

Mr. MCGIBBON: This may not be directly on the point, but how does the efficiency of a railway engine now compare with what it was?

Sir HENRY THORNTON: Speaking of the state of the art, the steam locomotive of ten or fifteen years ago had a fairly bad reputation; and electrification was travelling on its heels; but like many other things, that excited in the minds of railway executive and mechanical officers a desire to see if something could not be done with the good old steam locomotive; and progressively, in the last ten years, there has been concentrated effort to improve the efficiency of the steam locomotive, and that has reflected itself upon the position which we find to-day, with the result that the steam locomotive is as a machine much more efficient than it was several years ago.

Mr. GEARY: Are you burning oil much now?

Sir HENRY THORNTON: The burning of oil is pretty much confined to British Columbia.

Mr. FRASER: You think your system is pretty well up in the forefront?

Sir HENRY THORNTON: We know it is.

Mr. FAIRWEATHER: (Reading):

The principal Increases and Decreases, by Primary Accounts, follows:—

Principal Increases.....	Oper. Joint Yds. and Termls. Dr.....	\$ 203,990
	Injuries to Persons.....	57,758
Principal Decreases.....	Station Employees.....	1,263,316
	Yard Conductors and Brakemen.....	989,410
	Yard Enginemen.....	744,260
	Fuel for Locos.....	3,459,683
	Train Enginemen.....	1,397,610
	Trainmen.....	1,399,806
	Train Supplies and Expenses.....	385,548
	Loss and Damage Freight.....	288,861
	Express Service.....	554,669

Mr. HANSON: This question of station employees, I suppose, includes doing away with unprofitable stations?

Sir HENRY THORNTON: And reduction in forces in other operations.

Mr. HANSON: Could you tell me how many places have been closed? That is quite a burning question down in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and creates a decided feeling in the communities. I do not question your right to do it.

Sir HENRY THORNTON: We have explored that field, and where we felt that stations could be closed without undue inconvenience to the public they have been closed. Of course, every time you close a station, that particular community does not welcome that idea.

Mr. HANSON: You have a status of earnings, however, upon which you base the decision, either to close or to keep it open?

Sir HENRY THORNTON: We have to take into consideration the general requirements of the community itself.

Mr. FRASER: I see your "Loss and Damage"—What was the amount of the loss in that respect?

Sir HENRY THORNTON: \$872,000.

Mr. FRASER: That was a lot of money.

Sir HENRY THORNTON: That is a lot of money in itself, but you have to consider it in relation to the total. The total freight revenue was \$163,000,000.

Mr. FRASER: What was the principal reason of those losses? What was the main reason?

Sir HENRY THORNTON: Perhaps Mr. MacLaren can answer that question.