

Chairman,—

We should be glad to hear from Mr. McRae.

Mr. McRae,—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, you noticed the tone of voice the Chairman used in asking me to say a few words concerning car heating—kind of a funeral tone. Asking me to speak on this subject is somewhat of a joke. In the first place we have no trouble in heating our rolling stock by steam. However, the matter of ventilating the tram car is just as important as heating and ventilating the steam rolling stock. This question of heating and ventilating the rolling stock has been one of the most foremost questions on the steam railroads. If not in Canada, I speak the truth that it is so in the States. The State of New York has taken this question up so seriously that the Public Service Commission for that State has made this one of their most important tasks. It has now become a matter of competition in order to bring about the best results in heating and ventilating rolling stock.

In speaking of this question I am only justified to do so as a passenger or as a subscriber to the general funds of a steam railroad. I may say that I have had considerable experience in this way as I have travelled considerably. I know of nothing worse than riding in a steam railroad coach that is not well ventilated. There are very few coaches on our railroads which are properly ventilated and heated. If you go into a first class day coach there are probably seventy or eighty people. Some have the habit of washing themselves regularly and wearing clean clothes, while others have not this habit. In speaking to a number of conductors, they say that one of the worst parts of their job is in living in these coaches day after day.

I do not think the discussing of this subject by any railroad man present will bring about a censure on the part of the senior officials of his road, as it is a subject they are anxious to get information on.

The system which Mr. Parker has just spoken about is quite new to me, although I do know there is plenty of room for improvement in this regard. I am informed that there has been an apparatus patented during the past year or so, along the line of a Thermostat, but I do not know anything about it. Perhaps some of you may be able to say something about it.

As I said before there is hardly a railroad company which is not watching this matter closely. The Englishman says the only way to get proper heating and ventilating to satisfy everybody, is to go back to the compartments; however any remarks we make should bear on our regular type passenger coaches, as used in this country.