

TOWARDS A NATIONAL TRANSPORT

BY

ROBERT WILLIAMS¹

THE recent formation of a Joint Committee of the National Union of Railwaymen and the National Transport Workers' Federation means that in the very near future this new body will cover practically the entire transport of Great Britain: road, rail, air, and water. I include air because the Executive Council of the National Transport Workers' Federation has decided that "all workers who are or may be engaged on commercial aerial transport of goods and passengers" shall be eligible for affiliation to the Federation.

One may, therefore, be permitted to offer a few observations with regard to the probable trend of events in this, one of the most vital of our industries. Economical and swift transport is indeed the life-blood of a nation, and while this nation was unchallenged in regard to its maritime transport, the condition of our inland transport left so much to be desired as to be the despair of reformers. Inland transport was slow, dear, complicated, and generally inefficient. As in most inefficient concerns, transport employees were over-worked and underpaid. Hence, the strong demand by both railway workers and transport workers generally that the increases gained during the war shall be converted into wages.

Visualizing the future, one can see, first of all, a tremendous development in road transport. The hundreds of thousands of lorries and cars now in use

¹ This article was sent by Mr. Williams in reply to the symposium questions. It originally appeared in the *Athenæum*.