

Section 2.—Electric Railways

Replacing the horse-car systems, used in Montreal and Toronto as early as 1861, electric street railways were first seen in operation in Canada in 1885, when a successful experimental railway was constructed and operated at the Toronto Exhibition Grounds. Before many years their safety and convenience resulted in the discarding of the older systems. The first electric railway line in Canada, and probably the first in North America, ran between Windsor and Walkerville and was established early in June, 1886 (it is recorded that it was in active operation before June 11).

The cheap and reasonably rapid conveyance of human beings is a necessity of modern urban life. In the cities of Eastern Canada, electric street railways are generally operated by private companies under city franchises, while in a considerable number of cities in Ontario and the West the street railways are owned and operated by the municipalities.

Subsection 1.—Equipment of Electric Railways

The single overhead-trolley system is used by all electric railways but Edmonton, Montreal and Winnipeg have begun to use also a double overhead trolley and trackless trolley-buses (67 of these buses being in service in 1945). Of the 33 systems, 23 operated both electric cars and motor-buses in 1945, the buses numbering 1,454. The main advantage of the bus is that it is not confined to a fixed route and, in the case of both motor-buses and trolley-buses, the expense of track maintenance is eliminated.

A summary of the equipment operated by electric railway companies is given in Table 18.

18.—Equipment of Electric Railways, 1942-45

Item	1942	1943	1944	1945	Item	1942	1943	1944	1945
	No.	No.	No.	No.		No.	No.	No.	No.
PASSENGER VEHICLES—					OTHER VEHICLES—				
Closed cars.....	3,294	3,303	3,350	3,361	Baggage, express and mail cars.....	20	19	19	19
Open cars.....	8	8	4	4	Freight cars.....	150	163	165	165
Combination passenger and baggage.....	8	8	8	7	Locomotives.....	51	52	53	53
Cars without electrical equipment.....	139	139	138	131	Snow ploughs.....	72	70	77	75
Motor-buses.....	1,282	1,329	1,444	1,454	Sweepers.....	147	148	148	149
Trackless trolley-buses.....	38	41	42	67	Trucks.....	123	163	147	148
					Miscellaneous.....	209	202	194	206
TOTALS, PASSENGER VEHICLES.....	4,769	4,828	4,986	5,024	TOTALS, OTHER VEHICLES.....	772	817	803	815

Subsection 2.—Finances of Electric Railways

When electric railways have ceased to operate because of either a decline in traffic or the substitution of motor-buses, their statistics have been excluded from the following table. Consequently, fluctuations in revenues, etc., have been affected by variations in traffic and also by changes in the mode of local transportation. Despite these changing conditions, the gross revenues of electric railways have continued to increase since the low point reached in 1933, and very marked increases have been shown each year since 1940.