

Some Curious Rail and Tram Tickets.

BY LIONEL WIENER.



WONDER whether you have noticed, not the poetry of rail and tram tickets, but how very characteristic and even nationalistic they are?

The British "bus" ticket is solemn,

veritable coquette, in fact; while the Belgian and German one is ugly, complicated and economical, and verges frequently on the scientific. Science on a tram ticket!!

Even the American ticket, when it does



EARLY SPANISH TICKETS.

The centre one in the top row was also a lottery ticket used in the "The Game of Animals."

practical, a correct gentlemanly ticket, as immutable in size and aspect as a man in evening clothes; the French ticket is thinner, more dainty and *petite*, of an endless diversity of hues and colours, a

exist, which is exceptional, bears the national stamp upon it. Some western transfers have little pictures upon them—a young man, an old one, a young lady and an "older" one, a nigger, a female

nigger and a soldier. The conductor is supposed to punch a hole in the picture representing the class to which the holder belongs. But it is surprising how often the older lady is punched when a young one travels, and it is not surprising to note how often the young lady looks vexed.

We all know that the modern every-day ticket is made for use. I do not mean that the ancient ones were not, but in the same way as advertisements seek readers through arousing their interest, so the older tickets were intended to tempt purchasers for their own sake—with the journey thrown in.

A number of towns made use of illustrated tickets. The more interesting of these tickets were issued in Spain and Italy, where southern exuberance found a larger field. The first tickets here shown are reproductions of caricatures issued by the Madrid and Barcelona Tramway Companies in their early days.

The bull fight in all its phases, circus performances, or simply drawings and cartoons followed each other as uninterruptedly as in a cinematograph show.

In Rome, the early tickets were real photographs of the town's monuments or of famous people, princes of Royal blood and princes of the stage. These forerunners of picture postcards were issued in collections, each bearing a number, and a prize was given to the happy owner of a complete set.

It is a pity these photographic illustrations have been discontinued. They are picturesque, and a pretty souvenir of a trip abroad.

Spain took up the idea and printed

coloured pictures of a number of celebrated people. Presidents, such as Thiers and Abraham Lincoln, were included in the same series as Nilsson or Sarah Bernhardt; but Lincoln really looks displeased at being shown on tram tickets!

The Oliva Omnibus Company's ticket is a gambling one, like a number of the modern ones in Rio de Janeiro, though it looks innocent enough. It is a figure of the famous game of "Bichos," or of Beasts, whose history is rather a curious one.

A former director of the Rio Zoo grouped the numbers from 1 to 100 in



TRAMWAY TICKETS ISSUED IN ROME IN THE 'SEVENTIES.'

The portraits and views were photographs.

25 groups of four, each bearing the name of an animal.

He then sold entrance tickets, simply for gambling purposes, and at a fixed time each day a lottery decided which of the animals had won the day. He then paid the bearers of those particular tickets 20 times their stake. As he should have paid 25 times and not 20, it was impossible he should lose. Not only did people stake an animal, but groups of two figures as well, say 2 and 4, or even the end figure only. The game became such a

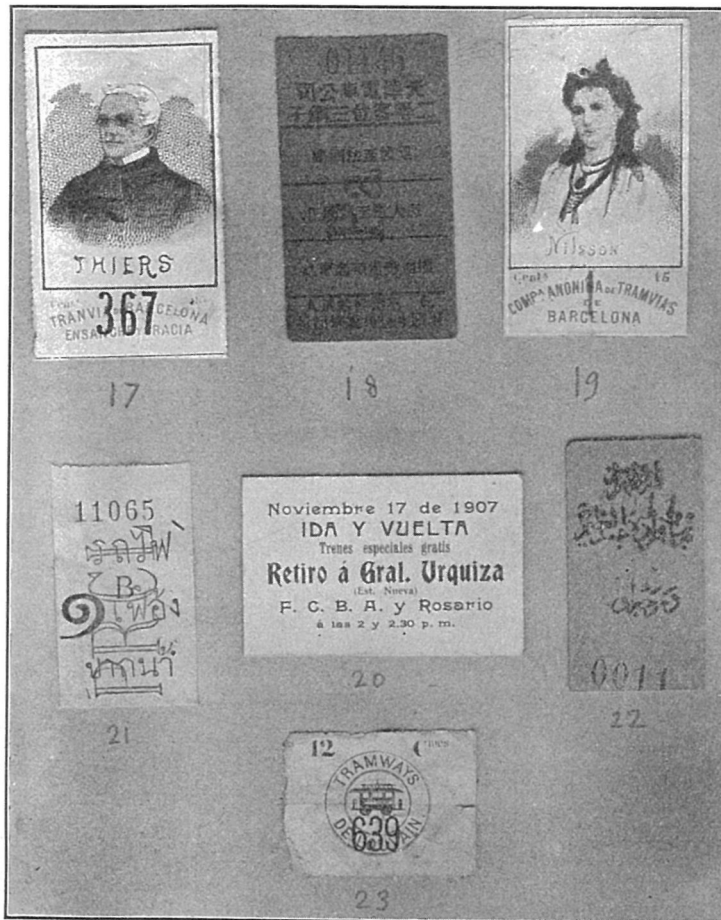
craze and such a public nuisance that Government was obliged to put a stop to it; the servant who took your money to the market gambled it as she went, and the shopkeeper gave you unlimited credit because he used to gamble his money as you did yours.

As soon as the game was prohibited, it was started afresh all over Brazil by

the checking instead. With this end in view, ticket-holders are requested to collect them and to return them, the Company paying various charitable institutions a few reis for each ticket thus returned. These few reis become several thousand pounds in a remarkably short time.

All kinds of illustrations have been resorted to, so as to arouse the holder's interest: verse, photographs, views of Rio de Janeiro, the animals already referred to, and particularly phantasies of all kinds, many of which are of too light a character to be reproduced here.

Another kind of picture tickets are the puzzle tickets, the earliest of which were printed in Antwerp some thirty years ago. This innovation, as many another, is the outcome of advertising. An important brewery used to print the "National Company's" tickets free, and in exchange, was allowed to fill in the empty spaces with advertisements; these soon grew into small pictures quoting or showing the particular very "bestness" of that particular brand of beer—as all breweries have done before, since and afterwards. Puzzles took the place of these pictures, just as, recently, certain boot-makers have turned the "soles" of many



SOME CURIOUS RAILWAY AND TRAMWAY TICKETS.

- 17 and 19. Barcelona tram tickets.
- 18. Chinese railway ticket (Tien Tsin Line).
- 21. Siamese railway ticket.
- 22. Persian railway ticket.
- 23. Usual type of ticket at the genesis of tramway enterprise on the Continent. (Louvain.)

means of the animals on the tram tickets and the end of the numbers printed upon them.

The Tramway Company did away with its Inspectors and got the public to do

a London 'bus ticket into a veritable "mine" of caricatures of all kinds.

More elaborate illustrations have been gone into occasionally; such is the older ticket of the Bahia Tramway Company, a

truly exquisite piece of engraving due to the American Bank Note Company, and certainly better than many a postage stamp; another ticket of the same town is shown with it, life size, quite a baby; one, in fact, similar to the early Brazilian stamps. Another was a more ephemeral one, issued in Lyons during a former exhibition, quite one of the most interesting things there: the promoters had the good, the brilliant idea of turning it into a pictorial map of the exhibition and of printing it in so very many colours that you had quite a dazzling idea of all you expected to see.

Originally, the ticket portion of all these slips of paper was small, the Company's name, the price, the number, and that was all. But the growth of the systems together with the necessity of better checking have changed this, and a number of things have been added, such as the list of the stations, the company's bye-laws, sometimes in several languages, and a number of other pieces of advice or caution—exclusive of the Company's general statistics—which is lucky, and of useful hints to foreigners—which is a pity.

The Belgian Light Railway Company's system covers some 2,800 miles, and this company has many curious productions in the way of complicated tickets. It would be difficult to carry about tickets suitable for every place the trains stop at, and for each fare, whatever the class, so there are usually two different tickets only, single and return. On them are printed the names of all the stations, such as are found on tramway tickets, and all the possible combinations of fares. Also the words, "whole price" and "half price,"

the class, the words "single" or "return," the numbers of all the trains running on the line, the month, and date of the month, and the time of day. Many of these tickets are printed in two languages, and are quite a curious literary production. They are sometimes perforated between the different fares, the collector tearing off the slip at the fare the passenger pays.



MORE TICKET CURIOSITIES.

11. Bahía tram ticket (old), engraved by the American Bank Note Co. (the photograph does not render justice to the delicacy of the engraving).
12. Manchester Corporation Tramway's Token, in celluloid instead of metal. Good for $\frac{1}{2}$ d. fare.
13. 'Baby' ticket of the Bahía Cable Railway.
14. Lille ticket. Available for a tramway ride and a swimming bath.
15. Hollow ticket of the Paris, Lyons and Mediterranean Railway, containing advertisements.

The tickets are well designed, but they are painfully large.

The illustration on page 393 shows simpler ticket—a triangular one. It is second class ticket of a light railway li

running over the field of Waterloo. It seems somewhat of a desecration for a tram ticket to bear such names as "Waterloo" and "La Belle Alliance," though it is the very fame of these places that has called for the building of the line.

The Ostend ticket, next to it, and issued by the same company is a curious contrast in size, and one of the very smallest ever issued. It is 0.4 sq. in., whereas the former is 17.4 sq. in., and some of the tickets issued by this company reach 8 inches by 6 inches in size.

The railway ticket illustrated on page 392, No. 15 on page 390, are the usual size of such tickets the world over, some are single and return tickets over the Congo Railway, and therefore interesting because the Congo is one of the 'questions of the day,' and also owing to their exorbitant price. £8 for a single fare along the 250 miles, which works out at about 8d. a mile.

Advertisements having but scant place on railway tickets, the Paris, Lyons and Mediterranean Railway tried a new departure some time back: the ticket is hollow and a neat tissue paper sheet of printed matter is inserted inside it. Upon pulling it out, which curiosity is bound to prompt the passenger to do (even should he not belong to the better sex) a number of advertisements are disclosed.

The number of necessary railway tickets is so considerable that many a dodge has been resorted to so as to

diminish it. Thus the Belgian State Railway prints, "kilometrical"—or as we know them, "Zone"—tickets, available from a station to all those that are about the same distance from it. The return portion is available from any of the others, of course which really does not matter.

Two other tickets have a larger scope still: the "tableaux" tickets, printed something like a multiplication table, and

of which we have said a few words, and the geographical ones. The illustration shows a tableau ticket printed in one language only, those printed in two languages would cover a couple of pages of the RAILWAY AND TRAVEL MONTHLY, and would be "outside the 'scope' of this article" by a long way.

The geographical ones show a plan of the system-schematically of course. If these could be combined with the photographs of the monuments, such as the older Roman tickets used to show, I do not know that there would be much left to wish for in the way of a railway guide.

The ticket numbered 14 on page 390 is perhaps the most curious of the lot.

It was issued in Lille, and, as it shows, is available not only for a tram ride, but for a bath as well. Whether the bath should be taken before or after the ride is an unsolved riddle.

A very considerable number of tickets are printed in Belgium, where this particular printing is quite an important



PICTORIAL TICKETS.

Top: Exhibition Tram Ticket, Lyons, 1894.

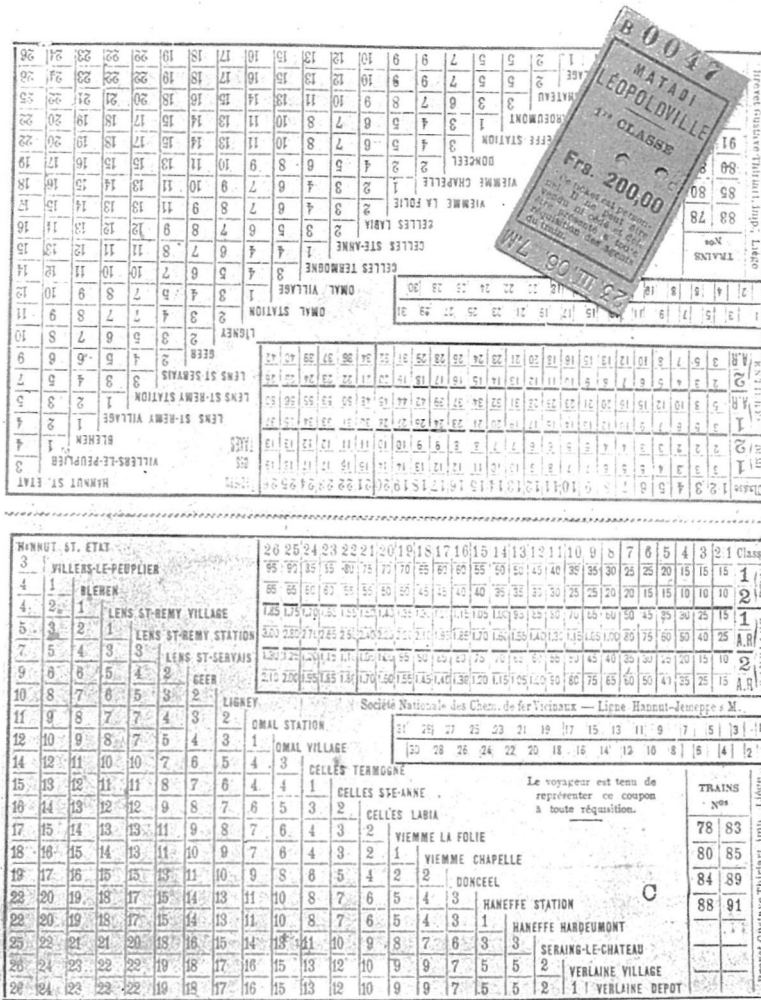
Bottom: Wiesbaden Tramway Ticket. Showing map of the system.

industry. This is due to the fact that whereas we British are the railway builders of the world, the Belgians are certainly its tramway providers. Most of the Spanish and Italian tramways and light railways, besides a very considerable number of Russian, Austrian, French, Dutch and German companies, are run by parent Belgian trusts such as the "Chemins de Fer Economiques," which owns besides a number of lines in Egypt, the "Chemins de Fer Secondaires," which includes Brazil in the countries in which it builds lines, and many another important group.

It is therefore natural Belgium should supply all these foreign countries with tickets, occasionally containing strange slips such as Russian lettering on the Malaga tramway tickets.

These latter ones have not been overprinted as have a number of others—in Brussels, for instance, where tickets of one line have been overprinted for use on another, where the price has been altered, sometimes two or three times, the number as well, and occasionally as many as five or six different overprints, each as expensive as a new ticket, have contributed to make such a blotch of it, that a reproduction as an illustration to this article would merely resemble a large smudge.

Apart from ordinary paper, cardboard or tissue paper, the material on which the tickets are printed varies but little. Occasionally a ticket may be printed on some patented substance, but this is quite exceptional. For one district the tickets were printed on "panmetalophile paper." This means paper upon which you can



A MAMMOTH RAILWAY TICKET (BELGIAN LIGHT RAILWAYS) COMPARED WITH A RAILWAY TICKET OF NORMAL SIZE (THE CONGO RAILWAY).

The big ticket is available for 1st or 2nd class; whole, half, or return; between any stations of the line, by any of the trains whose number is printed, and on any date of the month.

write with any bit of metal instead of a pencil.

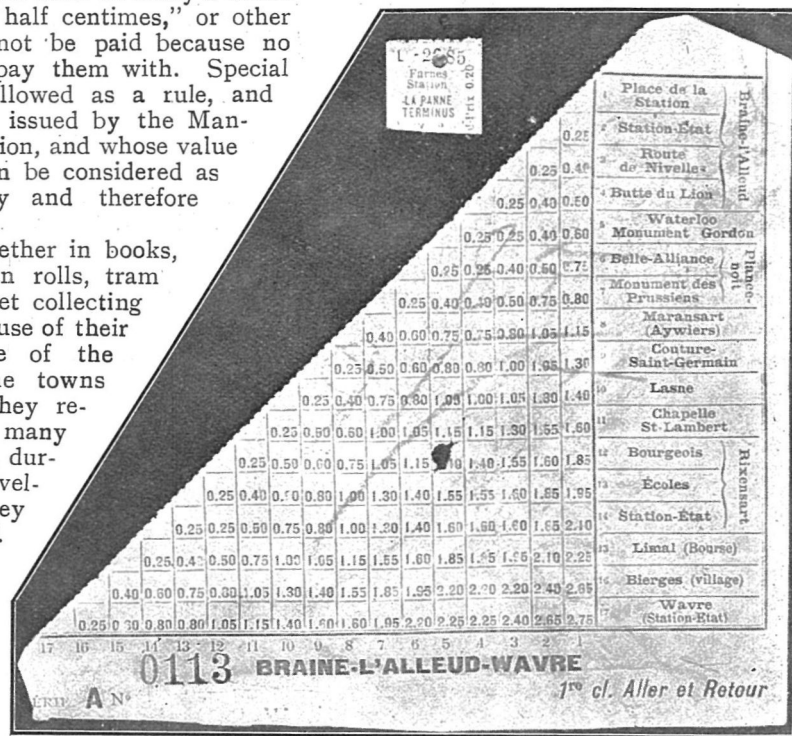
But even this special paper has not conquered the world, and this solitary instance has not been able to advertise it sufficiently.

Trouble as to the rate of the exchange is experienced in all towns where two currencies are used, and particularly near the frontiers. The fares on many a ticket are quoted in "half centimes," or other values that cannot be paid because no coin exists to pay them with. Special coins are not allowed as a rule, and even the tokens issued by the Manchester Corporation, and whose value is $\frac{1}{2}$ d. or 1d., can be considered as private currency and therefore forbidden.

However, whether in books, in packets or in rolls, tram and railway ticket collecting is amusing because of their variety, because of the souvenirs of the towns whose history they retrace, and of the many past experiences, during former travelling, which they remind one of. They teach geography better than do postage stamps, also method and classification, and as such should be encouraged.

But as many another and better things, tram tickets are dying out and condemned to disappear. The "pay as you enter

car" has conquered most of the New World and has appeared in this, and the very tickets we are using may some day



TWO MORE TICKETS OF THE BELGIAN LIGHT RAILWAYS.
The smallest ticket issued, and a triangular ticket of a line running across the Field of Waterloo.

become a thing of the past, so collectors had better secure specimens.