

WESTERN ROADS EXCITED

THREATENINGS OF A PASSENGER RATE WAR.

NEARLY 350 FORMS OF TICKETS OVER ROADS WEST OF CHICAGO WITHDRAWN BY THE TRUNK ROADS.

The leading topic in railroad circles yesterday was the threatened war in passenger rates, which, it is claimed by some of the Western roads and the ticket brokers and speculators here, will be precipitated by the action of Commissioner Pierson in ordering the stoppage of the sale of tickets here for points west of Chicago and St. Louis. The tickets ordered to be withheld from sale are said to be the first-class limited tickets by way of Chicago and Kansas City to Atchison, Leavenworth, and St. Joseph, and all first and second class tickets by way of Chicago and Kansas City to Atchison, Leavenworth, St. Joseph, Plattsmouth, Council Bluffs, and Omaha. The roads affected by the withdrawal of these tickets are the Chicago and Alton, Chicago, Burlington and Quincy, Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific, Chicago and North-western, and the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul. The first class limited tickets by way of Chicago to Omaha and Council Bluffs over the Rock Island Road have also been withdrawn.

As showing the scope of the order withdrawing these tickets, it may be mentioned that the total number of forms of tickets for the above points is about 450 and the number withdrawn about 350. At Commissioner Pierson's office it was stated that the step had become necessary by reason of the abuses which existed in the passenger departments of the roads running west from Chicago, and if vigorously carried out by the trunk lines here these abuses would be corrected in a short time. A convention of the east and west lines would probably be required to satisfactorily arrange matters, and this would possibly be held. In view of this, the call, which was issued yesterday, for a meeting here on Dec. 11 of the Joint Executive Committee, passenger department, may be regarded as significant. At the various trunk line ticket offices the order was strictly carried out, and it was not possible to purchase tickets for the points named, and one of the trunk lines interpreted the order so rigidly that it refused to issue tickets for points beyond those interdicted, on the ground that this would be a clear evasion of the spirit of the order.

At several of the offices of the Western roads the statement was made that a strict compliance with the order would inevitably result in war. Other roads regarded the order as a wise one. Regret was universally expressed that the evils of ticket commissions had assumed so great proportions, yet great doubt was entertained if these evils could now be abolished. A prominent ticket agent said: "I think there will be a war of rates and a very bitter one. The Western roads have such competition for business that they will not allow any one man to dictate to them how they shall manage their affairs, and there are so many of them all running to the same points and each eager for business that they will not submit to this last attempt to bring them into line. Then, too, there are now so many tickets still out which were issued during the great fight in 1880 that for months to come, until these tickets are exhausted, the brokers and scalpers here can easily supply tickets to any point West. All they have to do is to buy from the trunk lines a ticket to its terminal point and attach to it a ticket to the required point. When these are exhausted new tickets from Chicago and St. Louis will certainly be placed on sale here by the Western roads, and thus the action of the trunk lines will be checkmated. It is probably the best time the trunk lines could have selected to try the scheme, as travel is very light, but when it becomes brisk the bulk of it will be done without reference to them. There is no way that I can see that will prevent roads anxious for business from selling their tickets through the brokers, and any attempt like the present, which is clearly to force the Western roads into a pool to work in with the trunk lines, will certainly fail." Another broker said: "I think there will be a war, and if so the only party likely to derive any benefit from it will be the Lackawanna, which is not in the pool. It can continue to sell its tickets by way of any of the roads from Buffalo, and if it were a better known route this action by the trunk lines would prove its golden opportunity, as it would certainly obtain a very large share of the business."

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