

*Canada.*

So far as Canada is concerned, the only particulars regarding regulation are from the Province of Quebec. In this province motor-vehicle operators are required to file with the Public Service Commission time-tables and tariffs for fares, and must secure a permit, which the Commission issues after fully examining their standing and the necessity for operation in the public interest. A service, once established, must be continued in effect unless leave has been secured from the Commission for abandonment.

The Commission does not encourage competition among bus operators, and in practically all cases it gives a monopoly on each route. The experience has been that where competition is allowed the service suffers, and that with a monopoly of the route and close regulation and supervision better service is given the public. As a general principle, the Commission would not authorize a bus service to be started in competition with a suburban or interurban electric railway giving a satisfactory service. This Commission has no hard-and-fast rules as to competition, and each case is judged on its own merits, the public interest being paramount.

*South Australia.*

In December, 1926, the South Australian Government passed legislation creating a Board of four members, of whom the Railway Commissioner is Chairman, to exercise supervision and control of motor-buses operating in the metropolitan area. The competition against the railway throughout the country districts, however, continued so strongly that in 1927 Parliament passed a Motor Transport Act, vesting the control of all motor traffic outside the metropolitan area in a Board of three, of whom the Railway Commissioner is Chairman. In terms of this Act the Railway Commissioner cannot operate motor-vehicles within the metropolitan area other than in connection with traffic to and from the railways, and neither can the railways operate a motor service outside the metropolitan area unless it be shown that no other person is willing to carry passengers or goods on any particular route at rates or fares equal to or less than those proposed to be charged by the Railway Department. On the other hand, no person can, outside the metropolitan area, drive any motor-vehicle for the purpose of carrying passengers or goods unless the vehicle is licensed by the Board, which fixes the route or routes that may be traversed, and also such conditions as the Board thinks proper regarding the rates to be charged and the time-tables to be observed.

On the South Australian Board one member is a representative of the motor industries, and in a statement recently issued this gentleman stated that co-ordination between rail and road services is not only possible, but, as the result of the control now being exercised in South Australia, will continue to develop with benefit to all concerned. This member further stated that, although it would not be expected that any form of control could be instituted without some disabilities arising, he felt that definite progress had been made, and that the operations to date were sufficient to indicate the main lines on which development was likely to occur in the future. The rates fixed by the Board are arrived at after most careful inquiry, and are on a scale that will enable those engaged on such activities to continue their operation on a payable basis. The revised rates for freight and passengers as laid down by the Board give the railways a protection they formerly did not enjoy, and which every taxpayer must consider desirable. It was further stressed that one aspect of the road and rail co-operation which was already becoming manifest was the opportunities which would now arise for motor-lorries to perform a useful, economic service by operating from the different rail-heads and acting as feeders and distributors of goods carried by rail.

Broadly speaking, the method of co-ordinating transport services is to require that the applicant for a road license should satisfy the authorities in respect of the safety, regularity, and efficiency in working of the proposed service, and must also supply adequate proof that there is a demand for the service which is not adequately met by existing services. The fundamental principle is that the public interest is best served by the avoidance of any non-economic competition with existing rail and road services, and before granting a license the authorities are required to satisfy themselves upon this point.

*The Home-land.*

The position as it affected the Home-land was excellently summarized by the Right Hon. Mr. Winston Churchill recently, when he said,—

We need both road and rail communication. It is the task of Parliament to regulate the relations between them in true proportion, having regard to their competing interest, and to bring those competing interests into harmony with the general interest. On every side the local authorities complain of the burden cast upon them by the rapidly increasing motor-traffic, especially the heavy motor traffic. They appeal for ever greater assistance from the State, represented by the Road Fund and the Exchequer.

We have only a limited fund of capital to employ every year in every direction, and it would not be in the public interest—and this is one of the foundations of my argument—to spend in the next few years several hundred millions of additional money apart from the present grants upon the roads, *if the result should render artificially and prematurely obsolete the splendid British railway systems*, which represent a thousand million pounds of national capital and afford employment to nearly seven hundred thousand men."