

281. He says not?—I know for a fact that it is. I think the charge for the first horse is 8s. 8d. per ten miles, for the second 6s. per ten miles. After the first ten miles the rate is 2½d. per mile for the first horse, and 2d. per mile for the second. *Mr. Carruthers.*
20th Aug., 1877.

282. The same member suggests to me to ask you whether the exhibits at agricultural shows should not be carried absolutely free?—It is not a matter fairly coming under my notice; it is a matter for Ministers' consideration. The Government may think it desirable to encourage those things.

283. Can you tell us anything about the payment of the men. Under the new arrangement does a man get one day's pay less in the year than formerly?—I do not know; I think not. I cannot see how that could be, as they get paid by the day. If they work 365 days they will get paid for 365 days, and not for 364 days.

284. You have deducted a week's pay, or rather kept back a week's pay from the men?—Yes. The object is to make the men less likely to go off in a hurry. Under the old system there was two weeks' pay.

285. I understood you to say the expenses on the lines average 71 per cent.?—I can give the exact figures: by my report I see it is 73 per cent.

286. Is not that about 5 per cent. higher than when they were under the Provincial Governments?—No; I think not. I think the provincial lines in Canterbury stood at 84 per cent.

287. Mr. Conyers says 68 per cent.?—I am not certain on the point.

288. *Mr. Lumsden.* I think you have said the Engineer-in-Chief might go away when the lines were finished. You do not mean to say that the colony could do without an Engineer-in-Chief? There must be one engineer higher than the other, I presume?—At all events, his duties will become less important.

TUESDAY, 4TH SEPTEMBER, 1877.

Mr. CARRUTHERS recalled.

Mr. Carruthers: The record of the evidence which I gave on a previous occasion scarcely conveys my opinion on the subject of the sale of tickets outside the stations. It does not appear sufficiently distinct that one objection I have to such a system is, that I think there is a great risk of fraud being perpetrated on the Government if tickets are available after the day of issue. I may say that is the principal objection I have, because the guard, instead of marking a ticket, might simply put it in his pocket, and then find an opportunity of selling it again; whereas, if a ticket were only available for the day of issue, there would be nothing to be gained by a guard who kept a ticket.

290. Are you speaking of the form of ticket at present in use, or of any form that could be adopted?—Of any form that could be adopted, if it is worth money after the day of its issue.

291. Since you have said that, I would ask whether you have seen the railway tickets in use on the American lines, where they are available for six months after issue?—I came across the American Continent some years ago, and had through tickets to enable me to do so.

292. Do you think that the tickets in use leave any door open for fraud on the part of the guard or railway conductor, or whatever you call him?—I have not thought over the matter—that is, I have not given any special attention to it. The tickets I had were in the form of coupons, which were torn off during the journeys between principal places—there would be one coupon in the trip say between New York and Buffalo. I do not think a guard would be able to sell such a coupon to any shop, because nobody would buy it.

293. Then your statement or opinion would not apply to that kind of ticket?—Yes, because if you sold tickets between New York and Buffalo in the same form, the ticket would become valuable after it had passed into the possession of the guard. In America they do not sell these coupons except for through journey.

294. What is your opinion as to what should be the basis of calculation in fixing charges?—I think that the cost of maintenance and the original cost of a line should be taken into account in fixing the rates of charges, provided there is nothing in the way of competition to render an alteration in the rates necessary, so as to make the charges less than they would be if fixed on the principle I have alluded to.

295. Do you think railways should be made to pay?—That to a certain extent is a political matter. No doubt a railway should pay if possible, because if it could be shown that the railways of the colony were self-supporting, the credit of the colony at Home would be strengthened. Still there may be circumstances in which it would not be politic to insist upon railways being made to pay. There is another thing. I look upon the rates and fares as being simply a form of taxation, and I think it is better to throw that taxation upon the people who derive the greatest benefit from a railway—that is, those who use the railway most, and their customers.

296. I think there is some misapprehension as to your position in connection with constructed lines. Will you be good enough to explain what are really your duties in connection with constructed lines?—They are very slight, of course; all works that are charged to loan require my recommendation to go to the Minister, before any expenditure is incurred. That is the principal part of my duty. With the traffic I have nothing to do, speaking practically; that is left to the gentlemen in charge of the various departments of railways.

297. Do not all communications come to you, and are they not read by you, and minuted by you or by Mr. Maxwell, who, I believe, holds some position in your office?—Yes.

298. And then they go on to the Minister?—Yes.

299. Then, virtually, everything has to be brought under your cognizance?—Yes.

300. With regard to traffic and appointments?—Everything coming from the Traffic Managers, or persons in charge of the various lines, requiring to be brought under the Minister's notice, passes through me to him. But traffic is managed locally, and does not come under my notice.

Mr. Carruthers.

4th Sept., 1877.