

89. Does the dismissal of servants rest with the Engineer-in-Chief?—No; it rests with the Minister. *Mr. Carruthers.*

90. Has the Engineer-in-Chief power to issue free passes?—No; except to the officers of the department. 17th Aug., 1877

91. Can the Engineer-in-Chief have a knowledge of the servants and a practical knowledge of the running of lines equal to that of a practical Manager?—He gets his knowledge from the Manager.

92. Then it is second-hand?—Yes.

93. Then you are not responsible for the men in any way?—No.

94. In your opinion return tickets should be abolished?—I do not think it is a very serious matter. They are open to abuse in the way of re-sale.

95. Are you in favour of a system of single tickets instead of the system at present in use, and having them sold as revenue or postage stamps?—No; I do not think tickets can be sold as postage stamps. There would be no check whatever on Stationmasters, and the guards would have facilities for cheating to any extent. There is no doubt about it that in America, where such a system was carried out, the conductors have often made their fortunes.

96. What special advantages would be offered to the guards for cheating other than they have at present?—Now tickets are all numbered and sold in rotation. The tickets are collected, and if a number appears on a ticket higher than any the station clerk has sold, then we know that there is cheating.

97. Why not number the tickets consecutively in the new system?—The objection to that is that the tickets would lie so long out that there would be no way of checking them.

98. Would not that be an advantage to the Government?—I think not. The tickets would be all used. At present tickets are only issued for one day. If a man buys a ticket, and if that ticket need not be used for a month or two months, it is liable to be used frequently during the intermediate time.

99. What is to hinder the guards from allowing the same thing to take place now?—The same guard does not collect all the way through on the line.

100. You are aware that under that system is the note circulation of banks, and they are not in the habit of paying their notes twice. Do you not think that some system of that kind could be adopted, whereby the Government would run no risk of being defrauded?—I do not think any system can be safe from robbery when the tickets have a long time to run.

101. If the tickets were "ear-marked," would it be no protection? Is there any opportunity for a ticket being used fraudulently now?—At present the obstacle to cheating is that the guard is not the only person who has to do with the ticket. There are two or three people or more concerned in it.

102. If the guard is so inclined, he could defraud the revenue under the present system the same as he could under the system proposed?—I do not think so.

103. The date on the ticket is your speciality. Could not a system for arranging the dates be adopted?—Even if the tickets were numbered in the present way, the sale of them in the manner mentioned would be open to the same objection. I am inclined to disagree with you. At the present time by collusion with the guards a person can go free. Under the new method there would be precisely the same class of officers under whose eyes a passenger would go. I can understand there would be an objection to issue tickets for a month. However, the surplus remaining from the unsold tickets could be returned.

104. In clause 10 of your report, Mr. Carruthers, I see all tickets shall be printed in Wellington?—Tickets are valuable property, or at least become so, and it is well to have them all in charge of one man. Besides, there would be no use in having ticket-printing machines all over the country.

105. Are you aware that in other colonies the tickets are printed by tender? Have you any objection to that system?—I have no great objection, but I think it better to print them at the railway offices.

106. Do you know what proportion of tickets required for use on the Government railways are consumed in Wellington?—A small proportion as compared with the other parts of the colony. The cost of printing tickets is very trifling. It is better having the tickets printed at one place.

107. Then it is recommended that a supply of six months should be kept at each head station. I should imagine that two or three months' supply would be ample?—That would not be very essential so long as there is a good supply of tickets kept on hand.

108. You say in your report that tenders should be called for in England. Is that considered more desirable than calling for tenders in the colony?—I think stores would be got cheaper by calling for tenders in England. We have done nothing else hitherto but get our stores in the colony.

109. It is strange that stores can be bought sometimes cheaper in the colony than they can in England, from where they are imported. You would not object to tenders being called for in England?—I think it would be well for tenders to be called for in England and in the colonies.

110. Presuming there was a slight difference in favour of getting stores in England, would there not be an advantage to the Government to get the stores in the colony, as then a smaller quantity would be required to be kept in stock than if the stores had to come from England, from where they would have to be imported more largely. Would not one advantage counteract the other?—If tenders were called for in England, supplies could be sent out every month, and the stock here not be kept up very large.

111. You have no special objection to calling for tenders in the colony?—Not if the stores can be got as cheaply.

112. Are you responsible for the accounts as well as the payment of them?—The General Manager has all that responsibility as far as traffic is concerned. But if the Engineer-in-Chief has nothing to do with the constructing line, it will lead to great extravagance. Men will be given unlimited power of ordering things, who would not be interested professionally in keeping down the expenses of the department.

113. Presuming such management was left to the practical Manager, would he not be responsible to the Minister?—He is responsible for the traffic only.