

acter of the earth generally is hard, with large quantities of boulders. In the sandstone belt what appears to be rock in situ are immense boulders, many of them weighing hundreds of tons each. One of these boulders that has been removed was as large as an ordinary dwelling house.

All along the line an army of laborers are employed in hastening the progress of the work. The pick and shovel brigade number some 4,000 men. Of these some 1,500 are Italians, while the remainder of the force is made up of Canadians, Norwegians, Hungarians, Swedes, and, in fact, almost every kind of nationality and mixed race. One thousand houses or so are employed, and some 14 or 15 steam drills are used. The laborers receive \$1.50 per day for their work, and they are paid regularly every month. As a general thing they are a rough set, and it is fortunate that some of them are so far away from civilization. During the past summer they have lived in canvas tents and rude board shanties, but now that cold weather is approaching they are providing themselves with more comfortable and better quarters. A large number of them are building log houses, covered either with boughs or roofs of turf. Life in their camps is not unlike that of the lumbermen, who are now coming into the woods for their winter's work, and their "grub" is about the same, with the exception of the Italian contingent, who huddle in their own dirty huts, and subsist on their favorite black bread and macaroni, with soups made of putrid meat and pungent onions. I am told that it does not cost these swarthy and brigandlike looking fellows over \$6 a month for what they eat. The food of hundreds of others of the immense gang of laborers is equal to that of a first-class country inn. The men indulge in various kinds of rough amusements, and at night the blaze of the crackling camp fires can be seen at a great distance. One of the principal evils that exists among the men is that of drunkenness. No sooner do they get their month's wages, than hundreds of them have a regular jaunt. Bottle peddlers are numerous in their camp about the time their pockets are jingling with their earnings. Within the past two weeks since the men were last paid off, these bottle peddlers have infested their camps and supplied them with all the liquor they wanted. The contractors are powerless to rid the camps of their presence, and they are making many bitter complaints on account of the non-enforcement of the liquor law, because, when the men get drunk, it delays the progress of the work.

The sanitary condition of the men is carefully looked out for, and prompt medical treatment is given in cases of sickness. There is a fully arranged medical staff along the whole line, of which Dr. J. A. Sweet, a Maine man, formerly of Brownville, is director. The services of the physicians are paid for by the men, who are obliged to contribute 50 cents each monthly for such a purpose. There has been very little sickness since the men began work last May. Only three men have been killed while at work.

The work is being pushed with energy, and one year from this fall, it is confidently ex-

pected, the road will be completed and ready for the public traffic.

The entire road, it is manifest, is being constructed in a substantial manner. All bridges, trestles and cattle guards will be covered with 8x8 ties, 14 feet in length, with 8 inch space. The two large viaducts will have only 4 inch spaces. The guard rails of the road will be 9x9, 12 feet apart, to admit of the passage of the largest snow ploughs, and a substantial protection to derailed trucks. As a matter of remarkable precaution, on the entire road there will not be a single opening by which a derailed truck can be dropped. This is the standard that is being adopted by the Canadian Pacific.

The Canadian Pacific and Toronto.

BEFORE the Railway Committee of the Privy Council on the 25th inst., a lengthy discussion took place on the dispute between the Canadian Pacific and Grand Trunk railways with reference to the new entrance into Toronto by the former by way of the Esplanade formed by the Don improvements.

Mr. VanHorne stated the case for the Canadian Pacific Railway, producing a map showing the proposed new route and pointing out its advantages. He desired permission to cross the Grand Trunk track at Parliament street, his company having secured a right of way twenty-eight feet wide south of the Esplanade from Yonge street to Berkley street, then crossing the Grand Trunk railway track at Parliament street and passing north of Mill street to a connection with the Don improvements.

Mr. Bell, solicitor for the Grand Trunk, and Mr. Wragge, engineer, opposed the application on the grounds that there were other ways for the Canadian Pacific Railway to get to the Don without crossing the Grand Trunk tracks. The Grand Trunk was quite willing that the Canadian Pacific Railway should come down the Don embankments, strike the Grand Trunk double track and use it into the city, but the proposed crossing would damage the traffic of the Grand Trunk and interfere with the working of the road for all time to come. If the proposal were persisted in it would lead to great litigation, as the Grand Trunk Railway were determined to resist the proposal by every means in their power.

Mr. VanHorne said the Canadian Pacific Railway were willing to spend any amount of money in offering greater facilities to Toronto. He was surprised to hear what Mr. Wragge had said, considering it was Mr. Wragge who suggested this very crossing. The crossing could be protected by the interlocked switch system.

Mayor Howland said the Council had passed a resolution and had drawn up a petition approving of what was proposed to be done by the Canadian Pacific Railway. In the first place they had made arrangements to come down on their Don improvements, which the city had made, and the Esplanade. Having partially agreed that the Canadian Pacific Railway should use the Esplanade, it would be a very serious disadvantage if it were not carried

out. There was no population in the vicinity of the Esplanade, and there would be no danger.

Mr. Blackstock, on behalf of certain owners of property, asserted that if the C. P. R. were allowed to cross at the spot they desired it would injure the property in that locality. They were not averse to the C. P. R. making an entry at another point.

After some further discussion the matter was taken on deliberation by the committee.

Mayor Howland and the Toronto Deputation made some enquiries at the Public Works Department with reference to the proposed extension of the Windmill line into the harbor, but owing to the illness of the Minister and the non-return from British Columbia of Chief Engineer Percy, the matter could not be discussed.

Short Cuts to Europe.

MR. JAMES HANNAY has an article under above caption in the current issue of the *Epoch*. In this the writer shows to New York readers how greatly they can shorten the ocean voyage to Liverpool by keeping the land route as far as Halifax in winter, and to Chatham in summer, when the railway bridge at Fredericton is completed. The tables are convincing:

New York to Halifax, all rail	miles 943
Halifax to Liverpool	2,468
New York to Liverpool	3,411
Difference	311
New York to Chatham	753
Chatham to Liverpool	2,350
	3,103

It will be seen, as Mr. Hannay points out, that going via Halifax the ocean voyage of a New York passenger to Europe would be shortened by 632 miles, or 36 hours very fast steaming, and there would be an actual gain of 12 hours in time if special through trains connected Halifax and New York.

The summer route from New York via Chatham and the Gulf would give practically the same mileage between New York and Liverpool, with the difference that 53 miles would be on land, and 500 miles more on the landlocked waters of the Gulf, with less danger of severe storms.

Mr. Hannay's article also shows the advantage of the Canadian route to passengers from Chicago, and discusses the advantages of White Haven and Shippegan as points of departure or arrival on this side of the Atlantic.

London Free Press.

MR. JOHN A. MILLER, of Cairo, Ill., correspondent of the *Railway Service Gazette*, who has been a practical watchmaker for many years, says that never before have watch repairers been so troubled with fine timepieces "getting off all at once." This is due to the watches being brought into such constant contact with electric currents. Railroad watches are the most unreliable. Mr. Miller explains that the iron brake shoe generates a current of electricity that is carried direct to the watch of the brakeman as he presses his watch in his vest pocket tight against the brake-wheel.