

A well-known writer in the States confirms these views, and draws attention to the great laxity about disobedience to rules where such disobedience has not caused accidents. I was given to understand that one common and complete code of rules was about to be adopted by the whole of the companies in the States. It is surprising that such a step should not have been taken before. There is little we can learn from the States railroads on this subject. With our system under one control it has been possible to work out all these important details of operation with considerable precision and completeness, though it is as difficult to make proper rules for a thousand miles as it is for a hundred thousand miles.

The only statistics of accidents I met with are those given by Kirkman, who states the number in ten years to have been 10,887, involving 11,023 deaths, omitting the bulk of small mishaps that fail to get reported in the papers. Whether this is an undue number for such a great traffic on such a great mileage of line, subject to the severities of climate prevailing in many parts, it seems difficult to determine.

The train-running on single lines over long distances, in the great uncertainty of the climate in winter in the States, is very troublesome to conduct. No train that I travelled by from New York to Portland was less than two hours late. In certain cases they were twelve hours to twenty-four hours behind time, owing to accidental stoppages and the bad condition of the roads during sudden thaws.

Passenger-fares of the ordinary class range from 2 cents to 6 cents a mile for first-class in different parts of the States, those in the east being lowest. The greater part of the passenger-traffic is what is termed first-class, and the accommodation is excellent. The generality of trains for moderate distances have only this class; but practice varies greatly. Second-class fares are obtainable for most long distances. Second-class carriages frequently are old first-class, in which smoking is allowed; they are often very dirty, and unfit for cleanly-clad persons to ride in. There is not the cleanliness of the second- and third-class European carriages, or of our second class. There is yet a lower or emigrant class, which is run inland on certain through-trains from seaports. Saloon- and sleeping-cars are run on certain trains: persons who have already booked first-class can obtain seats in these upon presenting their tickets and paying extra fare. Carriages of this kind as a rule are not owned by the railroad companies, but belong to carriage companies, which furnish them on fixed terms, collecting and retaining the additional fares by their own conductor. Holders of second-class tickets are not allowed to use sleeping-cars.

The commutation ticket takes the place of our season ticket. There is no ticket so cheap as the New Zealand £50 ticket. A line with a 4-cent fare will issue a thousand-mile ticket for, perhaps, $3\frac{3}{4}$ cents per mile: this is a very moderate concession. The commutation ticket does not afford such a liberal concession as do our season tickets. A six-monthly New Zealand first-class ticket for a seven-mile distance enables a person to travel as many times as he pleases for $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. a day, while second-class he can travel as many times as he pleases for 6d. a day. Our second-class carriages are, for short distances, as comfortable and they are as clean as are the American first-class, and the rate of fare is cheaper. The Pennsylvanian commutation tickets are for 180 trips quarterly, and sixty or fifty-four trips monthly: the cheapest are the first—they cost, for a seven-mile trip, about $7\frac{1}{2}$ cents a trip, or $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. for the return journey: they have no second-class ticket as we have. School-tickets, for example, for a ten-mile distance are issued at 18s. a month, which is looked on as a very low fare. We issue such tickets at 10s. a quarter, and in certain cases free. As a rule, American companies charge higher rates than we do, but from the City of New York some tickets are lower.

Coupon-tickets of two kinds, limited and unlimited, are issued for long journeys at reduced fares. The limited are available between certain points within certain periods; passengers using them cannot stop over at intermediate points. Unlimited coupon-tickets allow the passengers to stop over at intermediate stations, and are not restricted as to time. The opinion of the American passenger-agents whom I asked was that our £50 ticket was far too low and open to abuse.

A practice, known in the States as ticket-scalping, is sometimes carried on by persons who buy up unused parts of coupon-tickets and the unused halves of return-tickets from travellers, at low prices, and sell at a lower rate than the proper fare. In many States this irregularity is forbidden by law; it is, naturally, objected to by all the large companies. The practice of issuing limited and non-transferable tickets has of late years largely curtailed this business. The paying of commission on account of fares by railway companies, except to their authorised agents, is also greatly diminished. I was told that the system had grown at one time to be a great evil; cab-drivers, bus-drivers, waiters, hotel-keepers, and a host of others solicited and obtained commissions for passenger traffic which they were assumed to bring to the railways.

The excursion business of the character we are used to is not carried on proportionately to the extent we do it in New Zealand, and, so far as I could learn, it is not the practice to issue tickets at such low fares as we do.

The baggage-check system is general in the United States with all carrying companies. Some of the State laws provide for enforcing this system. Railroads will not take baggage unless checked. The passenger has to present his ticket with his luggage at the office in good time before starting; 150lb. is usually allowed free. Each package has a metal check attached marked to destination, and the passenger is given a counterpart. The check-numbers are entered by the baggage-clerk. The luggage is delivered at its destination on presentation of the counterpart. The system is an admirable one, and is worked out in great detail, but it marred by the ruthless way in which baggage is destroyed in handling. On the Continent of Europe all luggage is booked instead of checked—a mere difference of detail—and it is also conveyed safely and without damage. In England the practice of seeing the baggage labelled and claiming it at the van insures fair treatment, and the trouble of this is thus repaid. In America the strongest and best-packed trunks frequently get smashed. I had several excellent opportunities of seeing this process in baggage-rooms. Some