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INDUSTRIAL EUROPE SEEN THROUGH AMERICAN EYES

Europe's Municipal Street Cars and the Economic Lessons They Present to the American People.

By JAMES MASON, Managing Director of Home Savings and Loan Company.

Glasgow, Scotland, Aug. 20.—This city is an excellent place from which to study the street car problem. It is probable that the statistics furnished by Glasgow officials have been more quoted than from any other municipality, but after all, figures are not everything, and as has been before remarked, while figures do not lie, sometimes figures do not tell the whole story. The reports are all in favor of municipal ownership from the financial standpoint, but there are other things to consider as well as money, and it is necessary to view the problem from all sides if one desires to come to a correct conclusion.

After talking with city officials and intelligent citizens in this city, Liverpool, Manchester, Oldham, Leeds, Sheffield, Bristol, Birmingham, London, Edinburgh, in Bern and Lausanne, Switzerland, in Freiburg, Germany, and in various other localities after viewing the magnificent plants and some of these cities have passed and noting how the public is being accommodated, and keeping in mind also the financial side, I can truthfully say that the street car problem has been solved in Europe overwhelmingly in favor of municipal ownership.

Universal Approval.
I have failed to find in a single city where municipal has followed private ownership, even a respectable minority of citizens favoring the private monopoly of city tramways. Municipal ownership is as yet comparatively young, while the private company with its long monopoly that every municipality that prospers could give, but only occasional city was the private municipal content with normal profits. Possessing a "good thing" they worked it for every penny it was worth, until finally they either sold it or they sold it out, and these municipalities have since repented the regret of their respective dignitaries.

During the past five years hundreds of thousands of dollars have been turned into the treasury of municipal corporations by the cities' tramway officials, and this officer and more rapidly, and the cities are much more satisfied with their own system than they ever were when they employed a private street car company. While occasionally a particular line of a system fails to meet expenses, the public is recompensed in other ways and the apparent loss is usually an actual gain.

Short Hauls the Rule.
Glasgow has been held up as a model for cities contemplating owning their own street car systems. It is, in fact, well worth studying, and a superior model would be wise indeed could be used as its general knowledge of street car matters by an investigation here. Still, in my opinion, both Liverpool and Manchester are not a whit behind Glasgow in their conduct of their municipal tramways. There is in every instance a wise supervision of the public while not neglecting economy. The men are not overpaid, the supplies are purchased in a competitive market, and the cars are neither extravagantly nor parsimoniously furnished.

It must be kept in mind, however, that probably in no city in Europe are the conditions just the same as those of American commercial and industrial centers. To look for enough, and it will be seen that most continental municipalities were walled towns, for protection against foreign foes. In consequence they are compactly built, and even in such a great city as Paris, with its 3,000,000 inhabitants—the area of which is about the same as Detroit, Mich., with 300,000 population—the suburbs are quickly reached, making long hauls the exception.

Most English cities were never walled enclosures, but the fact has been the effect of housing temptations, so that Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, etc., with populations running into the hundreds of thousands, comprise areas of from 14,000 to 15,000 acres only. Paris covers less than 25,000. Of necessity, then, the hauls are short, the great bulk of the street car riding public paying the most

hours of labor of employes from 70 to 54 hours a week, increasing their pay, putting on more cars with more rapid speed, and in other ways improving the service.

Letters of introduction from Mayor Maxway, of Detroit, Mich., and Mayor Johnson, of Cleveland, O., provided me interviews with city officials everywhere, and the information thus obtained, as well as the confidence with which they in charge of municipal tramways talked, backed up as were their words with official figures, makes it impossible for me to see how anyone with any general knowledge of the situation can argue for a moment in favor of private and against public ownership of street car service.

The "Zone" System.
In an English city owning its own street cars and tracks I find one feature charged different length hauls. The "zone" system prevails, passengers paying according to distance traveled. It has been said that the American public will never consent to be "collected" with this way of collecting fares; that the average American prefers the "one-price" way; and that the system would financially ruin any American road adopting it. These are not valid objections against the "zone" system that are not more than offset by the simple fact that under it each passenger pays for just what he gets, and that is of the most hand in not needed for the benefit of suburban passengers. In short, the "zone" system is the most equitable possible way of charging for street car fares, and the system is as easily laid out and managed as the system of a merchant who sells a cotton cloth by the yard, charges in proportion to the number of yards or feet.

Penny fares the Unit.
"Here the penny fare is the unit. That small sum carries a passenger about two miles. Over 50 per cent. of our fares, in round numbers, pay this sum; 25 per cent. pay a penny and a half, 15 per cent. pay two pence, any increase over the largest amount carrying them out of our and into other municipalities' territories. In the most town routes there are half penny zones, but these cut but a small figure in the system, such routes being only feeders to the main lines.

"Some routes are run at a financial loss, but there is compensation in other directions, one being the prevention of congested traffic elsewhere.

"You can say for me to the American public that our experience here proves that city tramways must be under municipal control if the best and cheapest service is desired. Only through good management can there be financial loss."

Manchester, as also do other up-to-date towns, use (no size of street cars. These seat from 25 to 35 passengers. Four passengers only are allowed to stand at one time in the small cars, and six in the large ones, during rush hours. This privilege is seldom needed, and never abused, as the cars are sufficiently numerous to take care of all ordinary crowds.

Conductors Have Apprentices.
On the big cars, besides motormen and conductors, there are employed "trrolley boys." The duty of the trolley boy is to watch the rope and to stop the car when a passenger wishes to alight while the conductor is collecting fares. The boy starts in at \$1.75 a week, and is raised 25 cents each year for five years, when he emerges a full fledged conductor commanding "journeyman's wages—say \$8 to \$10 a week. This latter sum is tip-top pay in England for a skilled mechanic.

I noticed in Bradford, on the municipal tramway there, what looked like the persistence of customs more applicable to private ownership. For one thing the motorman, in giving warning at street crossings, was compelled to pull a string attached to the clapper of a big bell hanging overhead. Each conductor carried a "safe," into which the passengers.

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ANOTHER REASON.
"The products of the labor of the toilers for the capitalists and small wage as possible for the toilers."—Political Economy.

TOILERS OF CANADA.
Ye toilers of the land of the Maple Listen to your Nation's call, To a greater and a better life, To be lived by one and all.

It is yours to make a history, More glorious than the world has seen, Not of fields that are covered with blood, But of a land where no wage slaves are seen.

Now rise ye sons of toilers And break the wage slave's chains, Until every man's a free man, In Canada's wife domains.

Let all the sons of toil, From whatever clime they be, Think as one at the battle line, To shake the shackles from the free.

A WORKINGMAN.
Because a man's a workingman, Why the need to worry, Is it just through work alone From death we can stay clear?

To live without the need of work Is a dream that comes to all, But all can't live on idle work, For the curse of man did fall.

Then if through work we all do live, And all have work to do, Then all should work until it's done, And after that have lots of fun.

LABOR DAY.
Men it means may curse and rave, Yet in them are men—both true and brave, And now another year has rolled away, But Labor Day is here to stay.

ONCE MORE.
Once more Labor Day is here, and it certainly is a good time for the toilers to review their position.

THE BEST METHOD.
It would be a wise thing for the toilers to ask themselves the question if the present system is the best method they could use or if there is not a better one that they have not yet tried.

A SPENDID ORGANIZATION.
The toilers have a splendid organization which has done a great deal of useful work for them, but if we do not do all for them that could be done,

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Up to the present time the toilers have only used their organization for to defend them against a reduction of wages or to secure loans in securing advance and shorter hours of labor. So far they have only used their organized strength to defend or protect them.

WAGE SYSTEM WRONG
It is the wage system that is wrong, and it is the real fundamental cause of all our industrial troubles, and if we do not do it right until they decide to abolish the wage system among themselves.

Before this can be done organized toilers must become convinced that the wage system is wrong and instead of advocating a living wage they must advocate the abolition of wage slavery.

GOOD AUTHORITY.
They have good authority for this when Commissioner Carol D. Wright, of the U. S. A. gives it as his belief that the present wage system must cease.

HOW IT CAN BE DONE.
This can be done by the toilers themselves, becoming as determined not to work for any money produced under the wage-slave system as they are today for the union label and union label.

(Continued on page 4.)

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