

From the *Oberland Ceylon Observer*, Summary.  
 This subject (steam traffic on ordinary roads) continues to engross a great deal of attention, in consequence of the reports which continue to be received of the wonderful performances of Thomson's Road Steamers. Besides the testimony of Major Skinner, (Chief Commissioner of Roads in Ceylon,) we have that now of Professor A. Prober before the British Association, in which he quotes the evidence of the eminent Aberdeen Engineer, Mr. Abernethy. Judging from what has actually been done at home we in Ceylon have reason to feel the most sanguine hopes that one of the greatest desiderata—an effective, cheap and constantly reliable mode of traffic, is about to be fulfilled. And that ere long goods trains at slow speed, and mail and passenger trains at a speed not far inferior to that attained on the railway, may be constantly running on our main lines of common road. Of course, a final judgment must be reserved until we have seen the result of actual trial; but with all the testimony which has reached us, we must confess that the effect on ourselves has been a transition from strong scepticism to a very sanguine belief of the efficacy of steam traffic over common roads and for long distances. The success of the experiment cannot but promote the progress of this colony to an extent which cannot be calculated.

From the *Times*, Money Article, Sept. 27th, 1870.  
 These Road Steamers appear to be exciting great interest all over the world. The Government of India have just ordered, to be dispatched overland, the first engine for a regular service, which they intend establishing on the Grand Trunk Road, for the transport of troops, government stores, and general merchandise, in lieu of the miserably slow, costly bullock trains which now creep along that fine road. The Road Steamers, it is said, will run five or six miles per hour at far less cost than the bullock hackeries which cannot keep up one-third of that speed.

From the *Times*, Paris Correspondent, Sept. 27th, 1870.  
 We have one of Thomson's Road Steamers running through the streets of Paris, dragging behind it a heavy Versailles omnibus with 50 passengers, compared to which the six horse power engines look like a steam tug towing an Indian. On the report of the French Government Engineers, leave has been granted to the Road Steamer to ply over two routes several miles in length and including some of the busy parts of Paris. The Engineers report it more handy and manageable than horses and in no way dangerous to the public.

From the *Pall Mall Gazette*, Jan. 18th, 1870.  
 One of these engines was recently shown in Paris, where it ran for some weeks with one of the great Versailles omnibuses, carrying 50 passengers attached to it. It went up a paved street beside the "Trocadero," where the gradients are 1 in 10, crossed the "Road Point" at hours when it was thronged with vehicles and equestrians, and in the beautifully level Paris streets easily attained a speed of 12 miles an hour.

From the *Engineer*, Sept. 10th, 1869.  
 The distance was two and three-quarter miles, and the journey was performed in twenty-one minutes and a half, or at the rate of over eight miles an hour, that being the highest speed at which was deemed safe to run it through a town.

From the *Scientific American*, Nov. 19th, 1870.  
 An ingenious invention or device in connection with the exhaust steam almost completely suppresses the noise caused by its escape.

From the *Edinburgh Courant*.  
 Mr Thomson has completely overcome the objection of noise, causing fright to animals, by means of a patent self acting injector, which throws a steady stream of water into the boiler, thus obviating all difficulty in keeping down steam, when it is necessary to stop the engine in critical places in order to allow horses to pass with the steamer in perfect silence, and the driver and stoker in full view of the passing animals it is found that all danger from fright is avoided.

From the *Philadelphia Ledger*.  
 The Steamer is more completely under the control of the driver than would be the best trained animals. There is no need of breaks, as the steam can be instantaneously shut off, or the engine can be reversed and backed up the incline if necessary.

From the *Pall Mall Gazette*.  
 At the present moment, when so much anxiety has been expressed on account of the exportation of horses, a parliamentary paper just issued will be read with interest as showing that the time approaches when we shall no longer require the services of that noble animal. It appears by the reports on Thomson's "road steamer" made to the War Department, that this engine, unless, perhaps, for hunting purposes, is far more useful than any horse. Mr Anderson, the superintendent of machinery, says he has "come to the conclusion that the question of steam traction on common roads is now completely solved; that the application of the India-rubber tire is a perfect success; that it opens up an entirely new field; and that he looks upon this application as a discovery rather than an invention."

# THE V

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## The Choice of Tariffs.

To-morrow the Legislative Council will be called upon to deal with the question of Customs Tariffs—to choose between the retention of our present Tariff and the acceptance of the Canadian one, upon entering the Dominion. The Legislature has now the answer of the Canadian Government with regard to being allowed to make certain alterations in the British Columbia Tariff as must be conceded now, if it was conceded before, that the choice was not between an amended tariff and Canadian one, but between the British Columbia Tariff, as it existed when Terms were first negotiated, and Canadian one. Such being the case we cannot see why the Legislature should hesitate to accept the Canadian Tariff. True, the question has been raised as to whether the present Legislature has the right of choice; but must be excused if we say that it does not appear to be any ground raising such a doubt. Whatever may now be experienced by any of the Delegates on this point, they did entertain the slightest doubt upon subject on their return from Ottawa. The Terms themselves convey no doubt. The allusion to the matter in the Governor's Speech, in opening the present session of the Legislature, not justify the belief that the Executive had any such doubt. The reply of the Canadian Government to the request of our own Government to be permitted to make certain alterations in the Tariff does not suggest such doubt. On the contrary, everything points to a definite conclusion. The Canadian Government is solely moved by a desire to ascertain the mind of British Columbia on this point; and it appears to be idle to pretend that British Columbia has not a right to make her own known till after Union. This, indeed, appear to be the proper course for the present Legislature the proper course to make a choice between the two. The Tariff question was made a prominent issue at the polls in the District; and if there be one more than another upon which the present Legislature has a right to speak the name and on behalf of the people is that of customs tariffs. If we the other side of the Rocky Mountains shall find something to our purpose. It will be remembered that a year ago, in the name of the people of the Red River, the Convention met at Fort Garry for the purpose of indicating a basis of Union with Canada. At other things, the Convention asked the Customs Tariff at that time in that settlement, which imposed a merely nominal rate of five per cent ad valorem upon imports, might be continued for three years, or until the establishment of railway communication. The wish thus expressed was recognized and acted upon by the Canadian Government and the constitution of Manitoba framed at Ottawa provides for the continuance of that tariff. If the wish of the people of that settlement so loosely expressed by Delegates called together under the name of a Government was so recognized, how much more must the wish of the people of British Columbia, so unequivocally expressed in a constitutional Legislature merit the same consideration.