

EDITORIAL

The Montreal Daily Star

"CANADA'S GREATEST NEWSPAPER."

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THE GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY.

LAST year the Dominion of Canada observed its fiftieth birthday. This year one of the great railway systems of the Dominion will celebrate its sixty-sixth anniversary. Both of these are historic events, proving that this young country is growing up, perhaps not getting on in years, but at least approaching adolescence.

The Grand Trunk Railway is practically, if not actually, the pioneer railroad of Canada. Before its advent there were several small lines, now part of the Grand Trunk system, but it remained for the Grand Trunk to originate and carry through the first comprehensive transportation plan for serving the Canada of the fifties. It was a bold scheme, almost a reckless one, in that pioneer age, to link up Sarnia, Ont., with Portland, Me., via Toronto and Montreal, and to do so with a roadbed of such permanence that its standards have never been appreciably changed since. The railroad builders of those early days had faith in Canada, a faith that might shame some of those living in a more modern era.

As a pioneer road the Grand Trunk is entitled to—even if it has not always received—the fullest measure of sympathy and encouragement from the Canadian people. It is impossible to estimate the importance of the part played by the Grand Trunk in the development of this country when it was practically the only trunk line carrying goods to the Atlantic seaboard through Canada. During its sixty-six years of history it has continued adding to its system, and today when the railroads of the

entire continent are laboring under immense handicaps, congestion, lack of fuel and labor, expense and scarcity of materials, the "old Grand Trunk" is holding up its end, and winning praise for its success. That recognition, so far as the people of Canada are concerned, does not seem to be commensurate with the deserts of the company.

The Grand Trunk exercises an influence in Eastern Canada more extensive than is generally realized. The present system includes no less than 125 companies which were originally separate in legal identity. It boasts a double track line practically all the way from Montreal to Chicago. It has been responsible for some of the greatest public structures in the Dominion, the Victoria Bridge, the Sarnia Tunnel and others. For more than half a century it has been closely identified with the growth and business development of Canada, doing its part without ostentation, but none the less effectively. Those who invested their money in the enterprises have had to be content with meagre returns financially, and a large consciousness of public service, if that was of comfort to them.

It is well that the Canadian people should not forget the actors that have helped them along towards nationhood. The sixty-sixth anniversary of the Grand Trunk should be an occasion for a little thought as to the deserts of that fine old railroad system, an honorable patriotic corporation that has been the victim of one-half the railway legislation not only of the Federal House but of most of the Provinces—a railway that was forced to accept the handicap of an ill-considered transcontinental road engineered for party and not for patriotic ends.