

A HUGE STEEL TOY

For some months past there has been gradually rising to view in the exhibition grounds at Earl's Court, [England], a steel structure, which has now reached a final altitude of 300 ft. from ground level to summit, and which, in clear weather, is visible for many miles around. This is the gigantic wheel, which is an enlargement upon, and a modification of, its prototype, which attracted so much patronage at the Chicago Exhibition. The present structure consists of the largest wheel ever built, the axle being carried on eight supporting columns 150 feet high, at which level there will be two large promenade or recreation rooms, having balconies around them, and communicating with each other by a passageway through the axle, which is 7 feet in diameter. Around the periphery of the wheel will be suspended, at regular intervals, on steel shafts, 40 cars, which are rather larger than ordinary trams, being 24 ft. long by 9 ft. wide, and 10 ft. high externally. Each car is capable of carrying 30 passengers, giving a total complement of 1,200 persons. Ten of these cars have been elegantly fitted and furnished at a cost of about £100 each, and will form first-class cars, five being for the smoking and five for the non-smoking portion of the public. As the cars leave the platforms the passengers will be raised above the ground gradually and will first be able to overlook the surrounding houses and then to look down upon them, and, in clear weather, to obtain a splendid view of London, with its numerous public buildings, whilst from the summit the surrounding country, stretching away even as far as Windsor Castle in one direction, will be within view.

Access to the promenade at the top of the columns forming the towers which carry the wheel will be gained by a double funicular railway or water-balanced lift. This consists of two cars connected by hauling gear, and each having a water tank in its base. These cars will balance each other and will slide up and down two of the columns, which are rectangular in section, and are placed at an angle. At the top of each column is a storage tank for water, which will be pumped up from a reservoir under the ground. When a car at ground level has received its complement of passengers, the base tank of the car at the top will be filled with water, and on the brakes being released the car will glide down the column at a moderate speed, and at the same time will haul up the freighted car on the other leg. Arrived at the ground level, the water in the car tank will be discharged into an underground tank, to be again pumped up to the top of the towers.

The wheel will be rotated by means of powerful chain gearing driven by steam power. Two endless chains will be used, each passing around either edge of the wheel through a series of guide brackets, over pulleys, and through a subway to the engines. The chains are of the short-link type, and each is over 1,000 feet in length, and weighs about eight tons. They are operated by two 50 horse-power Robey under-type engines placed in an engine-house at the foot of the wheel-towers. Either of the two chains is capable of driving the wheel by itself, so that there need be no fear of stoppage. At night the wheel will be lighted by electricity. The weight of the wheel and the empty cars is about 1,500 tons; with the cars loaded, it will be about 100 tons more. The wheel will be completed and opened to the public on May 25th, that being the date of the opening of the exhibition. —*Iron and Steel Trades Journal*.

WHY ENGLISH PEOPLE CANNOT MAKE COFFEE.

A writer in a London evening contemporary says: "One of the things that the French understand better than us is coffee. In England the coffee berries are as good as those that are bought in France at double or three times the price; but the beverage that is made from them is almost invariably bad, in hotels no less than in private houses. French visitors have explained again and again the reason of this inferiority, but to no purpose: for John Bull, difficult as he is to please over his tea, is indifferent on the subject of coffee, and will go through life serenely unconscious of the fine aroma and flavor that may be extracted from the yellowish-green berry if proper attention be given to the matter. The main rules are these: the berries should be freshly roasted, and should never be put into the mill until the coffee is about to be

made. To buy coffee already ground is indefensible. Supposing it to be pure when retailed by grocers in that state, it has generally lost much of its aroma, which is exceedingly volatile. Now the aroma is to coffee what the bouquet is to Bordeaux and Burgundy; that is to say, almost everything. However "generous" a wine may be, if it has no fine bouquet it is merely *vin ordinaire*—good enough for common use, but not to be offered to a friend at dessert. When it has lost its aroma coffee is almost worthless, chicory being then quite as good, if not preferable. But when its essential perfume rises powerfully with the steam of a freshly poured-out cup, it is one of the best and most delicate of nature's little attentions to mankind. In all French kitchens the coffee mill is regarded as one of the most indispensable of utensils; and although people living in large towns generally buy their coffee ready roasted, in country houses the roasting is done at home—a very simple and excellent contrivance being sold for the purpose. But it is of little use to talk of coffee to people who only drink it when mixed with milk. It is only so employed by the French at their early breakfast, when, in their opinion, the addition of chicory improves it; but those who have proper respect for the refinements of life think it rank heresy to use ever so little of the bitter root in making *café noir*. The English will never understand the art of making coffee until they learn to appreciate the true flavor and virtue of the berry when served in the form of *café noir* after lunch or dinner. The habit, however, is not worth cultivating when it is done parsimoniously. To obtain a good result there should be much coffee and little water. It is not the quantity but the quality of the liquid that is to be thought of. Inasmuch as there is nothing like black coffee—unless it be strong tea—to whip up the nerves, it should be used with caution, or not at all, by the ever-increasing number of people who are more or less afflicted with nervous disorders.

AN INEBRIATED BANKRUPT.

Rees Davies, lately carrying on business in Oxford street, Swansea, as a grocer, was examined at the Swansea Bankruptcy Court, on Thursday week. At the commencement the Official Receiver said: "This man is not in a fit state to be examined." "Oh, yes, I am," was the reply, given with some difficulty. "You were drunk at the last court, were you not?" "That is an opinion—I don't think so." (Laughter.) The Official Receiver: "I'm told that Mr. R. J. Lloyd, debtor's solicitor, has thrown up the case because debtor is not in a fit state to be examined. Is not this contempt of court?" Debtor said he could answer any question. The Official Receiver—"Perhaps in this state you may throw some light upon the missing books of account?" (Laughter.) Where are they?" Debtor: "I don't know." The examination was eventually adjourned, the Registrar observing that if he came in that state again it would be serious for him. Debtor: "I hope to be in a better state than I am now. I have been in very bad health. (Laughter.) What about my expenses?" (Loud laughter.) The Official Receiver: "The expenses were sent you, and this is what you have done with them." Debtor then stumbled out of the box. The Official Receiver called the Registrar's attention to the debtor's conduct, stating that he failed to put in an appearance at the first meeting of the creditors, and was drunk at the last court. He was afraid that unless he was locked up by order of the court he would never appear. The Registrar decided to consider the matter. —*Grocer's Review*.

CONNECTICUT RAILROAD MATTERS

When it was announced a few days ago that the Connecticut legislature, which has been hearing arguments for several weeks on the question of granting charters to electric roads paralleling to some extent existing steam lines, had decided not to make any general regulation, but to decide each case upon its merits as it came up, it was assumed in some quarters to be a victory for the trolley people. Such is not the case. Every application coming before the legislature since the hearing, where the parallel idea was involved at all, has been decided adversely to the trolley interests and against the best interests of the people of the State.

There can be but one interpretation placed upon the action of these Connecticut law-

makers. The merits of the trolley system for interurban traffic are so thoroughly demonstrated, and have been so overwhelmingly recognized by the public at large, that these hayseed legislators cannot crawl behind the pretext that they thought they were working for the public good. They were working chiefly in the interests of the Consolidated Steam Road Company, which for years has controlled the body.

If there be one man among them who honestly holds that the state is under any obligations to the railroad company, he is sadly misguided. Paternalistic ideas have slight foothold in America, but the arguments offered by the railroad lawyers would outdo in this direction anything that we know of even in Germany, the stronghold of paternalism. These lawyers held that the state had really guaranteed that the investment in New York, New Haven and Hartford securities should forever be a profitable one. This is not exactly nonsense. It is socialism of too dangerous a tendency to be tolerated in New England.

The advance of the trolley has been checked; the people who need the new lines can now wait another season or two, but they will get it sooner or later.

It would not be a bad notion to make an issue of trolley extension in the next legislative election in Connecticut. The trolleyites would certainly win. —*Electricity*.

COAL SEAMS DISCOVERED NEAR SYDNEY, N.S.

A large coal basin of magnificent coal has been discovered at Black Brook. It extends over three miles, and lying along the eastern shore of Sydney harbor there are five and a half miles of area rich in coal and prolific with seams. One seam, a large one, contains coal of a kind not hitherto mined in Cape Breton.

Four seams have been bored by diamond drill; two of these are large seams, the third is a good seam with a small clay parting of about five inches. Besides the four seams bored by the diamond drill there are outcroppings of coal, and coal has been taken out of them all. One of the seams has been proved, by a slope, to contain the best of coal, and shows at the roof of the slope a seam of five feet six inches from roof to pavement. It has been demonstrated that there are four large workable seams, and it is also true that other seams of the best coal are lying underneath the others in the coal measures.

An English syndicate has bonded this property at 20,000 a mile, and as they have decided to make their money talk, some very interesting developments may be expected during the coming summer. The property is contiguous to water shipping, and has the best railway facilities. Mira Bay coal mine (the Tracy seam) is one of the best seams of coal in Cape Breton, and a harbor could be constructed at the lake by cutting through False Bay beach. The lake is owned in fee simple with a charter from the Government, enabling its present owners to proceed at any time with harbor construction. In a very short time the whole matter will be clearly laid before the public, and special legislation will be sought for the new syndicate. —*Sydney Reporter*.

SENSIBLE ADVICE.

In an address at the commencement exercises of the New York trade school ex-Mayor Hewett said: If you ask whether it is the right of the workmen to associate together for the general welfare, and to increase the rate of labor, then I say yes. It is not only their right but their duty. But it is when the trades-union steps between the pale of the law, and assumes the right to compel or prevent labor, that it violates the fundamental principle of human liberty and Christianity. So also has the employer the right to combine with others, but when he oversteps the law then he has violated the principles upon which the constitution rests. But I see the dawn of harmony between the employer and the employee. When that time comes questions will be discussed and considered by honest men. The workman will not be deprived of his individual liberty. These late disturbances are among the last, and the time is at hand when there will be absolute equality to every man who breathes beneath the flag of the union.