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THE MUNICIPALIZATION OF TRAMWAYS.

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not signed, etc. condition, due he was requested sign or leave. He signed.

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CORPORATIONS AND DISTRICT COUNCILS WHICH POSSESS THEIR OWN
LINES OR A PORTION OF THEM.

(Those marked * have municipalized their tramways.)

Accrington, Barrow-in-Furness, Birkenhead, Birmingham, Blackburn, *Blackpool, Bootle, Bradford, Croydon, Eccles, *Huddersfield, *Hull, *Leeds, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Moss Side, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Newport, North Bierley, Oldham Borough, *Plymouth, Preston, Salford, *Sheffield, Shipley, South Shields, Sunderland, Tong, Wigan, Withington, Dundee, Edinburgh, *Glasgow, Gourrock, Govan, Greenock.

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Tramways -
United Kingdom.



THE MUNICIPALIZATION OF TRAMWAYS.

What shall we do with our Tramways ?

EVERY citizen of a town with a tramway in it should consider this question carefully enough to have a clear opinion as to whether the municipal authority, constituted by his vote, should acquire the tramway and work it for the benefit of the town, or simply leave it in the hands of private joint-stock companies, free from public control, and having no end in view except the profit of the shareholders. Or—for there is an intermediate course—whether the permission to the companies to use the streets shall be subject to conditions made in the interest of the employees and the townspeople.

How the Matter Stands at Present.

Our tramways are not now under a uniform system. Of the 153 lines now working in the United Kingdom, thirty-seven are already in the hands of the local authority, whilst 116 belong to private companies. Nor are the company lines uniform. Some are still enjoying the twenty-one years' monopoly secured to them by the Tramways Act. Others, in whose cases the twenty-one years have expired, are worked by the company under a lease from the local authority. Further, the lines worked by companies have not all been constructed by them. In some cases the municipal authority, having power under the Tramways Act to construct the lines but not to work them (which can only be done by a special Act), has constructed the line and leased it to a company. Experienced politicians will guess from this that the Act is out of date, and belongs to the period when theoretic legislation to keep all business enterprises in private hands was still in fashion. In fact, the date 1870 is written all over the Act.

The Tramways Act, 1870.

Our tramway systems at the present time are governed entirely by this single Act, and its modifications in the various Tramway Orders and Confirmation Acts, which have to be introduced in the case of every company or corporation, as the case may be. Previous to its enactment four Tramway Bills were sanctioned by Parliament, between 1868 and 1869. Three of these related to London, the other to Liverpool. But they all had a special provision that nothing therein contained should be deemed or construed to exempt the tramways from the provisions of any general Act relating to tramways now in force or which might thereafter pass during that or any future session of Parliament.

The Act of 1870 is divided into three parts. The first deals with the procedure necessary to obtain leave to build a tramway. The second is concerned with construction ; and the third is headed "General Provisions."

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The promoters recognized by the Act are of two kinds. They are either private companies or local authorities. Each of these bodies must obtain from the Board of Trade a Provisional Order before it can commence operations. This Provisional Order has afterwards to be confirmed by Act of Parliament. A company has the right of working the lines for twenty-one years only. At the end of that time it comes under Section 43, which will be referred to later.

Local authorities after constructing their lines may do one of two things. They may lease them to a company for twenty-one years, or they

May leave such tramway open to be used by the public, and may in respect of such user demand and take the tolls and charges authorized; *but nothing in this Act contained shall authorize any local authority to place or run carriages upon such tramway, and to demand and take tolls and charges in respect of the use of such carriages.*

This clause is hardly intelligible nowadays. It means that if private individuals choose to flange the wheels of their vehicles and use the tram rails, the local authority may take toll from them in the old turnpike fashion. The section is a piece of pure individualist theorizing, and may be disregarded as quite impracticable.

Section 20 empowers the local authority to borrow money from the local rate, and also to raise loans for the purpose of constructing the lines. The loans must be repayable within thirty years.

Section 43 is the famous purchase clause. Here is the greater part of it at full length :

Where the promoters of a tramway in any district are not the local authority, the local authority, if, by resolution passed at a special meeting of the members constituting such local authority, they so decide, may within six months after the expiration of a period of twenty-one years from the time when such promoters were empowered to construct such tramway, and within six months after the expiration of every subsequent period of seven years . . . by notice in writing require such promoters to sell, and thereupon such promoters shall sell to them their undertaking, or so much of the same as is within such district, upon terms of paying the then value (*exclusive of any allowance for past or future profits of the undertaking, or any compensation for compulsory sale, or other consideration whatsoever*) of the tramway, and all lands, buildings, works, materials, and plant of the promoters suitable to and used by them for the purposes of their undertaking within such district, such value to be in case of difference determined by an engineer or other fit person nominated as referee by the Board of Trade on the application of either party, and the expenses of the reference to be borne and paid as the referee directs.

This power of purchase is also granted when the undertaking of a company is "discontinued" or declared insolvent by the Board of Trade. Similar provisions are made in the next clause for the sale of a tramway undertaking, should a company wish to sell it, within six months after the line has been opened. The local authority may raise the money for such purchase, either from the local rate or by loan.

It is also important to notice that under Section 57 :

Notwithstanding anything in this Act contained the promoters of any tramway shall not acquire . . . any right other than that of user of any road along or across which they lay any tramway.

It is hardly necessary to make any comment on these clauses. Their meaning is perfectly clear. The local authority may, if it thinks fit, buy up the tramway at the end of twenty-one years, and

it shall pay the company the price of the material and nothing more. In a word, it is not to take over the undertaking as a "going concern." The towns are further safeguarded by section 57, which clearly states that the companies have no property whatsoever in the roads themselves over which the line runs.

How important this is can be seen from the arbitration between the London County Council and the London Streets Tramway Company in 1893, when the Council negotiated to buy four and a quarter miles of that Company's lines. The Company boldly attempted to get out of section 43, and claimed £604,090; Sir Frederick Bramwell, the arbitrator, awarded £129,748.

Further History.

The parliamentary history of tramways, so far, begins and ends with this Tramways Act. There are only two other events of any importance to be noted in this connection. Hitherto the rule that local authorities were not to run their own carriages was one of the Standing Orders of the two Houses of Parliament. In 1896 this Order was suspended for a year, and it is expected that this suspension will be renewed from year to year. And in 1896 the Light Railways Act offered an alternative procedure to municipalities who are prepared to dispense with horse traction.

In the towns, Huddersfield is the first which claims our notice. In 1880-1 it obtained a Provisional Order that in case no company could be found to run a tramway within its boundaries, the Corporation might run one itself. It so happened that Huddersfield, being full of steep inclines and unsuited to tramway traffic, could find no company to undertake the work. Consequently, it was the first town in England to municipalize its tramways. Since then five other towns, namely, Glasgow, Leeds, Sheffield, Blackpool, and Plymouth, have followed its example, whilst Hull has temporarily taken over its lines. The Liverpool Corporation has also just purchased the undertaking of the Liverpool United Tramways and Omnibus Company, Limited, for the sum of £675,000, and will actually take over the business on the 31st August, 1897. Some of these obtained special powers; others, like Glasgow, were allowed by their private Act to buy, within six months of the opening of the line, the undertaking of the company, with all that company's powers (including therefore the power to work). We shall refer in greater detail to some of these places later on.

Relieving the Ratepayer.

Those who wish to municipalize the tramways must beware of the well-meant argument that if the corporation takes over the tramways the ratepayer will be relieved. "Look," they cry, "at the boundless profits that the companies are making! All this money could be applied to the relief of rates if the corporations were but to take over the tramways." This is quite true; the money *could* be so applied. But it would first have to be collected from the passengers at as high a rate and for no better accommo-

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dation than at present. Why should the tramway passenger, who, in London at least, is usually a comparatively poor man, pay more for his tram ride than it costs, in order that the rates may be lightened for those who do not ride in tramcars? It is true that he had much better do this than pay, as he does at present, an equal surplus to enrich a group of private shareholders; but he is not bound to any such choice of evils. If there is a profit he may claim, and fairly claim, that it should be absorbed either in better accommodation for him or in a reduction of fares. Or it may be applied to some public purpose by which he benefits, or balanced against some equivalent advantage which he derives from similar indirect taxation falling in another quarter; for though he is entitled to be served by the public authority at cost price on the whole, the best way of arriving at that result may be to work certain departments at a profit and certain others at a loss. But there must be no question of relieving the general ratepayer at the expense of the tramway passenger. Tramways have become a necessity, and to charge high fares is to make the mistake of taxing necessities. The only real economic benefit the citizen should expect from the municipalization of trams is cheaper and better transit. The advantages enjoyed by the municipality over private bodies are so great that only the grossest mismanagement could neutralize them. No joint-stock company can raise capital on its own security on such easy terms as a civic corporation on public security, nor can it acquire the powers and privileges, the width of organization and command of the town which the authorities enjoy. Being a mere privately subscribed money-making concern, it has neither the cash, the credit, the singleness of social aim, nor the electoral responsibility to serve the public as well and cheaply as the public can serve itself. Its best must needs be less than the best of the municipality; and no other economy should be held out as a bribe to the ratepayers or anyone else. It should be established as a first principle of all municipalization schemes, that if a public representative body takes over a great work, its primary object ought to be to do that work as well as possible regardless of all profit and regardless of all expense, except that it should try to make the undertaking self-supporting.

The Case for Municipalization in Figures.

In Glasgow last year (1895-6) 86,462,594 passengers were carried in the municipal tramcars, and 6,932,650 miles were run. Let us suppose that Glasgow had electric installation, that half the passengers took halfpenny fares, and the rest one penny. This means an income of about £270,195. It has been estimated that electric traction would cost 7d. per car mile run, including repayment of capital and renewal and maintenance of lines. For argument's sake we will take the cost at 7½d. per mile, which comes out at about £216,645 in expenditure, leaving over £50,000 to cover all other expenses. This shows what could be done even with halfpenny fares. Low fares do not necessarily mean a reduction in revenue. In Glasgow the intakings went up by leaps and bounds when halfpenny fares were introduced. But

improved cars, higher wages, fewer hours, involving a larger number of employees, all imply greater outgoings. Against this must be set off the fact that a sinking fund means a reduction of the debt, and consequently an annually decreasing sum to be set aside as interest. Taking all this into consideration, tramways are, nevertheless, very paying undertakings. For example, the North Metropolitan line in London paid last year a dividend of 8 per cent., and could yet carry forward £8,666 into next year's account. The Liverpool United Tramway and Omnibus Company, Limited, pays 5 per cent. on its share capital; but as half of this is an unsubstantial asset called "Good-will," it is really paying 10 per cent. on the realizable value of its capital. In Oxford 6 per cent. is usually paid; it is true that last year (1896-7) only 5 per cent. was paid; but abnormal expenses had to be incurred, owing to the competition of an omnibus company. It is hardly possible to look up any of the larger towns in Duncan's *Tramway Manual* without finding that some enormous dividend is being paid. If we suppose that 2 or even 3 per cent. will have to be knocked off the net profit when the lines are taken over by the corporations, there will always be a substantial sum to set to the credit of the undertaking. In Glasgow better wages are paid to the employees; hours of work are shorter; fares are lower; and no advertisements are allowed on the cars. The first eleven months of municipal working (1894) shows the following:

	£	s.	d.
Gross receipts	226,414	3	4
Gross expenditure... ..	202,209	9	2
Balance	£24,204	14	2
This was disposed of thus:			
Depreciation written off capital	9,193	19	7
Reserve fund for renewal of permanent way	6,750	9	1
Payment to "Common Good"	8,260	5	6
Total	£24,204	14	2

At first, people said that next year things would wear another color, as 2 per cent. on capital would have to be set aside as sinking fund; but next year's account shows the following:

	£	s.	d.
Gross receipts	334,377	13	6
Gross expenditure	251,110	5	7
Balance	£83,267	7	11
Which was disposed of as follows:			
Interest on capital	12,656	12	5
Sinking fund	10,541	19	2
Payment to "Common Good"	9,000	0	0
Depreciation written off Capital	17,809	9	1
Permanent way renewal fund	17,000	0	0
General reserve fund	16,259	7	3
Total	£83,267	7	11

This disposes of the notion that a corporation cannot profitably work an undertaking of this sort.

Let us now take some less favorable examples. Plymouth took over its tramways in 1893. The Company which had worked the lines previously was in a moribund condition. It had been unable to obtain the requisite capital; and the result was that it was mismanaged and disregarded public convenience; after struggling on for three years it came in 1893 to the end of its resources. The Corporation, having bought the track at considerably more than its market value, tried at first to lease it, but as no one would undertake the task, it resolved to work the lines itself. It thoroughly repaired them and made large additions. It had great difficulties to contend against. The town is full of steep gradients; and there was a strong competition of omnibuses, which did all they could to obstruct and annoy the Corporation cars. But for all that, the lines have paid their way completely, except that it has so far been impossible to make any contribution towards the sinking fund. The service is cheaper, more frequent and more rapid than it was under the Company; and as soon as a means of haulage better than horses has been adopted the undertaking is expected to be a brilliant success.

Huddersfield is more unfavorable still, because it has such steep gradients that the expenses of haulage were prohibitive to private enterprise. But though the undertaking there has not been a financial success in the past, it is already beginning to pay its way; while the citizens show their appreciation of its services by their loyal support.

This is the dark side of the picture—not very black, it will be admitted. In Leeds and Sheffield we see the other side. Sheffield has taken, in the first half-year of its working £3,182 more than the Company took in the corresponding period of the previous year; and Leeds has in its first year beaten the Company by the enormous sum of £13,721 16s. 8d. In the first year its net profit was £3,220 1s. 6d., and in the second year £7,844 8s. 6d., out of which sinking fund has to be paid in both cases. Not bad, that, for undertakings which were once supposed to be incapable of prosperity in the hands of corporations.

Public Convenience.

There are two parts of the community interested in the tramways—and interested in different ways. There is the general public which uses the tramways, and there are the employees who work the tramways. First, then, as to the general public.

Frequent Service.

In cities, the need for a cheap mode of street transport is not intermittent. In the busiest parts of London a practically continuous stream of omnibuses is unable to exhaust the demand for penny rides. The continuous stream, however, only occurs in streets which are common to several different omnibus routes. It is not the interest of a company to satisfy completely the public need for frequency of service. If it can make a good profit on a small capital by running a few cars which are always quite full, it is not likely to expend more capital, run more cars, which are only three-quarters full, and so

make a less profit. As has already been pointed out, profit ought not to be a primary consideration with a municipal council: so long as the cars are always full enough to pay their way, the question of more or less profit is secondary. Thus we see that wherever the trams have been municipalized the services have been improved. At Plymouth the bad service was one of the reasons for supplanting the company by the municipality. At Leeds improvements were made on some of the routes; and the same causes would produce the same effects in the larger towns if municipalization were effected.

Haulage.

At the present time most towns in England have only horse tramways. A few towns have introduced some form of mechanical haulage. Huddersfield uses steam; so does Birmingham. Blackpool was the first to use electricity. Many other towns have, during the last year or two, formed committees to investigate the matter—notably Glasgow and Leeds; and in every case there has been a verdict against the present horse system. It is slow; it is expensive; it is cruel—especially where there are steep gradients. In America there are 15,000 miles of tramway, of which about 12,500 are worked by electricity. "Germany has already about 500 miles, France 150, Italy 100, and Great Britain and Ireland less than 50," says Mr. J. A. Baker, of the London County Council, in a lecture on the subject.

A large number of mechanical systems of haulage have been proposed. Most of them are open to objection. Steam is noisy; in Huddersfield people complain that their sleep is often disturbed by the steam trams. The cable has many imperfections. It adds to the occasional noise of the passing tram the continuous hum of the cable. The open slot in the centre of the road, in which the cable runs, is dangerous to bicycles and other light vehicles. Besides, with a cable, the car is bound to go either at full speed or not at all; for, as every one knows, the car moves by letting a grip fall on to a cable running at a uniform speed. Lastly, supposing an accident happens to a part of the cable, the whole system is brought to a standstill.

There are two chief methods of propelling tramcars by electricity. The first is the conduit system, known as the Buda-Pesth system because it was first used in that town. One of the rails is very deep and hollow. Along the sides of this hollow, and well within the curve, so as to be protected from rain water, run two brass rods, which conduct the current. The car lets down into the slot a sort of brush which passes over the surface of the rods and conducts the current from them to electric motors under the car. The overhead system consists of wires supported by brackets. These wires are connected with the car by means of a long arm attached to the car. The wires are themselves fed by feeder wires, which run underground, and are divided into sections in such a way that if one section goes wrong the others are not affected.

Neither system is perfect; and a very able statement of the advantages and disadvantages of them and others will be found in the report made by the City Engineer to the Corporation of Leeds.

This report was requested, but he was requested, the signed.

He makes an estimate for Leeds which is well worth considering. In the first column is the capital expenditure required to instal either of the three systems compared ; in the second column is given the respective annual cost.

	Initial cost.	Cost per annum.
	£	£
Horse system (renewal)	265,884	117,292
Electric	378,499	90,072
Cable... ..	428,922	101,819

It will be seen at once which way the advantage lies.

Of the two electric systems, engineers seem to prefer the overhead to the conduit. But it has been objected that the poles and wires are so very ugly. Strange to say, the people who are so sensitive in this matter, seem to have no objections to the sight of over-strained horses, to the intolerable uncleanness of streets strewn with their offal, or to the employment of boys in the disgusting labor of filling street-orderlies. The poles may be, and often are, ugly ; but that is no reason why they should not be made ornamental. If they are used to carry electric lights on the top, as is the case at Bristol, they will simply take the place of the old lamp-posts, which certainly are not less ugly than the poles. At all events, since they are welcomed in the picturesque streets of Nuremberg and the beautiful environs of Florence, we could probably bear them in our manufacturing towns.

Other Improvements.

A large number of other improvements, undreamt-of by the companies, could easily be introduced by the municipalities. For example, in Huddersfield and Plymouth there are waiting-rooms. Huddersfield alone has twenty. Again, Huddersfield has letter-boxes attached to the cars, and carries some 33,000 letters per month, to the great benefit of the postal service about the town.

Labor.

No public scheme can now be put forward without regard to its effect, not only on the general public, but on those who are actually engaged in carrying it out. Private companies may buy labor at the lowest competition price, without regard to the effect on the community of the degradation of the workers' standard of life (the real measure of the prosperity of a nation) by low wages and excessive hours of work. But public bodies have public duties, and are directly responsible to the working classes, by whose votes they are elected. If it can be shown that this responsibility is recognized, however imperfectly, and that the greater cheapness of municipal enterprise, far from being obtained at the expense of its employees, is actually accompanied by an improvement in their condition, the case for municipalization will be reinforced by the most powerful of all social arguments.

Wages and Hours.

The first question we ask with regard to labor is, what are the wages and what the hours? The following table is part of the answer :

COMPANIES.

Town.	Wages.		Hours.	
	Conductors.	Drivers.	Per day.	Per week.
Liverpool ...	24s. to 28s.	28s. to 35s.	14 $\frac{3}{4}$	103*
Edinburgh ...	18s. to 21s.	19s. to 22s.	9 to 9 $\frac{1}{2}$	54 to 56
London United ..	28s.	31s. 6d.	16	—
London ...	31s. 6d. to 35s.	31s. 6d. to 38s. 6d.	11'40	—

MUNICIPALITIES.

Glasgow ...	23s. to 27s.	23s. to 27s.	10	60
Leeds ...	23s. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.	29s. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.	—	65 $\frac{3}{4}$
Sheffield ...	17s. (boys)	28s.	10	— †
Huddersfield ...	22s.	27s. to 28s.	8	48
Plymouth ...	10s. (boys)	21s.	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	62 $\frac{1}{2}$
Blackpool ...	16s. to 18s.	24s. to 28s.	10	— †

This will give a very faint idea of the state of things. It has been very difficult to obtain any figures as to hours and wages from companies. In any case the municipalities have the best of the comparison. Some companies pay higher wages, but their hours are shockingly long. Instances like Liverpool and the two London companies quoted seem to be quite common. Plymouth pays a low wage. But a high authority says that it is not considered so under the local conditions. Further, Plymouth gives its men no Sunday work at all, and two half-holidays in the week. Glasgow decided that a Sunday service was necessary, but every man who works on a Sunday has a day off during the week. Further, a good uniform is supplied—a striking contrast with the Liverpool Company, which makes its men lay out 8s. 6d. in cap, cap-plate and licence before they start work. Liverpool is an instance of the instability of employment (the workman's greatest curse) under a capricious company. It takes on men and dismisses them so rapidly that few remain in service as long as a year. Many of them have come from other towns, and when dismissed, help to fill the ranks of the unemployed. When the Company is accused of maltreating its horses, it can make a brilliant defence; but when attacked on behalf of its men, it answers the charge in a most inadequate manner. It is commercially worth while to treat horses well; for if they are neglected, new ones will have to be bought. New men cost nothing.

A great evil which the municipalities will have to reform is the "checker" system. In particular the figures inside the bell-punch should be made visible. At present the conductor cannot see them, and has no remedy if the mechanism goes wrong. Secondly, the common practice of employing detectives to spy on the conduct of the men ought to be abolished or at least very carefully guarded; they are believed frequently to act as *agents provocateurs*, and passengers should learn to make their own complaints. Lastly the question of annual holidays with full pay is worthy of the consideration of a city council. It is much easier for a non-commercial body to effect such a reform than for a profit-making company.

* The hours here stated as regards Liverpool are an estimated average. It is impossible to be exact, as the hours vary on different routes.

† In Sheffield the men work two Sundays out of three. In Blackpool they have one day's rest in every seven.

Typical Tram Municipalizations.

GLASGOW.

In 1870 two private companies sought a Provisional Order to construct a tramway in Glasgow. By the Bill, eventually passed through Parliament, the city obtained the option of buying the Company's undertaking, *with all their powers*, within six months of the opening of their line. The Corporation exercised this option ; and it is in virtue of the powers so obtained that it works the tramways now. In 1871 it leased the lines for twenty-three years to a Company. Five years before the lease expired negotiations for renewal were opened. They failed because the Corporation insisted on the following terms (*inter alia*):

- (a) The hours of labor to be restricted to sixty-three per week.
- (b) The Company to provide their men with uniforms.
- (c) The lease to be for five years, and the Corporation to have the right to enter and adapt the lines to mechanical haulage two years before the expiry of the lease.

The Corporation, with the loyal support of the citizens, resolved to run the tramways themselves, and on July 1st, 1894, the first municipal cars ran.

There were considerable difficulties at first. The Corporation lacked experience ; the horses, which had been freshly bought, were unaccustomed to tramway work and were attacked by a severe epidemic of influenza ; and the old Company ran a vigorous competitive line of omnibuses. Despite all this the Corporation won, and the Company had to retire from the contest.

The Corporation introduced halfpenny fares, lengthened the distance which can be travelled for one penny, gave good uniforms to their men, freed the cars from all advertisements, and made other improvements. They are on the point of introducing electrical haulage.

The following table will show the figures for the last two years. As the financial year in Glasgow ends on May 31st, the first tramway year was only eleven months long. For that reason there is a third column giving the figures of 1895-6, reduced to a proportionate amount for eleven months. This will enable the reader to see what progress has been made :

	1894-5 (11 mo.)	1895-6.	1895-6 (11 mo.)
Gross revenue	226,414 3 4	334,377 13 6	306,512 17 5
Gross expenditure	202,209 9 2	251,110 5 7	230,192 15 1
Balance	£24,204 14 2	£83,267 7 11	£76,320 2 4
Horses	3,444	4,082	4,065.5
Passengers carried	57,104,647	86,462,594	79,257,378
Mileage run	5,192,031	6,932,650	6,354,929
Average weekly cars	230	276.62	276.62
Earnings per mile	10.26d.	11.38d.	11.38d.

The next table gives the wages as they are at present. Unfortunately it has been impossible to obtain the wages formerly paid by the Company.

	Per week.	Per day.
Point Boys	7s.	1s. 2d.
Horse Turners	8s. 6d.	1s. 3d.
Trace Boys	10s. to 12s.	1s. 8d. to 2s.
Horse Keepers	21s. to 22s.	3s. 6d. to 3s. 8d.
Sick Horse Keepers	21s. to 23s.	3s. 6d. to 3s. 10d.
Car Washers	21s. to 24s.	3s. 6d. to 4s.
Drivers and Conductors	23s. to 27s.	3s. 10d. to 4s. 6d.

The above rates apply equally to Sundays and week-days, except in the case of the horse-keepers, who receive 1s. extra for Sunday morning duty. Overtime is paid for at the same rate as regular hours.

The men belong to a Friendly Society, with the approval of the Tramway Committee, and the city contributes to its funds one-half of what is given by the members. The number of members is 1,474.

LEEDS.

The tramways in Leeds were originally let to a company. The Corporation merely took them over in 1894 temporarily, to consider what sort of traction should be used. But it has continued to work them; and the necessary powers have been made permanent by an Act of Parliament passed last year. The following accounts of the last two years are interesting.

	1894-5.			1895-6.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Car receipts	49,333	6	5	56,476	6	10
Other receipts	1,680	4	2	1,372	9	1
Gross receipts	51,013	10	7	57,848	15	11
Gross expenditure	44,123	8	10	46,013	18	3
Gross profit	6,890	1	9	11,834	17	8
Interest	3,670	0	3	3,990	9	2
Net profit	£3,220	1	6	£7,844	8	6

Exclusive of sinking fund.

The accompanying table of wages and hours is also striking. The wages are given per hour, with the equivalent per week in brackets:

Class of Men	Hours per week.		Wages.					
	Under Co. Under Corp.		Under Co.			Under Corp.		
	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	
Three-horse drivers ...	77½	66½	4 ⁹ / ₁₆	(29	5½)	5½	(29	3)
Two-horse drivers ...	81	71½	4 ³ / ₁₆	(28	3½)	5	(29	9)
Two-horse drivers ...	91¼	—	3½	(24	8½)	—	—	—
General average of two-horse drivers under Co.	86½	—	3¾	(26	11)	—	—	—
One-horse drivers ...	83½	67	3 ⁹ / ₁₆	(24	9½)	4½	(25	1½)
Engine drivers ...	77¼	66	5	(32	2½)	6¼	(34	4½)
Conductors ...	81½	65¾	3½	(21	5½)	4½	(23	3½)
General average—								
Drivers ...	81½	67¾	4 ¹ / ₁₆	(27	11½)	5½	(29	7½)
Conductors ...	81½	65¾	3½	(21	5½)	4½	(23	3½)

The Corporation spends in wages to drivers and conductors £5,000 a year more than the Company did. It spends £130 a week more than the Company on its employees generally. As a means of comparing the general scale of operations, the following figures are added:

that might be concluded, but he was requested to sign or leave. He signed.

	Corporation. (1895-6.)	Company. (1893-4.)
Car receipts	£56,476 6 10	£42,754 10 2
Car mileage	1,105,449 $\frac{3}{4}$	860,445
Passengers	10,843,457	8,208,865

There is a ten minutes' service. Electric traction is now being installed on seven miles of track.

HUDDERSFIELD.

This town is utterly unsuited for a profitable tramway undertaking. It is very hilly and largely rural in character, consisting of numerous outlying villages and townships to which tramways are run solely for the public convenience. In 1877 a company applied for leave to construct a line. This the town refused, as it wished to build its own lines and then to lease them. For this purpose a Bill was passed through Parliament in 1880 giving the Corporation the requisite powers, and further allowing it the privilege of working its own lines, so long as no Company offered to take up a lease. Despite every effort on the part of the Corporation, no such Company was found, except one which desired to run a portion of the line on the cable system, but failed even to open its lines to traffic. The Corporation resolved to use steam for its undertaking. The system it adopted has since proved insufficient, and, as the Corporation has always shown itself willing to adopt all good improvements, practically the whole of the permanent way and all the plant and rolling stock have been reconstructed and renewed. This has cost about £40,000; and to meet this expense in part, £20,982 has been transferred from the Depreciation Fund. The tramways have been subsidized from the rates to the extent of £41,238 (equivalent to £2,877 per annum, or 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. in the £); but no subsidy has been required during the last two years.

The account since 1882, when the construction of the lines began, may be summarized as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Gross receipts	242,322	0	0
Gross expenditure	220,873	0	0
Gross profit	£21,449	0	0
Depreciation	£27,322	0	0
Interest and Sinking Fund	57,132	0	0
	84,454	0	0
Net Deficiency	£63,005	0	0
Last year (1896-1897) saw the first surplus. The accounts were as follows:—			
	£	s.	d.
Gross receipts	29,051	4	11
Gross expenditure	18,794	5	11
Gross profit	£10,256	19	0
Interest and Sinking Fund	£6,079	6	5
Depreciation	3,000	0	0
	9,079	6	5
Net profit	£1,177	12	7

The hours and wages of conductors and drivers have already been given. It is only necessary to add that there is no Sunday work.

The tramways are now employed to remove sanitary refuse. They carry some fifty tons per day.

The postal authorities pay the tramways £300 per annum for the use of their cars.

The Leasing System.

Nothing has been said above as to the conditions which—failing municipalization—should form part of leases to tramway companies. The case for complete municipalization is so strong that a municipality, active and enterprising enough to obtain good terms from companies, is pretty sure to dispense with them sooner or later. In Glasgow the Corporation sought to impose on the Company a ten hours working day, and the provision of uniform overcoats for the drivers, in addition to general conditions of sanitation; and, as we have seen, it was only because the company refused to submit to these conditions that the Corporation took over the lines themselves. In London, municipalization has been postponed until the County Council is in a position to deal with the metropolitan tramway system as a whole, instead of beginning with odds and ends of lease-expired sections. Leasing, and even lease renewals, may therefore still be expedient; but only very foolish, lazy, or corrupt municipalities will grant or renew leases without making strict conditions as to the frequency of service, accommodation, and the maintenance of standard wages and hours for the employees. The rent should be a secondary consideration; in fact all the arguments given above to show that municipal tramways should not be used to make a profit for the relief of the general ratepayer, may be applied to show that the rent in a tramway lease should be nominal, and the real consideration should consist of conditions on behalf of the public or of the employees. But, however conscientiously and sagaciously leases may be drawn, municipalities resorting to them must not expect them to work without considerable friction. Wherever they have been adopted disputes have arisen repeatedly as to whether the company has to repair the tramway track, and as to what a good state of repair really is. The extent to which these disputes would be extended by the conditions demanded by modern conceptions of the duties of public bodies may be imagined.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, it is only necessary to say that a little energy on the part of the public-spirited Councillors in each tramway centre is all that is required to carry the day for municipalization. At Cardiff, for example, where there was general apathy to start with, things have so progressed, through the exertions of a few capable men, that purchase at a reasonable price seems probable, though it is not yet certain. Southampton has just resolved to buy her tramway undertaking. A little more of this, and all the great towns of England will be appreciating the efficiency and economy of a corporation-worked tramway system.

that implies the condition, but he was requested to sign or leave. He signed.

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