

Mr. Thomson. simply cause all passengers to pass through the booking office and obtain their tickets at once, instead of allowing them to accumulate on the platform, and when the five minutes bell rang to rush for tickets.
14th Sept., 1877.

1893. Could you not suggest an improvement on the present pigeon-hole system—something more similar to a bank counter, for instance, where more than one could go to the counter and get their tickets?—I think the greater the number that present themselves at one time, the more it is likely to create confusion. In the London and North-Western all passengers entered through one door, and they had to pass in front of these pigeon-holes, and book at the time, and pass on to the platform.

1894. Do you mean to tell me it is absolutely necessary, to insure the proper conduct of that especially, that tickets could only be sold out of a small hole, where a man with a large-sized hand could not get it in?—They need not be so small; but I object to two persons being there at one time.

1895. What is your objection?—Simply, you would require two booking clerks, who must be booking from the same lot of tickets. A clerk cannot book two or three persons at the same time.

1896. Why cannot tickets be dated and registered, and entered in the register-book. How would a bank manage to issue its notes, if it had to adopt the same principle, by issuing every note to one person at a time through a window?—The tickets are all registered as a matter of course, but all railway tickets must be dated at the time; not so bank notes, which are available any time.

1897. Why could not tickets?—Simply because any ticket not collected can be used again if not dated.

1898. Why are they not collected?—That is owing to the faulty system.

1899. Do you mean to tell me that no plan can be adopted to obviate that?—Most undoubtedly. On one section, when I travel, I have invariably half my ticket uncollected, which I bring away with me. If they are not dated and not collected, what is to prevent my using them next day? If the ticket is dated, I cannot use it again.

1900. Why not dated each day?—Then you are giving the ticket clerk as much work as if he had issued it in the first instance.

1901. Why not number them numerically?—They are.

1902. Is not that a sufficient ear-mark?—It shows they are railway tickets, but not that they have been issued to-day. Ticket collecting is a very difficult process, and on the London and North-Western Railway the most experienced collectors were put on.

1903. If the system has been adopted in America, I can see no possible objection to its being carried on here?—I am quite unaware of the American system.

1904. Is there not a possibility, if a bank teller can attend perhaps to fifty or a hundred people (as I have seen, at one time, all waiting to be served by the issue of notes), of such a system being adopted in connection with the railway department, rendering it easy for the ticket clerk issuing tickets to do the same?—I must say it is more likely to lead to confusion, because fifty people waiting to be served does not expedite business. I feel certain the inconvenience would be entirely obviated if they made the people pass through the ticket office, get their tickets, and pass on to the platform.

1905. Would it not be a convenience to the public if a firm, say, could purchase a number of tickets, and keep them in their office, so that when they, perhaps, sent twenty clerks in different directions, instead of having to wait to the last moment, they could give them their tickets at any time?—If I were a merchant, I should rather pay as I wanted the tickets, than keep a stock by me.

1906. Would you rather send for a postage stamp when you required to post a letter than keep a large supply?—There is no comparison between a postage stamp and a railway ticket. A letter can be posted at any office or pillar-box at any time, and does not require to be dated, whereas a passenger must pass through the office where tickets are sold, and to have them dated must give as much trouble as if he purchased at the time.

1907. You would think it is a convenience for an individual doing a large business to keep a large number of postage stamps?—Certainly.

1908. Why does not the same apply to railway tickets?—There is not the same check.

1909. Would not a change of system be worth trying?—Yes, as an experiment. I do not think if I were railway manager I should advise it.

1910. *Mr. Macandrew.*] Probably great improvements have occurred since you left the Home railways?—There might. When I was in England, about six years ago, I visited the audit department of the London and North-Western (the same office I had previously been in), and the only change I discovered was the substitution of monthly for weekly accounts. Each station sent a daily account of the tickets issued. This account did not show the cash.

1911. You say you prefer the monthly to the weekly system, as being more economical and quite as efficient?—I think so.

1912. Would it not be possible that the same number of hands could do the whole work of the Middle Island at Dunedin and Christchurch?—I think not with the same hands. The labour in an audit is purely checking, and if there are a hundred stations making their returns to Christchurch, and a hundred to Dunedin, it would simply require so many at each, but if you have only one audit it might save a little.

1913. Assuming the lines were finished, would there be any necessity for an audit at Christchurch and another at Dunedin?—No necessity whatever.

1914. Under no circumstances would you recommend an audit to be at Wellington for the whole colony?—Certainly not.

1915. *Hon. Mr. Richardson.*] I understood you to say that on the lines which afterwards amalgamated, and formed the London and North-Western, they had two or three centres of audit, and it was all brought into one?—Yes, before the amalgamation of the London and Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool, and Grand Junction; but when they amalgamated all the staff went to London.