

storage battery car between Ottawa and Pembroke, Brockville and Westport; Montreal and St. Eustache, Montreal and Rawdon, Montreal and Waterloo, Campbellton and Bathurst, and a gasoline car between Summerside and Tignish.

Sir HENRY THORNTON: Most of them are storage battery cars.

Mr. HARRIS: Can you operate trailers with these?

Mr. HENRY: It depends upon the grade.

Mr. STEWART: To what extent does the location of the line affect the use of the storage battery?

Mr. HENRY: You would have to have a place to charge it. It would run about 100 miles between charges.

Mr. STEWART: Then it takes a long time to charge it?

Mr. HENRY: About ten hours.

Sir HENRY THORNTON: The trouble with the storage battery was that it did take so long but Edison Company developed some years ago a new storage battery which is not only fool-proof but which can be charged in about half the time the other battery could.

Mr. MILNE: It is a pretty expensive equipment?

Sir HENRY THORNTON: It is pretty expensive but this far it is the most satisfactory type of car that we have been able to get hold of. The automobile does not seem to be adapted to satisfactory service on steam railway lines. I cannot see why that should be. Within the last year or so the problem seems to have been gone into rather more intelligently by the manufacturers of gasoline engines and it is not unlikely that something fully as satisfactory as the storage battery would emerge but we have been more successful with storage battery cars than any other kind of propelled vehicle.

Mr. MILNE: I do not think the line running from Winnipeg to Transcona would be a fair test, as to the possibilities of some of these branch lines, but where there is light traffic you would be able to have some kind of service in. I have in mind a line that runs up the west side of Manitoba.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: We have over 100 of these routes under investigation now. For small units the gasoline is much cheaper.

Mr. MILNE: That would be the ratio?

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: One is twice as expensive. An electric car is twice as expensive as a gasoline car. As a matter of fact if we could find some cheaper form of construction and some cheaper character of propellant for unremunerative branch lines, it would be what we want. It does seem ridiculous to build branch lines, standard bridges, build them as you would build a standard Transcontinental railway, if the branch cannot be developed. For instance, those of you who have been in France will remember the little narrow gauge lines that prevail along the side of the highway and run into the outlying villages, carrying passengers, vegetables and milk and all that sort of thing to some line and from there it is carried to Paris and other large cities. Now it does seem to me we are going on the wrong principle. We ought to find some way to extend our rural population transportation facilities at less expense than we do to-day. Agriculture is being moved in carload lots and we do not want to add to that expense, but if we could only get a small propelling unit, a gas engine, that could cut the cost off. There is no doubt we are spending too much money on that sort of thing.

The CHAIRMAN: It would probably be the most promising in the gasoline field.

[Mr. Henry.]