

Private cars and licensed road transport handle approximately 70 per cent. of all passenger transport work in the Dominion, private cars alone accounting for 42 per cent. of the total.

### ANNUAL COSTS

The public pays approximately £43,000,000 a year in freight charges and passenger fares. In addition, it is estimated that the annual cost of operating motor-vehicles other than those used in public transport services—*e.g.*, private cars, &c.—amounts to £50,000,000. The total expenditure on all forms of transport is therefore £93,000,000. The different transport agencies share in this cost as follows:—

| Kind of Transport.      |    |    |    | Percentage of<br>Total. |
|-------------------------|----|----|----|-------------------------|
| Licensed road transport | .. | .. | .. | 21                      |
| Private cars, &c.       | .. | .. | .. | 54                      |
| Rail                    | .. | .. | .. | 16                      |
| Shipping*               | .. | .. | .. | 6                       |
| Air services            | .. | .. | .. | 1                       |
| Tramways                | .. | .. | .. | 2                       |
| Total                   |    |    |    | 100                     |

\* Includes estimated receipts of Harbour Boards for year ended 31st March, 1949, and an estimate of revenue from coastal shipping at present freight rates.

The fact that no less than 75 per cent. of the total direct expenditure on all forms of transport during the year was spent on motor transport is a striking commentary on the popularity of the motor-vehicle in this country.

### COMPARATIVE TRANSPORT CHARGES

*Passenger.*—Relative unit costs are one of the most important factors relating to transport, and I have had the average charges per passenger-mile worked out for the different kinds of passenger transport services:—

| Kind of Transport.     |    |    |    | Average Charge, in<br>Pence, per<br>Passenger-mile,<br>d. |
|------------------------|----|----|----|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Air                    | .. | .. | .. | 4.1                                                       |
| Private car            | .. | .. | .. | 3.7                                                       |
| Steamer ferry          | .. | .. | .. | 2.1                                                       |
| Buses and service cars | .. | .. | .. | 1.5                                                       |
| Tramways               | .. | .. | .. | 1.4                                                       |
| Railway                | .. | .. | .. | 1.1                                                       |

There are, of course, reasons for the differences in the level of charges between the different forms of transport, but my purpose is to place before honourable members some rough idea of the comparative charges, because these have a definite bearing on the part played by each kind of transport. Air travel is the dearest as far as cost is concerned, while the railways are the cheapest, being just under travel by electric tramways and bus or service car. But each satisfies a public demand; the air for speedy travel over the longer distance, while the railways, tramways, and buses have the important job of getting people to and from their work.

As I see it, the statistics I have quoted draw attention to the tremendous importance of transport in our national economy—we depend on transport for both our internal and external trade—our great farming activities and our secondary industries must have cheap and efficient transport if we are to hold our place on the overseas markets and keep down the cost of living in the Dominion.

F. HACKETT,  
Minister of Transport.