

## ORGANIZED MOTOR TRANSPORT SERVICES.

Notwithstanding the depression, there was considerable expansion in the motor transport services running over defined routes during the year ended 31st March, 1931. The number of vehicles engaged increased from 2,172 in January, 1930, to 2,430 in January, 1931, or by 258, or 12 per cent.

Official statistics regarding motor transport services on defined routes are collected for the months of January and July each year. The yearly figures given in this survey have been derived from these monthly figures, by adding them together and multiplying by six, on the assumption that the months of January and July may be regarded as more or less normal busy and slack months respectively.

The following figures summarize the position for the year 1930-31 as compared with 1929-30 :—

Item.	1929-30.	1930-31.	Increase.	Decrease.
			Per Cent.	Per Cent.
Vehicles .. .. . Number	2,172	2,430	12	..
Vehicle mileage .. .. Miles	40,300,000	45,700,000	13	..
Passengers carried .. .. Number	25,500,000	26,000,000	..	2
Goods carried .. .. Tons	900,000	1,053,000	17	..
Receipts .. .. . £	1,947,000	2,031,000	4	..

These figures are in striking contrast to similar figures for the railways over the same period, as given hereunder :—

Item.	1929-30.	1930-31.	Increase.	Decrease.
			Per Cent.	Per Cent.
Ordinary rail passengers* .. Number	8,469,038	7,265,912	..	14
Season tickets .. .. . "	667,432	600,440	..	10
Goods carried .. .. Tons	7,796,209	6,963,073	..	11
Revenue* .. .. . £	7,473,993	6,781,388	..	9

\* Excluding motor transport services.

While rail transport business during the year showed recessions in both the passenger and goods branches as well as in total operating revenue, organized motor transport showed substantial gains in the volume of goods business and total revenue, and a slight decline in the number of passengers handled. Freights handled by coastal shipping during the calendar year 1930 showed a drop of 3 per cent. from the figure for 1929.

The outstanding point emerging from the foregoing figures is that the economic law of substitution, which is inevitable in economic progress, is particularly to be observed in the field of transport to-day. The plain fact appears to be that organized road motor transport is rapidly gaining ground, while the rail and coastal shipping facilities are barely holding their position. It is true that the present depression has caused a shrinkage in the national volume of both goods and passenger traffic, and the fact that the motor transport business has expanded in spite of this drawback is evidence of the dynamic conditions in the industry.

## OMNIBUS SERVICES.

For statistical purposes the terms "omnibuses" and "service-cars" shade into each other in respect of a few vehicles on the border-line between the two classes. For the purpose of distinction the omnibuses have been regarded as the bigger vehicles operating on the comparatively short routes, while the service cars have been regarded as the smaller vehicles on the longer routes.

The principal estimated data relating to the operation of omnibuses in the Dominion during the years ended 31st March, 1930 and 1931, are given hereunder :—

	Year ended 31st March,		Percentage.	
	1930.	1931.	Increase.	Decrease

## (a) Absolute Figures.

Vehicles .. .. . Number	562	609	8	..
Vehicle mileage .. .. Miles	13,900,000	15,300,000	10	..
Passengers .. .. . Number	25,200,000	24,800,000	..	2
Receipts .. .. . £	735,000	747,000	2	..

## (b) Average.

Average mileage per vehicle per annum .. Miles	25,000	25,000	..	..
Average number of passengers per vehicle per annum .. Number	45,000	41,000	..	9
Average receipts per vehicle per annum .. £	1,308	1,200	..	8
Average receipts per passenger .. .. . d.	7	7.2	3	..
Average receipts per vehicle-mile .. .. . d.	12.7	11.7	..	8