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THE TIMES.

Mr. Hickson, General Manager of the Grand Trunk, sails for Europe by the "Sardinian" next week. He has not been in England since 1878, when affairs wore a different aspect. The traffic receipts for the June half of that year were \$4,232,065.83—less than the same half-year receipts in 1880 by nearly six hundred thousand dollars. It cannot be said, however, that the increase is due to better management, but to better times and the accession of traffic from the Chicago line. The failures in Canada during the June half-years of 1878 and 1879 respectively were \$13,508,729, and \$17,425,953, while last half-year they had decreased to \$5,660,845. The last Grand Trunk traffic return published shows that in 1880 the increased receipts to date over 1879 were \$1,429,636, and the year 1879 showed an increase of about one hundred thousand dollars over the returns for 1878.

When Mr. Hickson was last in England it was uncertain how long Mr. Vanderbilt would be able to frustrate his plans for getting into Chicago, but now the line has been acquired in its entirety and placed in superior condition; its equipment has been nearly completed, and a site for the Chicago station has been secured in a good central locality—near the Grand Pacific Hotel. To the indomitable energy, and unflinching skill of Mr. Hickson, backed by the confidence and co-operation of the Board in England, and by a capable organization in this country, these results are due; and he must feel some considerable satisfaction in being able to meet the Board and the proprietary with the assurance that he has placed the Grand Trunk in the first rank of American trunk lines, and that its voice is respected in discussions upon matters affecting the united railway business of the continent. It is to be hoped that Mr. Hickson may have and enjoy a rest from the very arduous duties which his office imposes upon him.

Some after exhibition notes will not be out of place perhaps. A visitor passing through the exhibition could not fail to be struck with the number of prizes given. I tried hard to find an exhibitor who did not get a prize of some kind. Of course I succeeded in finding one or two, because the very few who did not get an award were very loud in their complaints, but really it is astonishing how well the judges succeeded in pleasing everybody. They must have had a large number of first-class prizes at command.

The judgment of some of the judges was also very remarkable. The show everywhere gained favour in their eyes; the get-up was highly prized. Perhaps the best illustration of it was given on the Montreal Lacrosse Grounds on the day of the Caledonian Games. There was a prize for the best dressed Highland gentleman, and it was awarded to one who was dressed as a Highland piper might be, but as a Highland gentleman never was, and it is to be hoped never will be, for he had encased himself in many folds and feathers and much tin. I have not seen many Highland gentlemen in native costume, but the learned in these things pointed out to me the dress of one, and it was the other extreme of the first prize man—as simple as it was charming.

The publication of Major De Winton's letter to the secretary of the Exhibition notwithstanding, the closing of the buildings for two hours to prepare for and accommodate His Excellency the Governor General was an unwarrantable and foolish piece of business. Major De Winton is perhaps right in trying to protect his charge from all vulgar crushing and other kinds of possible danger, but if he wished His Excellency to view the exhibits unhindered by *oi polloi* he should have taken him there early in the morning of the same day of opening or the next: then the formal opening would have been a simple affair—just the utterance of the needful phrases, and then the hospitable protection of the refreshment room. The committee had no right to deprive the sight-seers of two hours of sight-seeing. All possible courtesy was due to His Excellency and some little of that same was due to the people.

An exhibition is undoubtedly a good thing, but it has been demonstrated over and over again that it is quite possible to have too much of a good thing. And we shall be sure of the truth of the statement before long if we are to have an exhibition every year in Montreal. The community is too small for such a frequent recurrence of it. Once every two or three years would answer every practical purpose and be far more profitable in the long run.

I was pleased to notice the enterprise of the Northern Pacific Railway in sending one of their mammoth baggage cars from St. Paul, Minn., to our Dominion Exhibition. This car was fifty feet long, eleven feet wide, and fifteen feet in height,—larger in every way than the passenger coaches on Eastern railroads. The painting of the car was a pattern of good taste, and executed in the neatest manner; the car was provided with three brakes, thereby giving an immense amount of control over the car's motion. Inside the car the scene baffled description; there were shelves of black-walnut holding glass bottles containing samples of grain: in ornamental bins were to be seen vegetables of great size and fine quality, and above these were the specimens of mineral wealth. The arched roof was exquisitely ornamented with long, narrow sheaves of grain bound together with red and blue ribbons and forming curves of golden beauty; in very truth, to every one, whether of agricultural tastes or not, the sight was one that could not fail to please and gratify. This Northern Pacific Railway, which traverses the Red River at its sources, is rapidly being built across the Continent, and will, doubtless, prove a source of wealth to its owners. The colonizing influence of railroads can hardly be over-estimated, and, with our Canadian Pacific Railway it appears that we shall shortly have four Pacific railways crossing the American Continent. As I have said above the Northern Pacific Railway crosses the Red River at its sources; from here we have the St. Paul Minneapolis and Manitoba R. R. coming down the great wheat valley to Manitoba. This valley is celebrated for the extraordinary quality and yield of wheat, and the area of wheat cultivation is much larger in the British territories than elsewhere.

The Grand Trunk Railway passenger traffic for the past three weeks amounted to \$243,330, this is the largest passenger earnings the Company ever had for any three consecutive weeks. The next largest receipts for any three consecutive weeks was in 1874, \$241,650, which included the earnings of 118¼ miles more railway. The rate per mile in the three weeks in 1874 on 1383 miles was, \$174.73 and in 1880 on 1,273½ miles it was \$191.07.

It is to be hoped the *Witness* will learn to be a little more circumspect in the sensational headings it is accustomed to add to New York