

in a large measure make up for the loss of new work in the way of building engines, etc. He further said that the Northern & Northwestern Railways are under no obligation to the city to keep their workshops in Toronto.

Mr. Hickson gave every possible accommodation to the passenger traffic, especially as they wanted it, and if the City Hall Station could be altered or so changed as to afford proper accommodation for the trains from the east and west, that these trains would be stopped at this station. Various plans were suggested. Of these the most feasible was to divert Esplanade Street between East and West Market Streets to the north of the present station, and remove the present station building south, which if done would give all the accommodation needed.

Mr. Hickson stated that it was of the utmost importance for the prosperity of Toronto and the Grand Trunk Railway that the line running from North Bay to James' Bay be built as speedily as possible, and he would further say that it was in the interests of the city to use every legitimate influence to accomplish this much desired work. He thought the Ontario Government should assist in its construction by granting substantial bonuses.

The city is also vitally interested in the extension of the Northern Railway system to Sault Ste. Marie, which will soon be an accomplished fact.

Mr. Hickson was under the impression there was some misapprehension as to the position of the Northern Railway stock held by the city and the ratification of the bargain between the Northern and the Grand Trunk Railways. The fact of the matter was that the Grand Trunk had not to go to the Dominion Parliament for the ratification of the agreement, but only in reference to the stock. Hon. J. B. Robinson could not in any way block the agreement.

The question of discrimination of rates came up, but he showed no disposition to discuss it. He had told a deputation from Hamilton in relation to the same matter, that instead of paying less they should pay more, and that after the amalgamation he would be willing to discuss the matter.

With reference to the settlement of the dispute as to ownership of certain property now occupied by the Northern & Northwestern Railway on the Esplanade, the rights of the city were amply provided for in the agreement, and after the amalgamation was accomplished Mr. Hickson would invite discussion with a view to arrive at an agreement satisfactory to all concerned.

In view of the facts as above stated, your committee would recommend that Hon. J. B. Robinson be informed by cable that no action is to be taken by him on behalf of the city to oppose the amalgamation between the Northern and the Grand Trunk Railways.

The Council went into committee on the whole to discuss the report, Ald. Gillespie in the chair.

Ald. Baxter moved the adoption of the report, which was unanimously carried without amendment. In Council the report passed unanimously, and Mayor Clarke was instructed

to cable to Mr. Robinson, requesting him to take no action on behalf of the city. Ald. Baxter wanted the chairman of the joint committee in London also notified of the Council's action, but this, it was generally felt, would be an insult to Mr. Robinson.

### What a French Chief Engineer Says.

EMILIE ACKER, of Paris, chief engineer of the sleeping-car bureau of the Grand European Express and Interior Co. of France, has been sent to this country to study the American passenger car system. He recently passed through Pittsburgh on his way to Chicago, and is reported by a Pittsburgh paper as having expressed his astonishment at the perfection to which our passenger cars have been brought.

"They are infinitely superior to our coaches in every respect," said he, "but your roadbeds are perfectly miserable as compared to ours. If our rattling cars were brought over here they would not stay on the track a minute. There is another thing here that is simply awful; your curves are so sharp. To my mind it can not be possible that the car will stay on the tracks, and I fear for my life; yet everybody is so calm and comfortable that I only need to look around to see that there is no danger. Then, too, you run so fast, and in spite of me I would clutch the seat when we swung around that curve just out of town. I can honestly say that I never passed a sharper curve, and will have trouble in convincing those at home that we went over the bend at a rate of 45 miles an hour. We rarely run so fast as that. It isn't necessary. We haven't thousands of miles to go, and time is no object. We want safety. I will try to take your car system back with me; but you can keep your roadbeds and your awful rush to get from one place to another."

### Canada Shows the Way.

THE following, which was published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and cabled to the *Empire*, of Toronto, is a most remarkable tribute to the energy, loyalty and foresight of the Canadian people: The shrinkage of the world under electricity, which is the most notable phenomenon in our century, has seldom been more remarkably illustrated than by the interview which took place recently between the editor of this journal and our special commissioner. Mr. Norman has at last found his way across the American continent, and on the eve of his departure for Japan, standing on the shore of the Pacific, he paused to hold an hour's conversation with his chief at a distance of over seven thousand miles. This interviewing tour round the world, in the course of which our representative interviewed almost every colonial personage of note in the Dominion, from the governor-general to the mayor of Vancouver, has now yielded the most extraordinary interview on record. Never before has modern journalism made so bold a use of the instruments which science has placed at its dis-

posal. Between our special commissioner and his chief stretched an expanse of sea and land, across which, thirty years ago it would have been impossible to exchange communication in less than three to four months. But thanks to the enterprise and energy of cable-layers and railroad builders during the last few years it is possible to hold a confidential conversation between London and Vancouver without a greater interval than four minutes between the answer and the reply. Four minutes instead of four months. That measures the shrinkage of the plastic world beneath the magic touch of the electrical engineer. None of the wonders of the Arabian Nights can outdo the marvel of that midnight talk across the cable, in which a question, framed on the banks of the Thames River was answered on the banks of the Frazer River within a couple of minutes. In four minutes a circuit of 15,000 miles was complete. London can talk to Vancouver with no more delay than, if the telegraph were not, the horse guards could talk with the war office. The night was unpropitious, a storm raging in the far-away western regions between Winnipeg and the Rocky Mountains interrupted the conversation for nearly an hour, but although the temperature was below zero the damage was promptly repaired, the interrupted sentence was completed, and the interview proceeded to its close as though no blizzards had swept across the North-West and the wire, instead of traversing ocean depths and mountain heights, had merely connected Hampstead and Wimbledon. This interview at 7,000 miles' range is an object lesson of the first importance, for it teaches the world that distance has disappeared so far as the transmission of ideas is concerned, and as the government of men, and especially the representative government of men, tends to become more and more a matter of ideas, it is impossible to over-estimate the political significance of the revolution thus effected. As our commissioner very wisely remarked the slender filament of metal along which the men crossed and re-crossed messages of sympathy and requests for direction, is itself a striking symbol of our imperial unity and prophetic of that closer union there is still to be between our island realm and what Sir John Macdonald calls her auxiliary kingdoms. Regarded as a chain what can be weaker than the trailing anchor of a storm-driven vessel. She might snap the cable at either end. A gust of wind might bring the overhead wires to the ground, a prowling bear from the forest primeval clambering up the poles might interrupt the circuit. As a material the nexus is slender as the gossamer. And yet what chain of fortresses, what Roman wall of frowning masonry could vie for a moment in real potency as an empire-binder, with this silent and secret highway of the thoughts of man. It makes neighbors of dwellers at the uttermost ends of the earth. The change cannot fail to impress the imagination of statesmen, and to fill the hearts of our people with fresh hope as to the promise of the future. Our correspondent is evidently impressed with the danger of attempting to draw too tightly the