMS FOR THE HAGUE.

Sixteen trams of a new type are being built for The Hague Tramways Company in order to increase the passenger load capacity of the system.

Weighing 18 tons 14 cwt., the tram has an overall length of 43 feet and a width of 7 ft. 2 ins. It has been designed to operate either as a single unit or with one or two trailers. As a single unit

the maximum speed is about 37 m.p.h. There are four braking methods—rheostatic, air, electromagnetic and hand. Double-ended, each side of the body has two double-sliding doors, and there are seats for 30 passengers and standing room for between 60 and 70.

### WHO ARE THE ROAD HOGS?

#### Trams Use Street Space Economically.

One of those egregious egotists who pop up periodically and for periods more or less brief succeed in giving a small section of the public the impression that they are experts in the field of transport, got himself headlines early in the month by calling trams "incorrigible road hogs."

Leaving the stupidity of the remark aside, let us, in the interests of knowledge, examine the street transport position as it is to-day and see which type of vehicle is of the most efficient user of street space. It is important to remember that the object of street surface transport is to move people, not vehicles. From that point of view you are faced with the fact that motor cars carry on the average 1.7 passengers per car. That is a consistent and persistent world-wide figure; you get it whether you take your check on Princes Bridge, in Regent Street, London; at Piccadilly, Manchester, in Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow; in Fifth Avenue, New York; or on the Michigan Boulevard, Chicago.

Between 5 and 6 p.m. on any week evening it is possible for 750 motor cars to pass through Swanston Street. Use that figure of 1.7 passengers per car, and you find that these private vehicles are taking only a little over 1,000 people out of the city, whereas during the same period approximately 120 trams are taking from 14,000 to 16,000 people home. In terms of persons transported, then, the tram is an extremely economical user of street space, while the private car squanders it extravagantly, and by their numbers cause acute congestion to the detriment of all other users of the road.

### THE LA TROBE STREET EXTENSION.

Work on the extension which will link up Victoria Parade with Spencer Street commenced on the 20th September, when the excavator got busy on what will be the open ballast portion of the track in Victoria Parade to Spring Street.

When that has been completed, the making of the track along La Trobe Street will begin at Spencer Street.

Pole erection has been proceeding since the 13th September.

## OUR CLOTHING FACTORY.

Our clothing factory at the Hawthorn Depot functioned most efficiently last year, and turned out no fewer than 13,879 complete uniform garments, while 38,666 component parts for uniforms were manufactured for stock.

Included in that total of 13,879 were 4,602 pairs of trousers, 2,352 tunics, 1,776 summer jackets, 1,471 Khaki coats, 1,150 overcoats, 575 brown coats and skirts, 233 conductresses' overcoats, 224 overalls, and 197 blue overalls.

## PRESTON WORKSHOPS.

In addition to completing 10 S.W.6 trams and almost finishing 13 bus bodies (most of these would have been available for traffic but for the slow deliveries of certain fittings), the staff at the Preston Workshops dealt with 823 trams, either on the maintenance and overhaul schedules or for accident repairs. The latter numbered 214, which was a decrease of 44 compared with 1946-47.

There was, of course, much other work carried through. As opportunity offered, for instance, the position of windscreen wipers on 266 of the W.2 trams was improved, 397 conductors' bells were altered to reduce "ring," seven A class trams were re-converted to two-man operation, grinders, steam rollers and compressors were overhauled, a new cash van body was built, and many things were manufactured for the undertaking. The output of the foundry amounted to 83,633 lbs., mostly castings.

The value and importance of systematic overhaul and maintenance is reflected in the fact that the average number of trams available for traffic at the peak period was 93.65% of the total stock.

## WATTLE PARK GOLF COURSE POPULAR.

During last year the golf course at Wattle Park was more popular than ever, the number of tickets sold reaching to the enormous total of 43,583. There can be few courses in the State which can show a daily average of 119 players throughout the year.

## TOIL ON THE TRACKS.

During the year which ended on the 30th June last, the Per. Way Department constructed 1,892 feet of single track, 1,225 feet of which was the Glenhuntly Road duplication between Mernda Avenue and Truganini Road, and reconstructed 9,950 feet.

Surface patching alongside the tracks was done

over a length of 214,277 ft. d.t., and rail grinding for the removal of corrugations over 17,565 ft. of single rail. Rail scrubbing was carried out over 382 miles of single track, the track cleaning cars covered 13,644 miles, while the Lewin mechanical track sweepers cleaned 9,390 miles.

## HOW THE MONEY COMES IN.

Fares by cash and ticket numbered 322,982,424 last year, and it may interest readers generally to take a look at some of the details:—

½d. (swimming)	188,774
1d.	15,487,367
1½d.	14,600,576
2d.	115,449,880
2½d.	1,149,886
3d.	99,672,162
4d.	37,704,597
5d.	20,888,904
6d.	14,098,659
7d. (bus)	55,477
8d. (bus)	788,667
9d.	24,711

It will be noticed that the 2d. fare maintains its predominant position, more than one-third of the total fares being of that value. When the 3d. fares are added, it is found that the 2d. and 3d. passengers constitute fully two-thirds of the people carried, while fully three-quarters of the total passengers are found in the group of fares ranging from ½d. to 3d.

## RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

Only one retirement through resignation is noted in the list given below:—

Rev. Clerk F. J. Murdoch (65), 39 years' service, £504; Con. H. F. Benson (54), 28 years, med. unfit, £417; Painter's Lab. J. V. O'Connor (65), 40 years, £640; Pit. Labourer W. J. Shark (61), 40 years, med. unfit, £544; Drvr. J. F. Marshall (60), 28 years, Ret. Soldier, £640; Draughtsman J. H. Dawson (65), 25 years, £942; Con. S. A. Need (44), 20 years, resigned, £96; Drvr. W. J. Vessey (52), 27 years, med. unfit, £342; Rev. Clerk D. Yeoward (52), 26 years, med. unfit, £374; Drvr. A. J. McAuliffe (46), 24 years, med. unfit, £357; Drvr. E. E. Sharpe (65), 44 years, £759; and Car Cleaner F. H. H. Noble (59), 23 years, med. unfit, £300.

Death gratuities to the next of kin have been paid as follows:—Con. E. Hodge (61), 32 years' service, £470; Con. G. F. Lynch (56), 26 years, £382; Tradesman's Asst. J. F. O'Callaghan (53), 29 years, £364; and Drvr. J. P. H. Holmes (59), 31 years, £417.

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Number 62

## MELBOURNE'S TRAM FARES.

### Existing Levels to be Maintained.

### Contract for Bourke Street Next Year.

With Sydney unable to meet in full its interest and sinking fund charges, with every other transport undertaking in the Commonwealth having increased its fares, and with passenger transport charges having increased all over the world from 25 up to as much as 110 per cent., the Melbourne Tramways Board, thanks to the imaginative foresight which resulted in the accumulation of most substantial reserves during the war years, and thanks also to the Board's firm and unwavering adherence to the belief that the tram is beyond question the vehicle for mass transport is alone in being able to announce that the present fare levels, which are actually less than they were 13 years ago through the adoption of the maximum fare of 6d., are to be maintained.

Transport fares are no inconsiderable item in the family budget, and therefore it was easy to appreciate the relief felt in many thousands of homes over the announcement, following as it did immediately the public had been shocked with the intimation of another substantial rise in the price of gas. As for the bus maniacs, they might reflect—even if reflection is strange to them—that had the Board yielded to their uninformed clamour and started to replace trams by buses fares would long ere this have bounded upwards. As a matter of sober and unchallengable fact, it has been the heavy losses incurred by the buses which has prevented the possibility of lower fares. Those losses, which have in the aggregate involved hundreds of thousands of pounds—the debit last year alone was £182,924—have had to be found by the successful and dependable tram.

In this connection, "Truth" earlier in the month dealt pointedly and drastically with the few people,

most of whom speak through their pockets, who yearn for buses. "Prattlers, town planning theorists, and world travellers," wrote "Truth," "who return home as world unravellers on any nominated subject, would bring quick chaos to the street transport system of Melbourne if their persistent and monotonous advocacy of the scrapping of trams and their replacement by buses gained ground. In their short-sighted and ill-informed clamour they would wreck one of the best-run tramway undertakings in the world, quoted overseas as a model in many respects, and replace it with a bus system which is uneconomical, incapable of moving vast crowds swiftly, a failure in Sydney, and already a failure where it has been tried in Melbourne.

"Only the obduracy of the Chairman of the Tramways Board (Mr. H. H. Bell) and expert Government advisers, who know more of the problem than the car-travelling critics, have saved Melbourne from the pipe-dreamers and prattlers so far. Their plans, indeed, to wipe out the expensive and inefficient buses in Bourke Street and to relay tram tracks, and to put down another lateral line in Latrobe Street, are to be highly commended. Plain facts are all that is needed to place beyond doubt the suitability of trams as the only sound system of street transport for Melbourne."

Since that quotation appeared the Board has decided to call for tenders for the Bourke Street line as soon as the huge specifications have been completed, and hopes that it will be able to place the contract soon after the Royal visit to Melbourne next year has concluded. An estimate prepared nearly five years ago showed that the work would cost something like £944,000. Since then, as we all know, wages and the cost of living allowance have alike soared to such a degree that the expense of the electrification cannot now be less than well over £1,000,000.

### SYDNEY'S STREET TRANSPORT Goes Deeper Into The Financial Mire.

#### Fares To Be Higher.

With each passing year the Department of Road Transport and Tramways, N.S.W., sinks deeper into the financial mire. For the year which ended on the 30th June last the Department chronicled the record deficit of £675,890.

Thanks to the increased fares, the Sydney tram and bus services reports the Auditor-General (Mr. E. H. Swift), earned £1,598,625 more than in 1946-47, but against that large sum the operation, maintenance and administration charges increased by £1,616,011. At Newcastle, the revenue showed an advance of £149,952 while the charges went up by £150,076. The result was a deficiency of £601,657 for Sydney and a debit of £74,233 for Newcastle. (How very glad the Newcastle Corporation must be that it did not persist with the idea to purchase the worn-out system!)

"So straitened have the cash resources of both undertakings become," states Mr. Swift, "following a series of heavy losses, that neither was able to meet its full obligations for interest charges or to pay its sinking fund contribution. Since the close of the year advances have been made by the Treasurer to supplement the funds of the undertakings and enable them to meet current commitments."

Discussing this lamentable state of affairs, the "Sydney Morning Herald" expresses the opinion that "the core of the trouble is to be found in the policy of political meddling," and that the demoralisation in the undertaking "began in 1944-45 immediately after it had been brought under Ministerial control. Since then, discipline has become notoriously lax, service to the public has been bad, and costs have risen by leaps and bounds." According to the newspaper, higher costs might have been covered by increased revenues "had not the Government so readily lent itself to the union policy of wringing every possible concession out of a department which is no longer being run primarily for the benefit of the public. Mr. Swift notes, for example, that the cost of providing employees and their families with cheap railway fares now amounts to £124,000 compared with £60,000 in 1944-45."

Apparently the only expedient likely to be adopted is the futile one of increasing fares once more—futile because it will drive customers into procuring their own transport and because it leaves the various causes of the financial mess untouched. Anyway, the "Herald" reports that the Minister is asking the Government to raise all tram and bus

fares by 1d. a journey, exclusive of the first section, which was raised to 3d. more than 15 months ago, and to impose "penalty" fares for Sunday travel.

Still, there is one bright speck in the prevailing gloom—the "honesty" boxes, installed fully 12 months ago, have yielded £150! At this rate they will soon pay for their construction and installation.

#### SCIENTIST OR BAKER?

From the financial point of view, is it better to be a baker or a scientist?

It looks as if the London Transport Executive favours the man of dough, for recently it called for applications for two positions. One of these invited applications from bakers who have a thorough knowledge of modern bakery plant and processes, and the other for a scientific assistant who must have a First or Second Class Honours degree in Physics or Engineering and whose duties would embrace the review, co-ordination and development of research and experimental work, much of it electrical.

For the baker, the salary offered is from £800 to £1,000; for the scientist, from £700 to £800.

#### TROLLEYBUSES OUT OF FAVOR.

Although the Melbourne Tramways Board is often advised by letter-to-the-editor gentlemen to "wake up" and put in trolleybuses, it is evident that the people who have them do not seem to regard them with any great favour. Before the war, for instance, Wolverhampton, the first all trolleybus city, decided that all future extensions to its transport system should be served by Diesel buses. Chesterfield went further and scrapped their installation, while London Transport, after proceeding quite a way in converting tram routes to trolleybus operation reversed that policy last year and decided to have Diesel buses.

Now, Darlington is considering a proposal to convert the municipal trolleybus undertaking to buses, being encouraged in this idea by the British Transport Commission, which has intimated that such a change-over would assist the Commission in introducing an area transport scheme.

Although there have been trolleybuses in Britain since 1912, they have made but little headway; in fact, if London Transport had not started using them the number of such vehicles to-day would not have exceeded greatly the total in existence 25 years ago, while coming nearer home, we have not seen any suggestion that the small installations in Sydney and Adelaide should be increased.

It is safe to say that if ever Sydney embarks upon a scheme of modernisation, the trolleybus routes will vanish.

#### LONDON'S POOR BUS FLEET.

So parlous is the state of the bus fleet of the London Transport Executive that the matter gave rise to a debate on the adjournment before the House of Commons rose for the summer recess.

In the course of his reply, which might well be studied by the leader writer of "The Sun," the Minister of Transport admitted that the net gain to the fleet in eight years had been but 320 buses whereas it ought to have been 3,800, and that of the 7,000 odd buses operating 3,500 were over 12 years and 1,800 over 16 years old!

Shortage of steel for local requirements due to the clamant necessity for exports is the explanation of the fact that London Transport cannot get the 1,000 buses it needs so urgently. Sir Wavell Wakefield, "as Chairman of the largest company in the country producing double-deck buses," advised the Minister to examine carefully the new British mineral wagon being produced in large numbers from mild steel. If it were re-designed in high tensile low alloy steel, he said, there would be a saving of from one to one and a quarter tons of steel per truck, and that saving could be allocated to bus production.

#### TRAM AND BUS FARES.

##### Inaccurate Assertion by Association's Secretary.

It is strange how frequently, though doubtless inadvertently, the Secretary of the A.T. & M.O. Employees' Association succeeds in misrepresenting the Board. The latest instance is contained in the current issue of the "Tramway Record." In an article on "Should Tram Fares be Raised?" he wrote:—

"Apparently the Board are (sic) not as sure now as they (sic) were in January, when they said it would be essential for a 1d. increase in fares because the employees won the 5-day week, but 9 months later they (sic) are still considering it, so apparently it is not so essential to-day as it appeared 9 months ago."

No one knows better than the Association's Secretary that neither in January, nor in any other month, did the Chairman, or the Board, make any such statement. The reply of the Chairman in January to statements in the Press that fares would be raised was the laconic remark that the subject "will be considered." On the 2nd April he intimated that the Board had had the matter under review and had resolved to postpone consideration until after the close of the financial year, "when

the actual cost of the 5-day 40-hour week would be known." Between that date in April and the 11th October when the Board met specially to consider the analysis of the year's operations and examine the estimates of revenue and expenditure for the current year, deciding finally to make recommendations to the Government, the only statement by Mr. Bell on the subject of fares was the description of "pure guesswork" applied to various reports on different dates in the Press. These varied from the forecast that fares were to be raised ½d., by 1d., that it would not be necessary to raise all fares as 1d. would yield £1,500,000, "more than twice as much as is needed." that it was doubtful whether fares would be increased, to lastly the forecast in "The Sun" that "fares are not likely to be increased."

As these three statements—the subject will be considered, consideration has been postponed, and pure guesswork—were the sole references made to the matter by the Chairman, it will be seen that the allegation that intimation had been made that a 1d. increase "would be essential" is just a rather stupid invention.

#### THE BAND AT WATTLE PARK.

Arrangements have been made for the Tramways Band to give recitals at Wattle Park on the under-noted dates:—

14th November, 12th December, 9th January, 6th February, 8th March, 3rd April—3 to 5 p.m. Just note those dates, and if you have an Interstate visitor staying with you make a point of showing him, or her, the Park. A Perth gentleman after the lapse of 25 years spent a Sunday afternoon in the Park early this month and was good enough to telephone us his opinion, that the Park is now one of the most beautiful places he has seen in Australia.

#### MADRAS TRAMWAY DEAL.

Madras Municipal Corporation has decided to exercise its option and purchase the British-owned Madras Electric Tramways (1904), Limited.

The price, yet to be arranged, is payable in gold either in Madras or in London.

#### 121 DECIDE FOR 6,000.

##### But a Ballot Vote Favors Sunday Trams.

Some weird things are done in Sydney. Towards the end of last month a "mass" meeting of the nearly 6,000 members of the A.T. & M.O. Employees' Association was called to consider a recommendation from the Executive that trams should be manned on Sundays, and that buses should

operate where sufficient tram staff was not available. A full Sunday tram service requires a staff of 1,700 but only 1,000 are obtainable, and so for 10 weeks Sydney had been tramless on Sundays.

The "mass" meeting saw an attendance of 230, and of these 121 voted against the Executive's recommendation while 109 were in favour of it.

The Conciliation Commissioner then stepped in and ordered the men to work as rostered. Another "mass" meeting was held on the 1st October, and this time 493 turned up. Again the Executive's proposal that the men should work as ordered was rejected, the majority against on this occasion being 35. Two days later Sydney had its twelfth consecutive tramless Sunday.

The narrow majorities (12 and 35) by which the recommendation had been turned down by the "mass" meetings inspired the Executive to take a ballot vote on the 8th October. Even then not two-thirds of the members voted, the exact number being 3,777. By a majority of 779 the men resolved to "man the trams on Sunday to the full extent of the man-power available, and where man-power is not available, buses to run full alternative services."

What the public wanted to know when it was all over was why was it necessary to wait 12 weeks before ascertaining the views of the great mass of the members of the Union instead of permitting microscopical minorities to flout the judgment of the Executive.

#### A GRAND EFFORT BY PRESTON.

A Preston Workshops correspondent writes:—

"It may be of interest to you and also to other groups of tramway employees engaged in the movement to send food parcels to Britain to know that the Engineering Department has a weekly contributory scheme in operation. In the last 55 weeks £250 has been subscribed, and that sum has meant 331 parcels. Now, what about a little rivalry between Departments and Depots for the benefit of a very needy cause?"

#### AN ENGINEER'S TRIBUTE.

On the 10th October Sydney "Truth" published an article in which it analysed, and praised, the operations and results of the Melbourne Tramways Board, contrasted these with those of Sydney, and said:—If the State Government scrapped its outdated policy of re-placing trams with buses and took a leaf out of Melbourne's book it would soon make transport in Sydney a payable proposition. Modern and comfortable trams are the answer to the transport problem—not buses and higher fares as is proposed in Sydney." The article inspired

Mr. C. W. Keele, formerly Chief Civil Engineer of the N.S.W. Department of Road Transport and Tramways, to telegraph our Chairman in the terms given below:—

"Disclosure here your finances and policy of trams superceding buses contrasts greatly with our system. Congratulations on achievement. My experiences abroad reveal Melbourne's tramways the equal of the world's best."

#### WAS THE STREET QUIZ ON TRAMS FAKED?

"The Sun" never very scrupulous when dealing with trams, wasted a lot of space on the 14th October by publishing what it alleged was the result of a street "quiz" on trams, buses or trolleybuses for Bourke Street. At the corner of Russell and Bourke Street, it was stated, 12 people were questioned, and of these only one favoured trams, with six not interested.

The reporter worked in happy ignorance that his questioning was being noted by a member of the Board's staff and also a member of the A.T. & M.O. Employees' Association. Twenty people were approached, not 12 as stated by "The Sun," and the results were:—

Not interested 6,

Against trams 5.

In favour of trams 9.

Comment from us is unnecessary.

#### RETIRING GRATUITIES.

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

Drvr. F. L. Johnson (40), resigned, £81; Con. C. H. G. Turner (65), 43 years' service, £648; Depot Starter W. L. McLaren (61), 34 years, medically unfit, £584; Drvr. A. W. Gooch (48), 24 years, med. unfit, £357; M.O.'s Clerk R. E. Mellon (49), 24 years, resigned, £121; Med. Dept. Clerk L. S. Maynard (45), 14 years, resigned, £102; Con. E. J. Fox (61), 40 years, med. unfit, £417; Gardener D. B. Watson (53), 25 years, med. unfit, £356; Track Repairer G. Hayman (63), 22 years, med. unfit, £233; Con. L. W. Franzi (49), 24 years, med. unfit, £268; and Machine Shop Foreman H. R. S. Kohry (64), 26 years, £1,008.

#### APPOINTMENTS.

The following appointments are notified for information:—

M. F. McDermott, Per. Way, Special Ganger; A. W. Capp, H.O., clerk; R. G. Baker, H.O., Stores Clerk; and A. E. Villiers, H.O., Medical Officer's Clerk.

# Tramway Topics

The Official Bulletin of The Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board

Volume 6

November, 1948

Number 63

#### THE TOWER WAGGON FATALITY. Attention Directed to a Mandatory Rule.

The tragic accident in Mount Alexander Road, Flemington, on the 8th November, which resulted in the death of Mr. E. C. Jackson (36), and in injuries to two other employees of the Board, ought to imprint upon the minds of all tram drivers the imperative necessity for unrelaxing vigilance.

It is bad enough to lose a loyal and efficient employee at any time; it is a great deal worse when death steps in suddenly and unexpectedly and cuts off a life which had scarcely entered its prime, depriving a home of its breadwinner and the Board of a good and trusted employee. With the Coroner's inquest still pending, it would not be proper at this stage to make any comment on the circumstances which led to one of our trams crashing into the stationary tower waggon; but it is permissible to direct the attention again of all drivers to the fact that Rule 163, stopping 100 ft. from a tower waggon and not proceeding until given the all-clear signal from the waggon, is mandatory, and must be obeyed. No infraction of the rule will be tolerated; will, indeed, lead to instant dismissal.

A tower waggon is not what could be termed an inconspicuous vehicle; any tram driver who cannot see it while yet hundreds of feet away ought not to be driving. To direct further pointed attention to it, however, and to prevent, short of criminal negligence, any recurrence of such a fatality, the Chairman has, after a conference with Mr. Williams, of the Electrical Trades Union, and two delegates, arranged for the display of a large disc, suspended from the span wire, 100 ft. from where the waggon is stationary, bearing the words

S T O P!  
TOWER WAGON  
ON LINE

The tram driver will keep his vehicle at that point until given the signal to proceed.

The absence of this notice on any occasion will not relieve the driver of his responsibility to stop in accordance with rule 63.

While it is a fact that accidents to tower waggons during recent years have all taken place in daylight, the Chairman has instructed the Distribution Engineer to investigate immediately types of lights which will illuminate the waggon without having the tendency to dazzle the men working on the overhead.

#### OUR PROFITABLE TRAMS.

Everyone, except those who profess to believe that the bus is the final answer to a transport prayer, knows that it is financially more profitable to use trams for mass transport than buses because of their greater earning capacity and lower maintenance costs; but it is not likely that many of our readers are aware just how great is the discrepancy between the two vehicles. An analysis, based on the actual figures for the eight years which ended in the 30th June last, shows that the trams of the Melbourne Board operated at a profit of £1,008,939 while the buses achieved a loss of £715,458. The average amount of revenue brought in per tram was £4,146 as compared with the average for the bus of £2,316.

The effective, economic life of a tram is at least 25 years as against the seven years of the bus. After some years, as the Board has found from painful experience, bus maintenance costs rise to nearly 5d. per mile while those for the tram are just a shade over 3d. per mile. If we take the capital cost of a tram at £6,000 and a bus at £4,000—the latter figure is a good bit less than buses are costing to-day but it is nice, round figure for calculation!—and basing an estimate on

the revenue figures shown for 1948, we find that the total earnings during the effective life of each vehicle would be £103,650 for the tram and only £16,212 for the bus, while the percentage of capital cost to total earnings would be but 5.8 per cent. for the tram but 24.8 per cent. for the bus.

Suppose we take the comparison further and apply the figures for the conversion of the Bourke Street-Nicholson Street-Northcote lines to electric traction with the capital cost which would be incurred were bus services continued, the conversion would involve about £1,050,000, and with our usual maintenance the equipment would last from 25 to 30 years. Were buses to be continued, however—and the point should be noted by those who prate so blithely and stupidly about the alleged advantage the bus has over the tram in capital expenditure—the vehicles would have to be replaced four times during the course of the effective tram life, the result being a total capital expenditure over the years on new buses of £1,872,000. Over the 28-year period, therefore, the difference in favour of trams on the capital expenditure side alone would be no less than £822,000.

No wonder the Secretary of the Chamber of Automotive Industries is so very perturbed over the announcement that the Board will call for tenders for the Bourke Street contract next year! Just think of the juicy profit there would be in orders for buses worth £1,800,000, and remember that the oil and rubber interests would also be very much present for their modest share, and contrast that picture with trams made in Australia by Australian workmen out of Australian materials and run on power produced a Yallourn, the bill for which this year will be approximately £250,000.

### ANCIENT TRAMS IN GERMANY.

Owing to the serious shortage of trams in the large devastated cities of Germany, vehicles anything between 50 and 70 years of age have been resurrected pending the construction of new rolling stock. For instance, at Wuppertal, trams of the 1877 vintage are in use while at Brunswick 54 of the cars are over 50 years old.

But the carrying capacity is still there, for it is chronicled that the number of passengers being carried at present is almost double the 1938 total.

### OUR ALL-NIGHT SERVICES.

#### As Usual, They Were Run At A Loss.

Although our all-night tram and bus services are a great convenience to many people, they are, in common with all-night services everywhere, anything but a profitable section of the undertaking. Actually, for the year which ended on the

30th June last, they showed a loss of £45,772. Here are some of the details:—

	Trams	Buses
Miles	665,522	92,822
Passengers	1,544,879	188,716
Revenue	£38,237	£4,037
Revenue per mile	13.789d.	10,438d.

As the day revenue per mile is 33.916d. for the trams and 22.727d. for the buses, it will be seen that the all-night traffic follows on similar lines. Mileage, passengers and revenue were naturally less for trams because of the strike; but the bus figures rose as these for the year were run on 47 additional days compared with 1946-47. The three tram routes most used were those to Carnegie, Essendon and East Brighton with 129,000, 117,000 and 106,000 passengers respectively, while the bus routes were headed by Northcote with 91,000 passengers. Heidelberg came second with 47,000.

### A TRIBUTE FROM SYDNEY!

"So while Sydney's transport authorities struggle with the problem of making its tram routes pay, and the N.S.W. Cabinet passes to Caucus the buck of increased fares, in Melbourne somehow the Tramways Board manages to operate an efficient, regular comfortable and courteous service, economically and at no strain to the public which uses it."—*"Sydney Morning Herald."*

### PASSENGER TRANSPORT IN U.S.

#### Most Concerns are Operating at a Loss.

That unique transport publication, the 1948 edition of the Transit Fact Book of the American Transit Association, has been issued, and presents, as usual, a complete picture of the industry in the States for the year which ended on the 31st December, 1947.

Perhaps the outstanding fact revealed is that all the reporting rapid transit, bus, subway, tram and trolleybus undertakings used up no less than 89.07 per cent. of their revenues in operating expenses. With taxes alone absorbing another 7.54 per cent., the net surplus out of which to meet all other charges and a return on the capital investment sank to 3.39 per cent., the lowest ratio in the last 16 years; in fact, if subways and elevated railways are ignored, there was actually a deficit of 2.03 per cent. interest and rentals had been paid in spite of almost record revenue and passenger totals.

During the year, the wages paid increased by 77,000,000 dollars, bringing the average annual earnings by employees up to 2,970 dollars, the equivalent of £700 a year sterling, or £875 Australian. It should be remembered, however, that

one-man operation is almost general. In the war years it was not possible to get many new vehicles, and the rolling stock everywhere depreciated alarmingly. Last year new vehicles added to the fleets totalled 13,612 units, of which no fewer than 11,610 had to be used as replacements, leaving only a net gain of 2,002 units.

One comparison which can be made between the States and Britain reflects the difference that can be made in public transport by the use of the private motor car. Great Britain has a population of some 50,000,000 and has 60,000 buses, trams, trolleybuses and coaches. The States, with a population of 140,000,000 has, excluding express coaches and school buses, only 1,000 more vehicles

### DRASTIC SYDNEY FARE INCREASES.

#### Aim is to Secure £1,080,000 Additional Revenue..

Only in the United States now can fares for street transport be found which exceed those of Sydney. This result follows the intimation by the Minister for Transport (Mr. O'Sullivan) in the Legislative Assembly that it had been decided to increase all tram and bus fares by 1d. on each section except the first, which was raised to 3d. last year, and an additional 1d. on all sections at night and at week-ends. The following table contrasts the new fares with the old:—

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Old fares	3d.	4d.	5d.	6d.	7d.
New fares					
Mon. to Fri.					
4 a.m. to 8 p.m.	3d.	5d.	6d.	7d.	8d.
8 p.m. to 4 a.m.	4d.	6d.	7d.	8d.	9d.
Satds. & Suns.	4d.	6d.	7d.	8d.	9d.

These astounding figures have shaken the Sydney public, and the Press had added fuel to the fire by pointing out that Sydney's first section fare after 8 p.m. is now 100 per cent. more than in Melbourne, while the maximum fare at 9d. is 33 per cent. higher. It is emphasised also that long bus journey which used to cost 7d. and 8d. are to be increased by 3d., which will bear heavily on the workers who have made their homes in the districts served by those buses. The hope is that all those additions will in a full year realise £1,086,000 extra revenue, and that the Department will thus be able to meet all charges without aid from the Consolidated Revenue of the State. Apparently that hope is not shared by the *"Sydney Morning Herald."* Gloomily it remarks that there is no "reason to expect that even these exactions will prove the last," and that a deficit for the current year is still expected while "expenditure is rising as fast as ever."

The statement by the Minister gives no indication that any attempt is being made to rectify the various causes listed by the Press as the reason for the deplorable situation of the undertaking. In stead Mr. O'Sullivan indulged in a miracle of under-statement when he said he was prepared to admit that "some of our trams do not measure up to the requirements of the people." "The Sydney corridor tram," the speaker proceeded, surprisingly, "is the equal if not better than the Melbourne tram, which has only one entrance." Probably he does not know that that tram over which he is so happy is a copy of our W 5, and that our Head Designer spent weeks in Sydney with his blue prints altering details to conform to the ideas of the engineers of the Department. Actually the only alterations made of any importance were that entrances were provided at each end in addition to the central entrance, and that all three are much narrower than the doorways in our W 5. Our S.W. 5 and S.W. 6 trams which were inspected at our Workshops and which made such an impression that our Chairman was asked to build one for Sydney—a proposal which could not be carried through as it was found that its length was too great for the Sydney curves—has always had two large automatic sliding doors on each side, not one as stated in the Legislative Assembly.

### FOOTSCRAY-MELBOURNE BUS ROUTE.

At the moment of writing, no date has been fixed for the commencement of the bus service between Footscray and Melbourne, as discussions over the weight limits for the bridges have not concluded. Meantime, the new direct route between Footscray and Sunshine has been opened, though service on the old route is continuing at hourly intervals.

### RISING OPERATING EXPENSES.

#### U.S. Find Increased Fares Unsatisfactory.

Transport operators in the United States are vastly perturbed over the fact that the operating expenses to-day are greater than the total amount of revenue collected in pre-war days. We should say that that is a world-wide experience. Here in Melbourne, for instance, our operating expenses last year reached the record figure of £3,099,061, which is just £794,115 more than the total traffic revenue for the year which ended on the 30th June, 1939.

What is more important, however, for the immediate present is that the general increase in fares in the United States—the authorities in Sydney might note this—has not proved the easy way out of the difficulties caused by the marked rise in wages and the soaring cost of rolling stock and

## Tramway Topics

materials. When the proposals raising the flat fares from 5 to 7 cents to 10 cents and more in some cases were going through, the opinion was hazarded in these columns that the dearer transport would affect materially the short-haul traffic, and that the adoption of a sectional fare system offered a better chance of securing the additional revenue required.

"Mass Transportation," Chicago, indicates that the above forecast has been justified by quoting the following:—

	Increase In fare	Decrease In Passengers
Los Angeles	7.5%	7.5%
Boston	9.5%	8%
Des Moines	12%	12%
Washington, D.C.	14%	8%
Oakland	25%	12%
Dallas	17%	8%
Altoona, Pa.,	28%	21%
Duluth	11.1%	8%

It is a reasonable assumption that the large proportion of the decrease was brought about by the refusal of the passengers who were in the habit of riding three or four city blocks to pay the higher fare.

Two years ago, sectional fare systems were practically unknown in the States. To-day, 39 cities have adopted that system with good results, while 179 cities have progressed to the extent that they have token or ticket fares in combination with cash fares, and 40 have weekly passes at reduced rates. There are still, however, 129 cities which have a straight flat fare without any reduced ticket or token rate.

### FROM LONDON.

"Tramway Topics," the able and brilliant official bulletin of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board. — "The Modern Tramway," London.

We "dips our lid!"

### OUR TESTING LABORATORY.

As usual, our Testing Laboratory at Preston performed much valuable work during the year which ended on the 30th June last. No fewer than 26,969 tests were carried through while 1,624 reports were furnished. These were split up between the different Departments as follows:—

	Number of Tests	Number of Reports
Bus Department	19,379	916
Distribution	14	5
Per Way	360	116
Rolling Stock	6,500	474
Traffic	610	82
Stores	106	31

Of the total tests, 16,220 were physical and 10,749 chemical. Of the former, 9,800 were on spring leaves and 2,529 on brake shoes, while so far as the latter are concerned, there were 4,235 oil service tests, 1,875 on fuel distillates, 802 on lubricating oil and 660 on other oil.

### FOR THE BELFAST MUSEUM.

The Belfast Museum is to acquire one of the oldest electrically operated vehicles in the world still running. This is Car No. 2, which was built in 1885 for the Bessbrook and Newry Tramway Company and entered the service in October of that year, when the Company started its service for mill workers.

### APPOINTMENTS.

J. Pickford, H.O., Wages Clerk; M. F. Renehan, Central Bus Garage, Storeman.

### EDINBURGH'S TRANSPORT REVENUE.

Of the £1,862,690 earned by Edinburgh's Transport Department last year, the trams were responsible for £1,228,022. Between them, the trams and buses carried 281,925,358 passengers.

### MEDICAL DEPARTMENT'S RECORD YEAR.

The year 1947-48 was a busy one indeed in the Medical Department, the examinations increasing to 10,024 as against 6,894 the previous year and 7,785 in 1945-46, the record figure up to that time.

### RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

The under-noted retiring gratuities have been voted by the Board during the last month:—

Driver V. R. Wilson (38), 11 years' service, resigned, £81; Pitman E. P. De La Mare (65), 35 years, £730; Depot Starter G. H. L. Woolf (65), 32 years, £752; Cost Clerk M. B. Davies, resigned, £117; Drvr. R. W. Gorman (49), 22 years, med. unfit, £238; Con. F. G. Fereday (60), 32 years, med. unfit, £298.

Death gratuities in respect of the late Drvr. J. E. Tippet (56), 25 years, £252, and the late Car Painter, W. C. Nash (53), 24 years, £387, have been paid to the next of kin.

### TRAVEL BY TRAM AND YOU SAVE SPACE.

That heading, believe it or not, appeared over a paragraph in "The Sun" chronicling the announcement by the Town and County Planning Board that every motorist uses from five to 15 times the space occupied by the tram traveller.

That is just what we have been emphasising for years, so it is pleasant to have an authoritative statement showing clearly which vehicle is mainly responsible for traffic congestion.

J. S. McClelland Pty. Ltd., 42-44 Lonsdale St., Melbourne.

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The Official Bulletin of The Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board

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Number 64

### SOARING OPERATING EXPENSES.

#### And Record Payment to the Consolidated Revenue.

While the result of the Board's operations for the year which ended on the 30th June last will not be available until the auditors have completed their report, three outstanding facts emerge from the figures which are known with certainty. These are:—

(1) The operating expenses exceeded the previous year's figures (£3,099,000) by £400,000;

(2) The traffic revenue at £4,030,000 was £26,000 above the previous highest total recorded in 1946; and

(3) The payment to the Consolidated Revenue in respect of the Government's contributions to the Fire Brigades' Board and the Infectious Diseases Hospital was at £150,000 nearly £13,000 above the record for 1947-48.

So far as operating expenses are concerned, the great bulk of the huge increase was due to the cost of the 5-day 40-hour week being in force throughout the whole year, and increases amounting to 10/- per week in all through the Cost of Living adjustment, and so was inescapable. Advances in the cost of practically all materials also played a part, and here again the burden could not be evaded.

Factors which helped to produce the record revenue were full employment in industry leading to increased services, which totalled over 788,000 miles and brought up the year's mileage to 31,216,000, resulting in an increase in paying passengers of 15,000,000 and making the total 338,000,000. Neither the mileage nor passenger totals reached the record figures—31,539,000 miles in 1942-43 and 354,800,000 passengers in 1944-45. That we had more revenue last year from fewer passengers is explained by the fact that in 1945-46

Servicemen were being carried for a merely nominal fare. How many passengers we carried who did not pay no man knoweth. It would, of course, be possible to arrive at a rough approximation if we took the number of trips checked throughout the year, 173,744, and the number of irregularities discovered, 24,709, and then went on an assumption that a similar number of irregularities would have been found in the millions of trips which had perforce to remain unchecked. When that formula was used some two years ago it was estimated conservatively that unpaid and uncollected fares and over-riding were costing the Board £250,000 per annum.

It is interesting to note that the operating expenses for last year were, in round figures, approximately £1,980,000 above those for 1938-39. That huge difference was met without any increase in fares, thanks to the Board's far-sighted action in 1942 in securing Parliamentary authority to augment substantially the reserves during the war years of plenty. Now that the Board, at the request of the Government, has suggested certain fare increases—approximately 40 per cent. of the passengers will not be affected—Melbourne's tram and bus fares must still be about the only things in Australia which have not risen in harmony with the higher prices for all other goods and services.

### SAN FRANCISCO'S TRANSPORT.

#### Latest Report Flays the Management.

San Francisco, it seems, can give a start and a beating to any other city — including one much nearer home which may occur to the reader — in the number of reports it has called for in recent years on its municipal transport system. The latest, a weighty volume of 300 pages, is headed "Report on the Economic and Organisational Features of the

Municipal Railways," and from excerpts we have seen it can be said that the investigator, Mr. A. C. Jenkins, has "pulled no punches." As for bouquets, these are not to be discovered.

"What's the matter with the Muni," asks one of the local papers, and Mr. Jenkins takes over 200 pages to supply all the answers!

Melbourne's traffic schedules are prepared so meticulously, based on up-to-the-minute traffic checks, that it seems astounding to find that in San Francisco "new schedules are based upon old ones with modifications instead of upon traffic checks and time checks," and that "traffic checks are about two years in arrears."

Costs, Mr. Jenkins estimates, are 20 per cent. too high, no use is made of the information revealed by the tapes of the headway recorders, the Schedule Supervisor "is not acquainted with the number of daily turn-backs due to service delays, estimating when asked a daily average of 75 compared with the actual average of 365," the cable tramways are fit only for the museum, the garages are messy, the supervision is insufficient — in short, if you want to find out how *not* to run a street transport system just hop over to San Francisco.

All of which reads very funny when it is recollected that not so long ago a couple of returning tourists were writing to "The Age" telling Melbourne of the wonderful system which San Francisco was creating—or was about to create—through the eventual scrapping of trams and the provision of new trolley and Diesel buses. Apparently the new transport Heaven has not yet materialised for Frisco.

### SO THAT ALL MAY KNOW.

"You must be making tons of money" remarked a friend to an official of the Board as a South Melbourne tram loaded to crush capacity swung round into Spencer Street the other evening, "tram packed and only the driver and conductor to pay, plus the power."

"There is a bit more to it than that," said the official. "You are like the man who estimates the size of an iceberg by what he sees, and forgets that the vast bulk of the iceberg is unseen. In the case of that tram, you only see the driver and conductor; you fail to remember that a lot of people you don't see have to be employed and paid so that that car can be on the road. Trackmen, overhead men, repair and maintenance men, cleaners, mechanics, roster, traffic, wages, costing and disciplinary clerks, electrical, testing and motor engineers, the supervisors, the secretarial and engineering side—

all these and more have to be reckoned with, and that means that the expenses you do not see are several times the amount of those visible to you."

### MOSCOW'S 3,500,000 DAILY TRAM PASSENGERS.

Public transport in Moscow is provided by the Metro subway, which extends to 25 miles, trams, trolleybuses and Diesel buses. Another subway route of 12.5 miles is under construction.

The Metro deals with the greatest number of passengers daily, but the trams are a good second; they now carry 3,500,000 passengers as a daily average with 3,500 trams and trailers over 350 miles of routes. The standard type of tram is the Soviet version of the P.C.C. tram of the United States. As a matter of fact, the photograph of the Moscow car is so similar that it has to be looked at closely before it is realised that it is not the picture of a tram bought in St. Louis; probably in due course we shall be told that Russians invented the P.C.C. tram. In the peak hours, through the very broad Krasno-prudnaya Street, what is known as "train operation" is in force—which means that the trams are run in sets of three. Buses run on 64 routes covering 250 miles, while by next year it is hoped to have 280 miles of medium-traffic routes served by trolley-buses.

Generally, the principle governing the system is that which is observed in Chicago—the subway for rapid distance transport, the trams for heavy traffic within four miles of the centre of the city and then the trolleybuses and Diesel buses in that order.

### THE NEWS BEHIND THE "NEWS."

Occasionally there is a somewhat marked divergence between what is said to the representative of a newspaper and what appears in print. Here is an example:

Early in August, the representative of "The Argus" stated that his paper had been receiving numerous complaints over the behaviour of school children and students, and that his Chief of Staff would like to know if any condition was attached to the concession tickets on which the young people travelled. The reply was that the holders of scholars' or students' concession tickets must not occupy seats while full fare-paying passengers were standing.

That was all—a simple question receiving a simple answer. But "The Argus" the following day reported:—"Manners and behaviour of Melbourne's teen-age school boys and girls have been criticised

by officials of both the Tramways Board and the Railways."

"The Sun" pointed out the next day that no official of the Tramway Board had made any criticism, and that in point of fact no complaints had been received by the Board over the behaviour of the teenagers.

### HEADWAY RECORDERS.

#### Device to Help in Maintaining Schedules.

One of the ideas brought home from the United States by the Board's engineer (Mr. H. H. Bell, Jr.) was the headway recorder, a device which, when used in conjunction with two-way radio between the Head Office and patrolling motor cars, enables traffic interruptions to be spotted almost as soon as they occur, while effective steps can be taken to deal with the trouble in a fraction of the time now used by following the practices of 50 years.

Our Designing and Communications Engineer (Mr. Colin Steele) has with remarkable ingenuity improved, as we think, on the American apparatus, and the set he has fabricated has been demonstrated successfully, the movement of trams in Riversdale Road being conveyed over the existing telephone line from the Hawthorn Depot into the Head Office and exhibited on the chart by pen and ink. After giving a completely satisfactory display to the members of the Board, the decoder and recorder were transferred to Kew, where they were demonstrated for the information of the traffic staff. Plans for the use of the instruments for the trams coming into Flinders Street from Kew and Hawthorn, as a start, are for the moment being held up through inability to procure the necessary motor cars and radio equipment.

As the name implies, the recorder checks trams at predetermined points through contacts placed on the trolley wires. As soon as a tram passes under a contact point, a signal is transmitted to Head Office, where the pen and ink recorder marks the movement on the chart. So long as cars are running to time the orderly flow of the vehicles is there on the chart for all to see. If there is a traffic hold-up, then the gap on the chart increases gradually, indicating to the officer in charge, even if a bell did not ring or if the glowing of a red light did not direct his attention to the matter, that there was a traffic lag in the vicinity of the contact. It would then be for the officer to take action. Calling up the Inspector in charge of the area concerned by radio, he would instruct him to proceed to the scene of the

stoppage, the result being that that official would be able to deal with the trouble many minutes earlier than he could do so under present conditions, thus minimising the interruption to the service.

This idea of maintaining an even flow of traffic and of being able to take almost within seconds action to restore normal running is making great headway in the United States. All the lines in West Philadelphia have now been equipped with recorders, and the necessary work for the extension of the system to all the other major tram routes of the Philadelphian system is now in progress.

### GOLF AT WATTLE PARK.

It is scarcely credible, but no fewer than 72,235 rounds of golf were played over the Wattle Park course during last year. Although the traffic was the heaviest on record, the course, thanks to the skilled attention given to it continuously by the staff, stood up well, and is at present looking a picture.

Another batch of gum trees have been planted in the rough between fairways, and the ultimate intention is to have a course the fairways on which will be completely enclosed.

### OUR ARCHITECTURAL BRANCH.

There is a lot more to running a transport service than the mere acquisition of rolling stock, depots, drivers and conductors. Take our Architectural Branch, for example. How many classes of labour would you say are employed by the Branch? Apart from the inside staff of architects, draftsmen, designers, special clerks, and so on, the outside staff includes bricklayers, plumbers, carpenters, joiners, house painters, motor, tractor and horse drivers, gardeners, skilled labourers and labourers.

### BUT HE DOES!

Wrote one of these know-all, letter-to-the-editor gentlemen to "The Age":—

"I am sure if Mr. Bell lived on a tram route—"

Mr. Bell's home for the last 26 years has been at 48 Riversdale Road, Hawthorn. And Riversdale Road has been on a tram route for 33 years.



## CHICAGO'S OPINION.

### Trams for the Heaviest of Surface Traffic.

Frequently in these columns the similarity of the lay-out of the inner areas of Melbourne and Chicago has been mentioned. Chicago, it is true, has a population four times that of Melbourne; but the outlook towards transport appears to be identical.

Chicago is now entering the fourth year of its vast, comprehensive plan for the modernisation of equipment and the improvement of facilities. So far, 40,000,000 dollars has been spent out of the 152,000,000 dollars earmarked for the period which will end in December, 1955. The overall aim of the plan is to remove people rather than motor cars. Each vehicle is given the task best suited to its capacities. There are rapid transit cars for the long haul traffic to the outer suburbs, P.C.C. trams for the heaviest of surface traffic, trolleybuses for the medium traffic routes, and Diesel buses for the light lines and feeder services.

Five of the principal surface routes are now operated exclusively with P.C.C. trams—600 in all have been acquired in three years—while four of the medium traffic routes have been supplied with stream-lined trolleybuses. Of the trams, the comment is "that passengers find them fast, comfortable, quiet and odourless."

## WORK ON THE PER. WAY.

### Acquisition of Balts Giving Satisfaction.

Between the 1st July, 1948, and the 30th June last the Per. Way Department carried out surface patching alongside the rails over a length of 268,320 ft., patch topdressed over 646,360 ft., refastened rails over 18,741 ft. and repaired 4,536 rail joints.

Essential maintenance work was effected on 265,165 miles of single track, while on the construction side there were 2,932 ft. of single track between Victoria Parade and Spring Street, and 4,910 ft. along Latrobe Street to Spencer Street. It is hoped that the remainder of this work will be completed and the Latrobe Street line in operation before the end of the year. Labour, and the slow delivery of materials, has affected progress badly. So far as labour is concerned, this difficulty has been lessened in recent weeks by the acquisition of Balts. These new settlers are proving willing workers who are anxious to make good in their new home. For the time being they are housed at Broadmeadows Camp, and are carried to and from work by bus.

## A 39-DAY TRANSPORT STRIKE.

Going on strike because the company refused to concede the fantastic claim for a wage rise of 29 cents. per hour, the Scranton Transit employees

went back after 39 days for an increase of 6 cents. per hour.

Plenty of them are now reflecting that it will take 133 weeks at these additional 6 cents. to recoup them for their 39 days of idleness.

## LIGHTING IMPROVEMENTS.

An interesting sidelight on the economics of fluorescent lighting is furnished by our Electrolysis and Lighting Branch. The original incandescent lighting of the General Wages room at Head Office gave an output of 35,200 light units for a power consumption of 2,300 watts. The new fluorescent installation, on the other hand, gives an output of 108,000 light units at a power consumption of 2,775 watts, which represents an increase of 307% in lighting units for an increase of but 20.5% in power consumption.

## IN BRIEF — FROM EVERYWHERE.

The New York City Transport is to purchase additions to its existing fleet of 100 P.C.C. trams.

Coventry gives five miles of travel for 5d., which is the fare for that distance in Melbourne. The minimum is three-quarters of a mile for 1½d., as compared with our mile and a quarter for 2d. A Coventry man now in Australia has been writing to a paper in the old home town complaining about "the much higher fares charged in Sydney." He should come to Melbourne and feel at home!

Pretoria's municipal transport system had a loss of £114,000 last year—a lot of money for a small place.

Out of our total tram mileage only 261 miles were lost through power failures.

Although over 100 picnics were held at Wattle Park last year, and many scores of thousands of visitors visited the place, only one minor accident was reported.

Asked to report on the Pittsburgh Railways Company, a New York firm of consulting engineers has advised that on less than 25 per cent. of the tram routes should Diesel buses take the place of trams.

The Singapore Traction Company has its own Flying Squad and anti-corruption detectives! Chinese will pay as much as £15 in order to get a job as a conductor—at a salary of approximately £8 per month.

Revenue drawn from tennis and putting fees at Wattle Park last year was the highest ever received.

Liverpool is to spend £675,000 on the renewal of tramway tracks within two years, a sum which will obviate any further expenditure if the 10-year plan for the conversion to buses goes through.

# Tramway Topics

The Official Bulletin of The Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board

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## GOOD-BYE — AND THANKS!

### A Farewell Message from the Chairman.

During the last few weeks I have been recognising the truth of the saying that all things end. But it is one thing to recognise a truth; it is something else again to accept it with that air of philosophic detachment once recommended so warmly by the late Lord Asquith to a persistent questioner when the truth concerns a job to which I have devoted a considerable portion of my life.

Thirty-four years have elapsed since I became one of the original members of the Hawthorn Tramways Trust. Without a break I passed from Hawthorn to our own Board, first as a member, then as Deputy Chairman, and finally as Chairman on the 1st January, 1936. Of the Board appointed in 1919 I alone am left, and now I have to give up the work which has meant so much to me and say good-bye to you all.

Perhaps you will pardon me if I dwell for a moment on the results we have achieved together during the 14 years of my Chairmanship. Thanks to the generous and never failing support of my colleagues on the Board, and to your efficient and loyal service, we have made the Melbourne Board the envy of transport undertakings all over the world. Financially we have improved substantially our position despite the fact that the contribution by us to the Government for the Fire Brigades' Board and the Infectious Diseases Hospital has grown from £111,000 to £150,000; that we put on all-night trams (quite unprofitable), gave bus services to areas the traffic to and from which will never be sufficient to meet expenses, and gave the staff as a whole comprehensive improvements in salaries, wages and conditions, as well as a free and generous Retiring Gratuity scheme, which has

grown in these year from £11,479 to £105,577 annually.

There are other matters which have contributed to the well-being and prosperity of the undertaking, all of which have been initiated since 1936. There is our large and well-equipped Central Bus Garage and Workshop, the staff of which, under Mr. Westrup, during the last seven years has given us notable service; there is our Tailoring Department, which is giving us better uniforms at less cost; there is the system of weekly contracts and tenders which has been the means of saving us scores of thousands of pounds; there is the fine, sporting golf course at Wattle Park, the popularity of which has increased substantially the revenue on that route; there is the enlargement of our Preston Workshops, the staff of which, under Mr. Patterson, succeeded in the critical war years in keeping our vehicles on the road through their ability to manufacture spare parts which could not be obtained elsewhere; and there has been the development of our S.W.6 car, which has done so much to confirm the belief of the passengers in the superiority of the tram for dealing with mass traffic.

Taken altogether, all these things amount to a great deal and have spelled progress. I am not claiming sole credit for them, for without my colleagues, without the support of the staff in general and of the very able executive and senior officers in particular, upon whom I have relied so much, I could as an individual have done little. The point is that we have worked together as a team, and together have earned for the undertaking the position it holds in the world of street transport.

Now, so far as street transport in the Metropolis is concerned, I am about to merge with the past. What I have done, what I have tried to do, is alike on record, and nothing can now alter it. I am

content to be judged, not alone on what I have done, but on what I have done in relation to what I said I would try to do. I have given the job the best that is in me, and I have enjoyed every minute of it. It has been a great privilege to be the head of this great organisation, and it has been a particular delight to me to play a part in the improvement in your conditions. If for any reason you think I have merited thanks, then you can express them in no better way than by giving my successor, Mr. R. J. H. Risson, C.B.E., D.S.O., support similar to that which you have given me. I wish you all good health and good luck, and, above all, that contentment of spirit which arises from work well done.

Good-bye.

H. H. Bell,  
Chairman.

Melbourne, 27th September, 1949.

### AT PRESTON WORKSHOPS.

#### Design For Door Engine Successful.

Our Preston Workshops during the year which closed on the 30th June put up a good show with the manufacture of bus bodies. Twenty-seven of these, fitted with front and rear pneumatically-operated sliding doors, and with a seating capacity of 31, have been completed. In this connection, it is worth mentioning that the door engines are of our own design. Originally, the engines were imported, and during the latter years of the war were made at the Shops with the permission of the overseas manufacturers and patentees. After the war, it was not found possible to continue the manufacture under satisfactory terms, and our designing engineers were therefore given the task of producing a door engine which would be suitable and which would not infringe existing patents. The task was difficult, but eventually it was accomplished, the result being that we now have an engine both novel and original, which has demonstrated its reliability after extensive tests in operation. Congratulations are extended to all concerned.

During the year 813 trams passed through the Shops. Of these, 176 received general overhaul and 224 were for major repairs, necessitated mainly as the result of collisions. That latter factor, plus the spasmodic supply of vital materials and the time spent on the construction of bus bodies, retarded the construction of S.W.6 trams, and for the first time since these cars were designed no new vehicle was delivered to Traffic, though 10 on the 30th June were 85% complete, with another six

well in hand. The result for the current year will show a big improvement, as in addition to those mentioned the manufacture of equipment and parts for another 14 is well forward. When the year ended the framework of the tram which is to be equipped with the P.C.C. trucks and electrical gear had been completed, and body construction was proceeding.

Space does not permit a full resume of the work done at the Shops; but its scope can be indicated by pointing out that such items as the construction of two motor waggons, an emergency waggon, the alteration in position of 114 windscreen wipers, the making of telescopic trestles, the repair of 289 bus seats and 441 main springs, and the making of standard parts, as well as the overhaul, repair and painting of many vehicles.

### BELGIUM'S EIGHT-YEAR RECORD.

"Thus for eight years the whole local traffic in Belgium was carried by tram, and now the war is ended vast possibilities are opened up for still further tramway modernisation."—"The Modern Tramway," London, from an article by Mr. van Camp.

### THE VALUE OF MAINTENANCE.

That systematic maintenance yields handsome dividends is proved once again by the fact that during 1948-49 the average number of trams available for service averaged 93.43 per cent. of the total stock. The universal practice is to work on the basis of 10 per cent. spares. Our figures show we have, as usual, been operating much better than that.

Trams changed over for defects in equipment numbered 1,629 out of the total number of change-overs, 4,007. The mileage per change-over for defect was 14,193, another remarkably good showing. Broken windows accounted for 434, collisions for 1,007, flat wheels for 170, for soiling 912, and for miscellaneous causes, 255.

### MANCHESTER'S ESTIMATED BUS LOSS.

At long last the bus advocates have achieved their ambition, and Manchester is now an all-bus city. Result—an estimate that the loss on operation for the current year will be near £200,000 and an application to the Area Authority to raise the minimum fare to 1½d. and to put another halfpenny on many other fares.

It is amusing to recall that the decision to convert to buses was due to the confident prophecy that these vehicles would place the undertaking "on a

sound financial basis." A similar argument is now being used in Liverpool to justify a three-stage plan for the conversion of trams in that city, the first stage to be completed before the end of next year—if vehicles can be procured.

### MEDICAL DEPARTMENT'S BUSY YEAR.

A busy year indeed was put in by the Medical Officer and his staff, the examinations at 10,274 exceeding the record established the previous year by 250.

There was a marked increase in the number of cases of influenza, 1,051 suffering from that complaint. The large number of man hours being lost through this disease, remarks Dr. J. J. Daly, will be evident if the average is worked out on the basis of but four days per case.

The total sick and injured seen and examined came to 3,898. Of the applicants for employment in traffic examined (1,384 males and 543 females), 292 males and 114 females were found unfit.

### MONTREAL "IN THE RED."

Montreal Tramways Commission in its 31st report (1948) chronicles revenue of £6,083,102, expenses of £6,855,879, and a loss of £772,777 compared with a deficit of £315,994 for the previous year.

Aware how things were going, the Commission early in the year applied for permission to increase fares. The City of Montreal, and other interested municipalities in Greater Montreal, clamoured to have the position investigated by a special tribunal, which body has not yet handed down a decision. The opposition to the proposal seems silly; the deficits have to be made good eventually, either by higher fares or through taxes.

A bus repair shop which has been completed will maintain a fleet of 700 buses.

### TESTING DEPARTMENT

#### Photography As An Aid.

An enormous amount of work was put through by the staff of the Testing Department last year, the physical and chemical tests alone numbering nearly 18,000, divided between the various Departments as follows:—

	Tests	Reports
Architects's Department	11,808	862
Distribution Department	92	8
Per. Way Department	1,002	226
Traffic Department	819	113
Rolling Stock Department	4,059	329
Stores Branch	151	36
Totals	17,931	1,624

Of the tests, 10,358 were physical and 17,931 chemical.

Problems investigated during the year were as varied as Melbourne's weather, and included the breakdown of coils in sub-station equipment, the calibration of thermometers, corrosion inhibitor, insulating material for relay coils, physical properties of armature oil, temperature survey of filter units and transformer oil reconditioning.

The wisdom of the Chairman in expanding the Department and the value of the work to the undertaking is in evidence continually. An example or two may be quoted. Extensive tests were made for pressure, temperature, speed and efficiency on a portable air compressor, the result being that the improvements suggested and effected made for a more efficient unit. After an investigation into the cause and nature of failures in sub-station relay coils, a suitable insulating material was recommended. Many lubricating oil service tests were made in the laboratory, the engine parts and bearings being photographed previous to and after the tests.

### CONTROLLING TRANSPORT.

#### Proposed Area Scheme in South Africa.

All the world over there appears to be an itch on the part of Governments to control—we almost said manage, but that would be a "howler," for who ever heard of a Government managing any form of transport except at a ruinous loss?—transport. The latest outbreak seems to have occurred in South Africa, where centralised ownership and control of all road passenger transport undertakings now operating in the Cape Peninsula is recommended in a report by a special committee and has now been presented in the House of Assembly.

It is proposed that a regional transport commission, composed of five members—one selected by the Governor-General, two by the Cape Town municipality, one by the Cape Divisional Council, and one by three other municipalities—should be created by Parliament to acquire and operate all existing road passenger transport undertakings in the Cape Peninsula, and to provide such other services as may be required.

Officials of the Cape Town Electric Tramways and the Golden Arrow Bus Service Co. Ltd., the two principal companies to be affected by the proposals, have declined to comment; but the public has been quite excessively vocal and fail to see what benefit would accrue to them if the recommendations received legislative authority.

### CENTRAL BUS GARAGE.

#### "Make and Mend" for other Departments.

There is every reason for derisive grins when we read the outpouring of some uninformed grocer or auctioneer that the Board "has a prejudice against buses." In the last 14 years the Board has spent the not inconsiderable sum of £855,000 on the purchase of such vehicles—which seems a queer way of demonstrating a prejudice—while in the last nine years the fleet has been trebled and now numbers 332, of which 230 are Diesels. How happy we would be if only they could be operated to pay expenses, never mind profit; but, alas! it is certain that the loss last year will be well over £200,000. This despite the grand work by the staff of the Central Bus Garage, whose skill was such that throughout the year the average of buses out of service daily was but 23, an astonishingly low figure for a bus fleet, especially when it is remembered that the total covers buses in for repair for accidents as well as those undergoing one of their periodic overhauls. Another interesting fact, and one which will doubtless be received with gratification by the makers, is that the 43 Leyland Cubs have now averaged more than 300,000 miles each. Mileage for the fleet last year was 8,096,000, a total which has been exceeded only by the war years of 1943-44-45. The highest was in 1945, when 8,600,000 miles were run.

How sickness, accidents and absenteeism complicate managerial problems! Last year, sickness and accidents accounted for the loss of 2,731 man days, the equivalent of 10.5 men per working day. Absenteeism (with and without permission) meant another 3.4 men per working day, so that from these three causes the staff on the average was 13.9 men short of its complement each working day.

But let us glance at the brighter side. Under the Bus Superintendent (Mr. Westrup), with his happy gift for organising and taking part in all social activities, the staff has become a band of highly-skilled and competent craftsmen, able to manufacture and repair many gadgets in use by other Departments. Take, for example, the Clock and Instrument Shop. There the instrument makers, fitters, turners and clock mechanics repaired speedo-

meters, oil pressure switches, carburettors, fuel pumps, oil and vacuum gauges, speedo cables, ticket punches, firearms, Bundy recorders, time switches, rail micrometers, duplicating machines, date stamps, and so on, and manufactured screws, bolts, special washers, die ticket punches, steel pins, telephone box locks, etc., etc.

As we remarked last month, there is a lot more in running a transport system than merely putting trams and buses on the road.

### THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT INTERVENES.

The Ministry of Transport has asked the Liverpool Corporation Transport Department to suspend further conversion of tram routes to bus operation after the first stage is completed next year.

The Ministry suggested that the matter should be reviewed either next year or the following year.

In connection with the Liverpool system, it is interesting to learn that the department is making preparations to employ two-way radio communication between patrol vehicles and headquarters to reduce traffic congestion, clear queues and answer emergency calls. Five cars, with an Inspector in each, will be used, and each will be given a particular patrolling area.

### SYDNEY'S NEW COMMISSIONER.

Mr. R. Winsor, Assistant Commissioner for Railways, New South Wales, has been appointed Commissioner for Road Transport and Tramways in place of Mr. C. N. Neale, who has retired. The salary is £3,000 per annum, and the appointment is for seven years.

The new Commissioner started work as a clerk on the Railways, and progressed steadily upwards as night officer, station master, inspector, accountant of the mechanical branch, and chief staff superintendent to Assistant Commissioner. Looking to the magnitude of the task which is now his, all in the street transport industry will wish him success and will watch the progress of the undertaking with sympathetic interest.

J. S. McClelland Pty. Ltd., 42-44 Lonsdale St., Melbourne.

# Tramway Topics

The Official Bulletin of The Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board

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Number 55

### OUR NEW CHAIRMAN.

**Brigadier R. J. H. Risson, C.B.E., D.S.O.,  
E.D., B.E., M.I.E., Aust.**

Our new Chairman, who took up duty on the 1st of last month, will appeal to us all, not only as one intimately acquainted with our street transport industry, through his 26 years with the Brisbane Transport Department, culminating as Deputy Manager and as Acting Manager during the absence of the General Manager (Mr. S. L. Quinn) abroad, but as a distinguished citizen soldier, a highly qualified engineer and a sportsman.

Born in April, 1901, Mr. Risson was educated at the Gatton High School and the University of Queensland, where he took the degree of B.E. and was awarded his football blue. After graduating, he joined the engineering side of the Transport Department of Brisbane in 1923, and 10 years later began his association with the Australian Army Engineers, which was to lead him to many thrilling experiences in desert and jungle wastes and to high honours. Seconded to the A.I.F. in October, 1939, Mr. Risson went abroad in command of the 2/3 Field Company, R.A.E., and in 1941 was promoted C.R.E. of the 7th Division and then of the 9th Division in 1942. It was while with the 9th that he became a "Tobruk Rat," and so took part in a siege which will figure always in Australian annals. Later, at El Alamein, a shell entered his headquarters and wounded him severely. For the operations during these two years Mr. Risson was awarded the D.S.O. and the O.B.E., and was mentioned twice in despatches. Returning to Australia when the 9th Division was withdrawn from the famous 8th Army, Mr. Risson was appointed Chief Engineer of the 2nd Corps, and a year later to the 1st Corps, serving in that capacity in New Guinea, where he gained the C.B.E.

### The New Chairman's Greetings to the Staff.

I am sure that all officers and employees of the Board will regret that the time has come for Mr. Bell to retire from the position of Chairman, which he has occupied for so many years to the great benefit of Melbourne's street transport and with marked distinction to himself. I am deeply conscious of the honour of being chosen to succeed him and of the responsibility which that succession entails. I am much encouraged, however, by the fact that I have the same experienced colleagues as members of the Board, the same capable staff, from most senior officer to newest employee, and also the continued advice and assistance of the retiring Chairman himself.

The Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board and its services, and the men and women who operate them, are held in high regard throughout Australia. They compare favourably with similar undertakings anywhere. The Board has always endeavoured to keep thoroughly abreast of the times in the provision and use of up-to-date equipment. But equipment, trams and buses are only the beginning. It is the men behind the gun that matter—in this case the men and women in the Board's service wherever they may be employed; in senior executive positions, offices, workshops, garages, on the tracks, as uniformed staff who make direct contact with the travelling public and collect from them the Board's very necessary revenue.

You have a grand record. It will be my aim by hard work to maintain and enhance the excellent service rendered by Melbourne's trams and buses in your hands. I ask for, and am confident I can count on, your whole-hearted co-operation with the Board and myself to that end. We in turn will continue to be actively interested in the welfare of all the Board's employees.

Let us work together for the combined success of a great undertaking, to which we can all be proud to belong.

R. J. H. RISSON,  
Chairman.

## TRAMWAYS BAND AT WATTLE PARK.

Arrangements have been made for the Tramways Band to give a series of Sunday afternoon recitals at Wattle Park as follows:—

13th November.	11th December.
8th January.	5th February.
5th March.	2nd April.
	30th April.

This season the Board is giving the use of a bus for the transport of players to and from the park on condition that a volunteer driver is provided. The bus will leave the Central Garage each Sunday at 2 p.m. for the band room in Lonsdale Street, and will return the bandsmen at the conclusion of each performance.

## THE "NEW THOUGHTS" WERE OLD.

The worst of omniscience is that it can never admit to a mistake. One day last month, for instance, "The Herald" had "Some New Thoughts on Our Trams," which reading showed to be: (1) numbered tram stops; (2) rear stop lights; and (3) modern trolleybuses. It was pointed out to "The Herald" in regard to (1) that the Board months ago had decided to experiment with numbered stops on one route as soon as the necessary materials and labour could be obtained; (2) that even if the Board thought rear stop lights are advisable, the work of re-wiring 750 trams and the procurement of the necessary fittings would take a long time; and (3) that the Board offered the northern municipalities a trolleybus service years ago between Essendon and Heidelberg, provided the councils concerned agreed on a route and put the streets in a condition fit for bus operation, but that nothing had since been heard from the councils on the subject.

Incidentally, what exactly is "modern" about a trolleybus? Such vehicles have been operated on the Continent, Britain and the United States for the last 40 years, though not with any great amount of public favour. The last figures we have seen from the American Transit Association show that while trams dealt with 9,027,000,000 passengers for the year, trolleybuses carried but 1,311,000,000. In Britain, the number of such vehicles is going to decline substantially as the London Transport

Executive gives effect to its policy of replacing the trolleybus fleet, installed since 1935 at a cost of more than £7,000,000, with Diesel buses.

## HOW THE MONEY CAME IN.

### Three-fourths of Our Passengers Paid 3d. or Less.

Figures tabulated by our Industrial and Revenue Officer (Mr. Hine) show that the foundation of our fare system is the short-haul passenger, a fact which should be of the greatest possible interest to those undertakings in the United States which are beginning to think that "zone" fares would more than help to bridge the present ever-widening gap between revenue and expenditure. More than one-third of our paying passengers handed over 2d. or less, while three-quarters paid sums varying from 3d. to 1d. Nearly 15,500,000 passengers used the 1½d. "city" ticket, which represents an average of approximately 42,400 per day. It will be interesting to see what effect the abandonment of the "city" ticket will have this year on the sale of 2d. tickets. An almost similar number bought the maximum tram fare ticket of 6d. The totals for all fare denominations are as follow:—

1d. ....	17,313,660
1½d. ....	15,492,004
2d. ....	119,675,052
2½d. ....	1,130,522
3d. ....	104,469,941
4d. ....	39,485,073
5d. ....	22,187,526
6d. ....	15,169,844
7d. ....	33,521
8d. ....	796,917
9d. ....	16,037
Scholars .....	2,756,197
Special .....	246,836

## WHY INCREASED FARES ?

### Expenses Up by 42 Per Cent. in Six Years.

As this bulletin is compiled solely for the purpose of keeping the staff informed of matters relating to their own undertaking and developments abroad, politics have always been rigorously excluded. When referring to the small increase in fares which took place in September, however, it seems impossible to avoid remarking that the protests made were purely political and were not based on the actual financial facts.

To put the matter into its proper perspective, let us see what has happened to our traffic revenue and operating expenses in the last six years. Here are the figures:—

## MR. H. H. BELL HONOURED.

Before he retired from the Chairmanship, Mr. H. H. Bell was overwhelmed with the tributes which flowed in upon him from all sections of the community, and he was touched particularly by the gifts from his colleagues on the Board, the Press and various organisations among the staff. The presentations were as follows:—

- Members of the Board—Silver coffee service.
  - Tramways Sub-Branch, R.S.L.—60-piece dinner and tea set.
  - Tramways Benefit Society—Antique card table.
  - Malvern Harmonica Band—Hand-carved cherry-wood ink stand.
  - "A" Shift Football—Framed photo.
  - Essendon Depot Sporting Clubs—Dunhill pipe.
  - Press—Inscribed fountain pen.
  - Combined Sporting Associations—Cut crystal flower, rose and fruit bowls.
  - Senior Officers—Portable wireless.
- The gift from the Press was unique, for it was the first time, as Mr. John Hogan, of "The Herald," in making the presentation, pointed out, that the Press had so honoured a retiring Departmental head. Mr. R. Jones, "The Age," Mr. A. L. Dunn, "The Sun," and Mr. John Allan, of the A.B.C., took part in the pleasant ceremony.

## AN UNFORTUNATE GENERALISATION.

Our good and genial friend, the Chief of the Traffic Control Branch of the Police (Superintendent Morris), must have got up on his wrong side on the morning he gave evidence before the Parliamentary Public Works Committee for him to have committed himself to the reported generalisation that trams in St. Kilda Road are "a menace," not only to ordinary traffic, but to the people of the blind, deaf and dumb institute.

If the report is correct, we suggest to the Superintendent that he should take a look at the accident map published by his own branch recently. From it he will learn that St. Kilda Road has fewer accidents in proportion to the traffic than any of the other major thoroughfares, while as for accidents in which trams are concerned—well, for the year which ended on the 30th June last our records show that there were but 63. The Superintendent's "menace," therefore, boils down to a fraction over one accident per week. We would not be surprised to learn that the ratio was something like one accident to every 200,000 miles.

Nor will the inmates of the institute be disposed to agree with the worthy Superintendent. They are deeply conscious of the never-failing care, sympathy and consideration shown them daily by our

	1944	1949
Traffic Revenue .....	£3,941,680	£4,030,346
Operating Expenses .....	2,491,649	3,560,495

That table shows that while our traffic revenue increased by £88,666, or 2.249%, operating expenses soared by £1,068,846, or by no less than 42.897%.

As compared with 1947-48, there was the large advance in our operating expenses last year of £461,433, the greater part due to the full effect of the 5-day 40-hour week, and as for the current year there is already more than £200,000 of additional expenditure in sight, it follows that the Board was facing a deficit which could be estimated at something like £500,000. Without that increase in fares, that sum would have had to be taken from the Renewals Reserve Fund, a fund which has been accumulated prudently for the express purposes indicated by the title.

Even with the addition of 1d. to all fares from 3d., the fares are still the lowest in Australia. Most other large concerns now start their first section at 3d., with Sydney putting a surcharge of 1d. after 8 p.m. The critics found it convenient to forget that higher wages, shorter hours, improved conditions, not only in transport, but in the industrial world generally, have to be paid for, and that so far as the Board is concerned there is but the one source from which to get the necessary money, the fare-paying public.

## ACCIDENTS ARE COSTLY.

Apart from the cost of repairs and the loss occasioned by having the tram or bus out of service, accidents are costly. A glance through the records of our Claims Department for last year shows that £9,290 was paid in respect of boarding and alighting accidents, £10,798 for personal injuries and damage to other vehicles and cyclists, and £4,222 for collisions between other trams and buses. Unsettled claims at the 30th June last will, it is estimated, cost the Board another £29,000. The claims received increased from 1,201 to 1,305.

These figures suggest that greater vigilance is necessary on the part of drivers. It is not a bad plan to regard every other driver on the road as a complete fool and to take every step possible so as to avoid being involved in his folly.

## DRIVERS' AND CONDUCTORS' SCHOOLS.

During 1948-49, the tram drivers' and conductors' schools at Hawthorn and the bus drivers' school at Central Bus were busy places, 1,346 students taking the courses. The good work done in passing out successfully all but 84 of those concerned was nullified to a great extent by the number of employees who left the service with less than a year's employment with the Board.

## Tramway Topics

traffic staff in conducting them to and from the footpath, and annually they show their appreciation by putting on a first-class entertainment for tramwaymen, their wives and families.

### THREE-YEAR PER. WAY PROGRAMME.

Approval has been given by the Board to the Per. Way works programme for the three years ending the 30th June, 1952, at an estimated cost of £243,400. This is in addition to the uncompleted portion of the 1946-49 programme. If both are to be fulfilled by the date mentioned, the staff will have to be augmented by at least another 200 men.

Included in the new programme is:—

	Length, ft.
Chapel Street, Prahran—from Dandenong Road to Church Street Bridge	17,100
High Street, Kew—Barker's Road to Princess Street	4,900
Fletcher Street, Essendon—Pascoe Crescent to Napier Street	4,800
South Melbourne—Cowderoy Street to Fitzroy Street	4,600
Toorak Road—William Street to Canterbury Road	3,400
Special work and curves at various points in the city and in Richmond, Essendon, Preston, Footscray, St. Kilda, Prahran, Caulfield and Camberwell will also receive attention.	

### BRISBANE SHOWS A PROFIT.

While the amount is not stated, the Brisbane Corporation's Transport Department showed a small profit last year, according to the Press, as the result of tram earnings of £1,514,324 and the bus income of £312,903. These figures show increases following upon fare changes of £180,636 and £158,790 respectively.

Revenue per car mile went up from 31.14d. to 36.03d., while revenue per bus mile at 23.3d. compared with 23.08d. The trams carried 125,586,807 passengers and the buses 23,869,568.

Apparently there is some doubt as to the trend financially for the current year, as the General Manager (Mr. S. L. Quinn) has announced reduced services after 8 p.m. Routes with 8 and 10-minute headways will be lengthened to 10 and 12 minutes respectively, while the 15-minute headways will become 20 minutes. It was stated at the City Hall that this is part of a general economy drive by the Transport Department to help to meet the losses occasioned by the coal strike, the higher price of coal and other materials, and the loss of traffic due to the greater use of motor cars at night, while the Lord Mayor (Ald. Chandler) remarked that unless

some means could be found to meet transport losses a further rise in fares would be inevitable.

### ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Modifications in the S.W.6 body so as to fit it for the P.C.C. trucks and electrical gear involved no fewer than 127 drawings.

Transport plans for Warsaw covering the next five years include the purchase of 500 trams, 193 Diesel buses and 43 trolleybuses.

Our emergency breakdown waggon at Hanna Street responded to 479 calls during 1948-49 and travelled 4,136 miles.

After the football match, North Germany v. South Germany, at the Hamburg Stadium, 12,000 people were moved in 35 minutes by the special trams.

The wheel grinding plants at Malvern, Hanna Street, Kew and Coburg treated 3,400 trams for flats last year, and the tyres on 2,412 trams were reshaped by grinding.

### RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

During recent weeks the Board has approved of the payment of the under-noted retiring gratuities:—

Con. W. Lawther (59), 36 years' service, medically unfit, £402; Inspector P. J. Jenkins (48), 26 years, medically unfit, £386; Con. J. C. Revell (57), 36 years, £485; Con. T. Blencowe (65), 31 years, £738.

Death gratuities have been paid to the next of kin in respect of—

Dvr. F. M. Collins (51), 25 years' service, £400; Depot Foreman H. L. Stevens (63), 31 years, £675; Bodymaker F. G. Newham (47), 18 years, £283.

### THANKS FROM THE M.C.C.

In connection with the V.F.L. semi-final and final matches at the M.C.C., the Chairman has received a most appreciative letter from the Secretary of the Club (Mr. V. S. Ransford) regarding the facilities provided by the Board.

"The speed and efficiency with which all the personnel of your organisation handled the large crowds," wrote Mr. Ransford, "particularly at the close of each of the matches, is worthy of the highest commendation to all concerned, and I have been directed to express to you and to the tram crews the great appreciation of my Committee at the splendid service rendered, which in no small measure assisted in the smooth control of the matches."

Mr. Risson has expressed his pleasure to the M.C.C. for the letter, and is glad to pass on the thanks to those concerned.

J. S. McClelland Pty. Ltd., 42-44 Lonsdale St., Melbourne.

# Tramway Topics

The Official Bulletin of The Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board

Volume 6

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Number 67

### A GREETING FOR CHRISTMAS.

Before another issue of "Tramway Topics" can appear, Christmas will have come and gone. On behalf of the Board and myself, therefore, I take this opportunity of conveying good wishes to you all and of wishing you a most happy Yuletide.

This is my first Christmas among you. During the past few weeks I have been able to see most of the Depots, the Garages and the Workshops, and to meet quite a number of you. I hope by next Christmas to speak to you with much greater knowledge of the Melbourne tramways.

Good luck and health to you all.

R. J. H. Risson,

Chairman.

£200,000!

### Record Payment to Consolidated Revenue. How These Payments Became Chargeable to the Tramways Board.

For the current financial year the payments by the Tramways Board to the Consolidated Revenue of the State in respect of the Government's payments to the Fire Brigades Board and the Infectious Diseases Hospital are going to amount to no less than £200,000, a sum which exceeds last year's record by £50,000, and which has to be paid even if the undertaking is run at a deficit—a result which at the moment seems a certainty. The Board has protested strongly against this unprecedented drain on its funds; but only a super-optimist will dream that the 22-year-old recommendation of the Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts, that the Board be relieved of these payments, will be adopted. By the 30th June next the total taken from the Board will

have reached the enormous total of £3,500,000.

How did these payments come to be imposed on the Tramways Board? A generation has passed since this act of political brigandage, which would undoubtedly have earned the professional admiration of the late Mr. Kelly, received the sanction of Parliament, so it may not be out of place to tell the story for general information.

Let it be kept in mind that previous to the passing of the Tramways Act all the tramways, cable and electric, in the metropolitan area with the exception of the small electric system in North Melbourne and Essendon and the tramways of the Victorian Railways, were the property of the municipalities—the State was not interested in them to the extent of a penny piece. For a year or two prior to 1916, when the lease of the cable tramways to the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company was to expire, there had been quite a lot of talk about the necessity of appointing a Board which would act as the tramway authority for the metropolis and form the various systems into a coherent whole. The first step was legislation providing for a temporary Board for the cable system. That having been done, representatives of the municipalities, the owners of the five Tramway Trusts, held various abortive conferences, following upon which the Peacock Government took a hand in the matter and in 1917 introduced the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramway Authority Bill. It was not persevered with, and so it was the Lawson Government of 1918 that passed the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Act.

In the Peacock Bill, Section 77 (Section 88 of Act No. 2995) read originally that provision should be made for the determination of the total amount of each municipality's contribution to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Loans Redemption Fund, and provided further that for the purposes of the determination the cable surplus should be deemed to be

£827,000. In return for the seizure of those profits, which were, of course, the property of the 12 Councils who had raised the necessary funds for the construction of the cable lines on the security of their rates, the Government pacified the Councils partially by undertaking to write off a similar amount from the debentures which would be due for payment by the Councils in 1936.

That procedure, the seizure of the cable tramway profit, seems obscure until it is known that the Government had a loan of £4,000,000 falling due in London, and that the negotiations for conversion would be facilitated by the intimation that the Government would re-pay £1,000,000, leaving £3,000,000 to be converted. The snag was that the Government did not have the £1,000,000. The Government resolved to get it by grabbing the estimated cable profit of £827,000 and raising the balance from other sources. When the cable accounts came to be adjusted, however, the Government was dismayed to find that they would be £60,000 short of the estimated amount. But that little difficulty was adjusted easily; the Government promptly passed another Act (No. 3023) making that £60,000 a charge upon the first year's revenue of the new Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board!

That arrangement having been completed, Section 77 was altered so as to make the Tramways Board responsible for recouping the moneys hitherto paid by the Government to the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board, the Infectious Diseases Hospital and the Licensing Fund. How this alteration making the Tramways Board liable for those payments was brought about was told by the then Hon. Arthur Robinson (later Sir Arthur Robinson) in the Legislative Council. (The full report can be read in Hansard, 14/8/18, pages 637 to 644 inclusive). At one of the conferences with the representatives of the municipalities prior to the introduction of the Bill he stated that he had said—

"I am prepared to place the responsibility for these payments on the municipalities, and not on the tramway receipts, if you prefer it that way. You say that the amount should not be taken from the tramway receipts. Will you pay them from the municipal receipts? The Government is not going to pay them in future. When they saw the position I took up they consented to the proposal of the Government."

From that quotation it will be seen that the objection by the municipalities to the Government's proposal to saddle the Tramways Board with these payments was countered by the blunt threat, "Either the Tramways Board pays them or you do." Faced with such an ultimatum, it is scarcely surprising that the municipalities, in Mr. Robinson's euphonious

phrase, "consented to the proposal of the Government."

The spokesmen for the Government in these days of 1918 did not turn out good prophets; they estimated that the payments would not exceed £70,000 per annum, a sum which, it was thought, would be secured easily out of the profits of the undertaking! With the exception of four years, the exactions have never amounted to less than a six-figure sum.

### SYDNEY'S "DISTURBED" OUTLOOK.

"Notwithstanding remedial financial measures applied by the Government," writes the Auditor-General of New South Wales (Mr. E. H. Swift) in his annual report on the accounts of the Department of Road Transport and Tramways, "the outlook for the immediate future remains disturbing."

...Mr. Swift mentions that the loss for the year which ended on the 30th June last was £272,008. Working expenses, as in Melbourne, soared steeply, going to £7,826,957, which was £518,151 more than in the previous year. Of that increase, wages, salaries and pay-roll tax was responsible for all but 6 per cent. of the total.

Carrying 309,757,000 passengers, the trams earned £4,821,976, while the buses brought in £3,061,592 from 163,429,000 passengers.

For the year, the State's railway, tram and bus systems failed to pay debt charges amounting to more than £2,000,000, which sum had to be made good by the Consolidated Revenue.

### CHICAGO AND STAGGERED HOURS.

A preliminary survey undertaken at the instance of the Mayor of Chicago by a Traffic Commissioner on the proposal to revive the staggered hours of the war years shows that a large number of the "Loop" district employees would like to go to work half an hour earlier and go home 30 minutes sooner and so avoid the evening peak congestion. A much smaller number favours going to work half an hour later than at present.

### "FLAT FARE DOES NOT MAKE SENSE."

#### Zone System Extending in the United States.

"It does not make sense to carry a passenger 20 miles, or even 10 miles, for the same price that you charge a person who rides a tenth of that distance," writes Mr. Harley L. Swift, the President of the Harrisburg Railways Company in "Mass Transportation," and he goes on to point out that railroads, cross-country transport companies and freight hauliers charge in direct ratio to the distance the passenger or package is carried. Urban transport, he asserts, should adopt the same formula.

The fact that tremendous short-haul traffic is being

missed through high flat fares is being brought home to many undertakings, which are finding that flat fares in excess of 10 cents. are not producing the revenue necessary to meet the ever-rising operational costs. There are at the moment 29 cities with flat fares in excess of 10 cents, the highest being the 15 cents. of the Rapid Transit Lines of Chicago. The Surface Lines (trams, trolleybuses and buses) of that city charge 13 cents.

In all, 323 of the cities of the United States with populations of more than 25,000 have increased their fares within the last two years, 15 of them on no fewer than three occasions. Yet, comments Mr. Guy C. Hecker, the Executive Manager of the American Transit Association, the increased revenue gained, although traffic declined by 7.9 per cent., failed by 162,200,000 dollars to cover the additional costs, including depreciation.

Mr. Hecker notes that there is increasing interest in zone fares, and mentions that several properties are engaged in extensive studies of the possibilities of such fares, "not only to obtain needed additional revenue, but to maintain the highest possible volume of riding."

### THE MONTH'S GREAT THOUGHT.

"Those who would abandon trams completely in Melbourne often forget that London's buses are only supplementary to its great underground railway system."—"The Sun."

And no one, we might add, has done more to help the 423,954 daily readers to forget, or ignore, that fact than "The Sun."

### THE WORLD'S FIRST UNDERGROUND.

On the 19th July next the Paris "Metro" will celebrate its jubilee, and no doubt our French friends will see to it that the occasion will be marked in a manner appropriate to the world's leading underground. Perhaps a qualification would be necessary for that statement were information available from behind "the iron curtain" as to the traffic on the rapidly-expanding Moscow underground. We have seen it asserted that last year Moscow's trams, buses and underground dealt with more than 4,000,000,000 passengers, though the proportion carried by each was not stated.

So far as is known, then, the intensity of underground traffic per mile of double track each year is greater in Paris than in any other city of the world, the figures being:—

Paris Metro	11,520,000
New York Subway	9,600,000
Berlin U-Bahn	7,360,000
London Underground	4,960,000

The Metro has a mileage of 89, with 343 stations, 458

booking halls 34 lifts and 79 moving staircases. As many as 3,000,000 passengers have been carried in a single day.

### THE LATROBE STREET EXTENSION.

Lack of manpower and the hiatus in rail deliveries through the coal strike has delayed the completion of the Latrobe Street extension far beyond the anticipated date. Including what is necessary for the section in Spencer Street between Latrobe Street and Lonsdale Street, the final parcel of rails is now being put through by B.H.P. at the Port Kembla works.

In the meantime, the men who can be utilised are working on the Latrobe Street-Elizabeth Street junction, work which, it is hoped, will be completed before Christmas.

### NO MONEY FOR RENEWALS.

Edinburgh's Transport Department functioned at a loss of £61,413 for the year which ended on the 28th May last. Actually, that does not tell the complete story, for the customary allocation to the Renewals and Reserve Fund was not made. In the past it has been the practice to appropriate £86,229 (1.5d. per mile) from the tramway section, and £50,000 from the bus revenue for these purposes. It looks as if the Transport Committee had shied from asking the Corporation to make good the total deficiency of £200,000, but that is where it must come from eventually, unless, of course, there is a large and totally unanticipated increase in revenue.

For the period under review, the total revenue for the combined services at £1,877,676 was £14,986 above that for the previous year. The passenger total advanced by 1,745,936 to 283,671,294.

### USE OF TWO-WAY RADIO.

In a recent issue we told of our experiments with a headway recorder, and mentioned that the idea is to use that instrument in conjunction with motor patrol cars equipped with two-way radio, the object of the whole installation being to reduce materially traffic delays through the earlier reporting of interruptions. Now, "Bus Transportation" reports that planned use of two-way radio to inter-city bus operations has proved economically feasible and has improved safety and passenger convenience. It is pointed out, however, that its use is not economical for small fleets.

There are now three radio-operated bus systems in the United States—Chicago-Milwaukee-Madison, Chicago-South Bend-Detroit and Chicago-Grand Rapids-Muskegon. A year's experience has demonstrated that on these three heavily-travelled routes the two-way radio installations have saved money through the quick correction of minor road failures without having to send out repair crews, the elimina-

tion of unnecessary secondary mileage and the consequent reduction in overtime payments.

Compared with the non-radio equipped buses, the radio-equipped vehicles covered more miles, doubled the mileage per road failure and cost less per mile to maintain.

**GERMAN TRAMWAY EXTENSIONS.**

This will be horrible news to Mr. Harley Styles, but it can't be helped—since the end of 1945 new tram lines have been laid in Frankfurt-on-Main, Mainz, Rostock, Augsburg, Hamburg, Brunswick, Berlin, Ulm, Kassel, Cologne and Offenbach.

Further extensions are now under construction in Frankfurt, Nuremberg, Duisburg, Stuttgart and other cities.

**FARE CONCESSIONS.**

**Ordinary Passengers Pay For Them.**

An application by the Bolton Corporation Transport Department to grant half-fare concessions to the town's unemployed old-age pensioners when travelling on the Corporation's vehicles has been refused by the North-Western Licensing Authority.

The judgment is interesting to us here because it shows how correct is the view of the Board that periodical tickets can be given only to the prejudice of those not able to afford the money for a monthly, quarterly, or yearly ticket. "Generally," said the Chairman of the Authority, "the effect of these and other fare concessions is that the fare paid by the ordinary passenger is in the form of a subsidy to the person who obtains the concession."

Capetown Electric Tramway Company has also made the discovery that pre-paid monthly tickets, sold at a big discount, are uneconomic, and that the main result, apart from selling transport at a loss, is to subsidise people in the higher income groups, who can afford to pay for a monthly ticket in advance, at the expense of the lower income groups. The tickets are, therefore, to be abolished, and fares on the buses are to be increased.

**BAN ON RATE AID FROM TRANSPORT.**

In approving Newcastle-on-Tyne's application for increased tram, trolleybus and bus fares, the British Ministry of Transport has laid down the important principle that in future no contribution in aid of the rates can be made without the consent of the Ministry. Any surplus shown by a Transport Department must be retained for the benefit of the undertaking.

If that rule had been in operation during the last

30 years many a municipal transport undertaking would to-day be in a much healthier condition, both as regards finance and rolling stock. In the fat years, the surpluses were mostly put to the General Rate Fund, the Renewals Fund only occasionally getting a bit of a dole, the result being that when reconstruction was necessary and new equipment and rolling stock was essential, the unfortunate Transport Departments had no money with which to meet the bills. How happy Glasgow would be to-day, for instance, if in the dear, dead days beyond recall it had not bestowed two or three million pounds on what is lyrically known as the Common Good!

**"MOST ECONOMICAL."**

"One general conclusion may be stated, and that is that it has been found that a schedule calling for less than 10-minute intervals between vehicles, the tramcar is the most economical."—Mon. G. Bourgy, Director and Engineer, Tramways Unifies de Liebe et Extensions, in an article describing the trolleybus section of the Liege undertaking.

**APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS.**

The following appointments to the Official and Clerical Staff are notified:—

R. W. Robinson, Victoria Parade, Per. Way Checker; R. L. Mansfield, Bank Street, Emergency Driver.

**RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.**

Since our last issue, the Board has approved of the undernoted retiring gratuities:—

Bodymaker H. G. Thorne (65), 26 years' service, £637; Con. H. J. Mitchell (58), medically unfit, 31 years, £477; Pitman H. W. Dalrymple (65), 34 years, £800; Bus Driver M. S. Burgess (35), medically unfit, 11 years, £96; Bus Driver E. C. Bond (54), medically unfit, 32 years, £508; Drvr. A. J. B. Mackenzie (40), 10 years, resigned, £80; Con. R. E. Burgess (45), 15 years, medically unfit, £240.

**IT WOULD BE NICE — IF CORRECT.**

"... the current revenue will be ample to accommodate all of the justifiable demands of the Association."—J. R. Andrews, Editor, "Tramway Record."

That assertion regarding revenue would be very nice, if correct. Unfortunately, with five months of the financial year gone, nothing has occurred to foster the hope that the operations which will conclude on the 30th June next will result in anything but a deficit.

J. S. McClelland Pty. Ltd., 42 Lonsdale St., Melbourne, C.1.

# Tramway Topics

The Official Bulletin of The Melbourne & Metropolitan Tramways Board

Volume 7

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**BOURKE STREET CONVERSION.  
Board Anxious to Commence Construction.**

It is learned that there is an impression in some quarters that the statement in "The Age" on the 5th January that "double and single decker buses will be running in Bourke Street for many years—until 1955 at least," emanated from our Chairman (Mr. R. J. H. Risson, C.B.E., D.S.O.). We would like to emphasise for the benefit of the staff that it did not. It is known further that "The Age," to whom the Board is indebted for support throughout the years and helpful suggestions, did not intend the article to be read as if it had come from the Chairman, but only as an expression of the paper's own opinion.

Naturally the Chairman declined to commit himself to a specific date for the commencement of track construction. With the present unsatisfactory manpower position and the uncertain situation in regard to materials, it would be unwise to attempt a firm estimate at this stage.

The Board is most anxious to start track construction as early as possible. Looking to the capital expenditure already incurred, which, of course, must remain unremunerative until the lines to East Brunswick and Northcote are opened, that desire can be understood and appreciated. But nothing can be said in favour of an early start with inadequate gangs and the prompt supply of materials uncertain. To do that would be but to prolong the unavoidable inconvenience which will be suffered by the public when the work is under weigh. But the work will be started, and finished, as early as practicable.

**TO MINIMISE BREAKDOWN DELAYS.  
Cars to be Equipped with Two-way Radio.**

Since 1931 the Board's Supervisor at the Carlton Control Room has been able through the State Electricity Commission's transmission station to

communicate with any of our tower waggons fitted with wireless receiving sets. To-day we have 11 vehicles so equipped, and while the arrangement with the S.E.C. has worked satisfactorily, the Board feels that the time has come for a marked step forward, especially as the Commission has now a modern frequency modulated system in service which gives two-way mobile radio service over the Metropolitan area.

Having considered alternative schemes, the Board has decided to equip eventually 23 vehicles with two-way radio, using at present the S.E.C. station and contributing to the operating cost on a pro rata basis. The two-way radio equipped fleet would then consist of—

Tower Waggons	10
O.H. Staff	2
R.S. Breakdown Van	1
Per. Way Breakdown Van	2
Per. Way Staff	1
Sub-Station Inspectors	1
Traffic Inspectors	3
Bus Breakdown Van	1
Spare Cars	2

While this arrangement with the S.E.C. will provide an excellent service and will, it is hoped confidently, minimise the extent of delays through breakdowns in the Distribution and Traffic Department, it will be recognised that the scheme is but the preliminary move to the ultimate objective, the establishment of our own Traffic Control Centre functioning through two-way wireless communication to a fleet of motor vehicles patrolling defined areas in charge of Inspectors.

**EXPERIMENTAL EQUIPMENT.  
Maintenance Cost of Resilient Wheels.**

Looking to the fact that some time in the New Year we shall have a tram on the streets comprising

our altered S.W.6 body on P.C.C. trucks, it was interesting to learn from the General Manager of the Glasgow Corporation Department (Mr. E. R. L. Fitzpayne) that improvements in new or existing trams in order to provide greater comfort, speed, etc., prove costly in practice. We can well believe that, for, as we pointed out in a recent issue, the drawings alone required for the alterations to the P.C.C. trucks numbered no fewer than 127.

Getting back to Glasgow, Mr. Fitzpayne tells us that the steel treads on a set of resilient rubber sandwich wheels ran only 49,000 miles, as compared with the average of 70,000 miles for the standard tyres. As the rubber sandwiches were still quite good after that mileage of 49,000, whereas the rubber components of the wheels on the Blackpool system had to be renewed after only 13,000 miles, Mr. Fitzpayne reaches the conclusion that the softer the rubber used the greater the noise reduction and the greater the maintenance costs.

That mileage of 70,000 miles for standard tyres seemed to us low compared with our records; but to make certain on that point we asked our Rolling Stock Engineer for his figures for the year which ended on the 30th June last. Here they are—

Miles per tyre

26½"	351 pairs condemned	172,423
28"	40 " "	119,590
28" solid wheels	143 " "	183,376

The difference in Melbourne's favour is remarkable, looking to the gradients of Glenferrie and Burke roads alone. In Glasgow there are but two rises of any consequence, the short pull up Renfield Street to Sauchiehall Street and the longer gradual ascent from the Tolbooth to the Cathedral.

### TRANSPORT IN AMERICA.

#### Impressions of London Chairman.

A recent issue of "Modern Transport," London, carried the impressions formed by Lord Latham, Chairman of the London Transport Executive, on a tour of eight representative cities of the United States and Canada. What he has to say makes it evident that the traffic problems of the great cities of the world differ only in degree, and that the difficulty of maintaining a financial balance when there are abnormal peak loads allied with unprofitable off-peak loading appears as incapable of solution in New York, Chicago and Toronto as it does in London, Melbourne or Sydney.

Apart from New York, and in a lesser degree Chicago, Lord Latham found that street surface vehicles are the principal means of public transport, and that the morning and evening peaks are worse than in London. Movement is slower, and the vehicles are very overcrowded, standing passengers

being sometimes in excess of the seating capacity, while in others up to 50 per cent. of that capacity is the permitted number. "Off-peak traffic," his Lordship remarks, pointedly, "is insufficient to support the provision that has to be made to carry, even in great discomfort, the peak loads; hundreds of vehicles are idle in the middle hours and much capital expenditure is unfruitful." (But even at their worst, we would comment, they would not be half as bad as our Fisherman's Bend route).

Efforts to increase off-peak traffic have not been very successful, for concessions offered to travellers in certain hours merely lessened the revenue without attracting the additional passengers necessary to ensure an increase in the financial result. "In the result," Lord Latham mentions, "public transport, whether provided publicly or by private undertakings, has been compelled to seek successive increases of fares, and, even then, most operators are running at a loss, or very near it," a conclusion which is confirmed by the figures quoted in another column from the American Transit Association.

"Fare increases have got near to, and in some cases have passed, the point of what the traffic cannot and will not bear," Lord Latham proceeds, "and traffics have permanently declined. The result is, perhaps, accentuated by the prevalent system of flat fares as distinct from our system based on distance. Flat fares have a restrictive effect on short journey riding. Several cities have sought to minimise this by having zone fares with a flat fare within each zone, but additional fares when passing from one zone to another means that the passenger pays quite a high total fare.

"The rectangular layout of the cities of Canada and the United States, with transport routes running north and south and east and west, does not give the radial cross-wise facilities we are accustomed to in England; to travel between or across these routes generally means a transfer from one vehicle to another, and even these facilities are limited. My general impressions are that public transport is not generally regarded as a public service, forming part of the civic planning of the social and economic pattern and communications of great urban areas. In many cases, it seemed to me, the area of operation was too small, and that there were too many undertakings operating independently with little or no effective large scale co-ordination, to say nothing of integration."

### UP THEY GO AGAIN!

Increased in April, the Manchester fares were again advanced in October last, the minimum fare for the first section now being 1½d. with the maximum at 7d., as compared with 1d. and 5d. On the

"limited stop" buses, the minimum charge was raised to 3d., while cheap travel tickets were advanced from 1/- to 1/6.

The financial Utopia which was to dawn on Manchester transport following upon the completion of the conversion from trams to buses seems now further off than ever.

### THE POSITION AT ADELAIDE.

Like ourselves, the Municipal Tramways Trust, Adelaide, found that while for the year revenue increased (from £1,330,689 to £1,541,994) the gain was insufficient to offset the additional expenditure incurred through higher wages and prices for materials and power, the result being a deficit of £138,403 after appropriating £103,533 for Renewals, £151,199 for Interest and £33,810 for Sinking Fund.

The Chairman (Mr. L. O. Pitcher) in his report compared 1949 with 1930, and points out that while the cost of operating has increased by 85 per cent., fares have gone up only 29 per cent., and passengers by but 15 per cent. Since February, 1948, salaries and wages alone have advanced by £189,000.

On the rolling stock side, six double deck Diesel buses were put into service, the bodies for 30 single deck Diesels are being built in Sydney, while parts for 40 additional H1 trams, which are to be assembled at Hackney, are coming to hand.

### MELBOURNE'S PRACTICE ADOPTED.

Two or three years ago an American made a tremendous fuss over its "leadership" in adopting the fluid drive for their cars, ignoring the fact that a British firm had specialised in that direction for the best part of a generation. Now, British technical journals are indulging in panegyrics because the Transport Department of Manchester has included with its annual report a graph showing how each £ of revenue was expended.

To read the laudatory references to the "enterprise" displayed is to wonder what would have been written over something which had not been done before. We have published such a graph in our annual reports for the last 26 years.

### GLASGOW'S OFF-PEAK FARE CONCESSION.

In the hope that sufficient traffic may be diverted from the slack periods experienced between 10 a.m. and noon and 2.30 and 4.30 p.m., the Transport Committee of the Glasgow Corporation has approved a scheme under which tokens issued in books of 10 are exchanged by conductors for 1½d. tickets valid

for any distance on the trams and trolleybuses from Monday to Friday inclusive during the hours mentioned.

### PROFITS A RECORD LOW. Revelations by the Transit Fact Book.

Compiled by the Statistical Fact Department of the American Transit Association, which embraces 1,445 transport concerns, the Transit Fact Book of 1949 shows that for 1948 the profits dropped to a record "low," the return on an investment of 4,077,300,000 dollars being but 2.49 per cent. as compared with 3.39 per cent. in 1947.

There may not be a "recession" in the United States, but the figures reveal that in the year under review buses, trams, subways, elevated railways and trolleybuses carried 2,000,000,000 fewer passengers than in the peak year of 1946. In all there were 21,368,000,000 passengers and the total operating revenue was 1,488,600,000 dollars. Against that revenue there were operating expenses (including depreciation) of 1,343,651,000 dollars, and as in addition 101,210,000 dollars had to go for taxes, the amount left dwindled to 43,739,000 dollars. Wages soared by 39,000,000 to 829,000,000 dollars although the staffs decreased by 5,000. General increases in fares failed to overtake the rises in wages and in the cost of materials, and managements discovered that each lift in the flat fare decreased the number of their short-haul passengers. Flat fares of from 10 to 15 cents. are now common, with at the moment the Chicago Transit Authority trying to secure permission to impose a flat fare of 20 cents. on the elevated and subway and express buses and 15 cents. on the trams, buses and trolleybuses.

### RETIRING AND DEATH GRATUITIES.

Since our last issue, the Board has approved of the under-noted retiring gratuities:—

Sub-Foreman T. E. de Luca (65), 36 years' service, £1,038; A. V. S. Smith (38), 13 years, med. unfit, £235; Dvr. J. H. Underwood (60), R.S., 25 years, med. unfit, £591; Signalman L. L. Fogg (65), 41 years, £900; Con. R. E. Burgess (45), 15 years, £240; Asst.-Control Supervisor L. E. E. Batten (65), 25 years, £979; Track Repairer C. Johannsen (63), 34 years, med. unfit, £462; Paint Mixer R. A. Blamey (65), 32 years, £747; Sub-Foreman A. B. Crichton (65), 27 years, £967; Track Repairer G. A. Dickson (65), 29 years, £613; Nightwatchman N. G. Hamilton (57), 33 years, med. unfit, £562; Leading Pitman C. J. Kennedy (55), 30 years, med. unfit, £541; Pitman R. A. Stewart (65),



## Tramway Topics

25 years, £674; Tradesman W. E. Ash (65), 47 years, £930; Con. R. G. Boyd (60), 35 years, £491; Dvr. J. McNeill (65), 36 years, £627; Con. C. M. Pepperell (65), 24 years, £676; Dvr. E. Cutler (65), 36 years, £796; and Dvr. N. G. Olson (42), 16 years, med. unfit, £261.

Death gratuities have been paid to the next of kin in respect of the following:—

Leading Hand Car Cleaner E. Nelson (55), 30 years' service, £502; Machinist F. A. G. Barker (57), 30 years, £398; Cleaner W. E. Stevens (60), 33 years, £432; Tradesman's Assistant E. Forbes (46), 24 years, £332; Tram Transport Driver A. G. Betts (56), 36 years, £474; Bus Driver F. Cameron (51), 15 years, £266; and Dvr. F. L. Hughes (61), 33 years, £554.

### FOR OUR MOTOR DRIVERS.

Do you know that you can wear out tyres twice as fast in summer as in winter?

Or that in a modern city a vehicle will pull up in half the distance on one type of road surface compared to another?

Or that a very good driver can get 10 times more life out of a tyre than a very bad driver.

Or that a vehicle takes twice the distance to stop on wet asphalt as on wet wooden blocks?—"The Leyland Journal."

### IN OPORTO.

Three tram extensions have taken place in Oporto, the second city and chief seaport of Portugal, since 1946, and the fleet now consists of 191 trams and 25 trailers, serving routes of 51 miles.

Only 10 buses are used. It is planned to open up new routes with trolleybuses until the traffic justifies the construction of tramways.

### THE FIRST P.C.C. TRAM AT THE HAGUE.

The first European P.C.C. tram arrived at The Hague in August, that term being used to denote the fact that while it was imported from the States, in several respects it differs from the standard car of America. It is slightly shorter, it has a width of 2.20 metres as against 2.50 metres, it has three seats and one window less, it is fitted with pantograph instead of trolley and it has been constructed for two-man operation instead of the more usual American one-man system.

Remarkably good acceleration was achieved on trial, a speed of 30 kmh. (18.2 m.p.h.) being reached in five seconds. All control is by pedals—a "dead man's" pedal, accelerator and brake. The first

application of the latter gives rheostatic braking, the second actuates a brake drum on the motors, while the third brings in the magnetic track brakes.

### RUBBER IN STREET PAVING MIXTURES.

Richmond was the first municipality in the Melbourne area to try laying the streets in concrete, a departure which paid handsomely in the shape of largely decreased charges for maintenance. Will we wonder, will be the first to follow the example of New York and incorporate rubber in asphaltic mixtures?

In order to determine how the compound will stand up under heavy traffic, six stretches have been laid in Manhattan, the proportion of rubber used in each case varying from 12 to 25 pounds per ton of paving mixture. All told, 3½ tons of natural rubber was included in the 200 tons of material laid. It is proposed to leave the test stretches in place for from 6 to 18 months before appraising their worth.

Somebody is sure to write and ask what connection there is between street paving and tram operation, so we can anticipate the query by pointing out that the Board is bound under the Tramway Act to lay that portion of the street for which it is responsible as specified by the Council concerned.

### APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS.

The following appointments and promotions are notified:—

W. R. Allen, Footscray, Depot Foreman; G. T. Gazeley, Brunswick, Depot Foreman; J. G. Miller, Preston Workshops, Laboratory Assistant; C. J. S. McClounan, Depot Foreman; D. Seaton, Relief Depot Foreman; E. F. Vale, Coburg, Probationary Staff Signalman; T. C. Tippet, Preston, Depot Foreman; Freda R. Mowbray, H.O., clerk.

### MALE JUNIOR CLERKS WANTED.

Members of the staff who have sons having their last holiday before starting work have their attention directed to the fact that vacancies exist in the Revenue Department for junior male clerks, with commencing salaries as under:—

14 years of age	£2/10/0 per week
15 years of age	£2/16/6 per week
16 years of age	£3/2/6 per week

Applications, together with copies of three references, should be addressed to the Industrial and Revenue Officer, Head Office.