

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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THE IRON WAY.



THAT is, literally, what the French call it—*chemin de fer*. And a wonderful way it is. It is, I think, the greatest

his breakfast comfortably in Montreal. England is the place, however, where the railway service is the best in the world—the roads the most solid, the trains most frequent, the speed the greatest. The Queen often travels at the rate of seventy miles an hour. The picture shows an English train. The

go like the wind, and are punctual to the minute.

From an interesting article in the last *Contemporary Review* we glean the following striking facts respecting this wonderful system. The different companies have, in London, in all nearly 500 stations, exclusive of goods,

day; or, an average of sixty-one an hour for eighteen hours a day. The *Railway News* estimates that in busy times of the day there are probably two movements of trains every minute. The passenger trains within the metropolis run a distance of 35,000 miles every week-day, or, 11,000,000 miles in the year. The capital invested is more than £50,000,000.

The traffic of one of these companies awakens wonder. Look at the London and North-Western Company, with its 1,736 miles of continuous railway—(10,000 miles in all)—along which flows the trade of several of the chief towns and cities of the Empire, carrying 50,000,000 passengers a year, or a million a week, equal in a month to the population of London, conveying 24,000,000 tons of goods and minerals, which would fill a train 10,000 miles long; with 2,300 locomotives, 2,500 carriages, and over 50,000 other vehicles, that run a distance of 35,000,000 miles a year, equal to 1,458 times round the world, to say nothing of a magnificent fleet of steamships, and estimate, if it were possible, what all this means in the traffic of that one line of railway. Such an institution, with its policies, its negotiations, its responsibilities, its revenues, its 40,000 servants, and its influence, is more like

invention of the century. On this broad continent of ours, where distances are so great, we would get along very poorly indeed without it. It used to be said, that the United States and Canada were giants without bones. Well, the railroads have given them bones. The Grand Trunk and the Pacific Railway will be the great backbone of Canada, and the other roads the long, strong arms reaching out in every direction and carrying the grain of the country to the sea.

I remember well the beginning of the first railway in Ontario, the Northern. The first sod was turned by Lady Elgin, just opposite the Parliament Buildings on Front street, Toronto. The first conductor is still a comparatively young man; and yet Canada has now, I think, more miles of railway for her population, as well as more shipping, than any other country.

It used to be a dreadful journey to Montreal by stage in winter. It took nearly a week; often more than a week. A man prepared for it as if going to the North Pole. I know a friend who got a great fur bag made to put both his feet in to keep them warm on the long and tedious journey. And now, one can take his supper in Toronto, go to bed on the sleeping-car, and take

locomotive has no "cow-catcher"—there are no cows on the track to catch. It has no cab—a great comfort on a stormy day, I wonder they don't use it. The cars are shorter than ours, each divided into three compartments, like three stage coaches placed end to end. One enters at the side and is locked in. I don't like it as well as ours, but they

coal, and cattle depots. It is estimated that the number of passengers using these stations is 750,000 a day, the Metropolitan alone averaging 180,000 every week-day. With regard to the number of trains, several stations have 500 each, Liverpool Street has nearly 700 a day, Moorgate Street over 800 a day, and Victoria more than 1,100 a

kingdom than a Company. Or, take the Midland, which has "gradually spread its 1,365 miles of railway north and south, and east and west, through half the country of England, till they stretch from the Wash to the Humber, the Wash to the English Channel to the Solway Frith," that has a property—has cost £60-



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