

capacity of rolling stock, commensurate with the maximum loads and speed to be allowed. Among many railway promoters Government inspection is regarded as very superficial. It has happened on provincial roads that a trip over the line by a member of the local government, in company with some of the railway directors, has not only secured the payment of the government subsidy, but has enabled the railway company without further inspection to open its line for traffic.

The subject of steam heating, referred to by various speakers, is now gradually going beyond the range of mere experiment. It was the general principle and not any particular system which was advocated in the paper. After careful trial, the Boston and Albany and Connecticut Valley, among other roads, have recently decided to equip, the one its whole the other its through, service on this particular principle, and to abolish stoves.

Electric lighting has now been introduced on the Great Northern Railway of England, four whole trains being equipped each with ninety-two lights—two in every compartment—and with forty-four accumulators. The initial cost, however, is £400 stg. per train, and the weight added two or three tons.

The chief aim of the paper is the advocacy of a railway commission. If the Railway Committee effectively exercised even the powers which it possesses, it would be a source of much good; but its members have other duties which properly have prior importance, and do not give and cannot possibly give that extended time and attention which is absolutely required in investigating the various matters which the Railway Act has placed under their jurisdiction. The public—aware of this—seldom take advantage of this tribunal. It is no disparagement of the acknowledged abilities of the members of the Committee to say this. The recent suggestions on this point of the Royal Commission would be an improvement; but it is still a question whether members of the Government, which itself owns and operates railways, can form an impartial tribunal. A commission responsible directly to Parliament would seem more advisable.

There seems to be an impression that a railway commission exercises an unjust interference with private rights, but the fact is forgotten that these private rights in the case of a railway are all obtained from the public through its Legislatures. Besides, as Mr. Brown has stated, corporations and individuals, and he might have added even governments, are none the worse of some supervision. No railway company can claim to be absolutely perfect in the arrangements connected with its business, and infallible in the opinion of its management; and in the nature of things the private interests of the corporation will occasionally