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THE INTER-COLONIAL RAILWAY.

(To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.)

SIR.—My attention having been called to the proposed extension of the Grand Trunk Railway, towards an outlet or harbour on the shore of British territory—by the letters of the several gentlemen who have preceded me upon this important subject—and feeling a lively interest in keeping the matter before the public, I beg leave to occupy a small space in the columns of your valuable paper, for the purpose of offering a few additional suggestions, both, as to the entire feasibility as far as New Brunswick is concerned, and as to the route spoken of in connection with the New Brunswick and Canada Railway, and its very favourable character, as regards distance and cost.

I also purpose making a few further comments upon the impracticability of the much agitated scheme of a Military Road; and briefly comparing the results of such a scheme (providing that it could be successfully carried out), with those of the shortest, cheapest, and most practicable route, for a railway.

First, then, as to the route—and in this connection I shall only consider that through New Brunswick, referring the reader to the very able letter of Mr. Wallace, for information respecting that through Canada.

Having before me a profile of the route located, and mostly adopted by the N. B. & C. Railway & Co., from their starting point at St. Andrews, to the high road between Houlton and Woodstock—a distance of about ninety miles—and being acquainted with the country forward by actual examination and report, I make the statement authoritatively, that no road of equal length in New England, at least, runs through a country so well adapted to cheap yet solid and durable railway construction.

The only engineering difficulties met with so far, are, at or near Woodstock, in crossing the high ridge of land between there and Houlton; and obtaining such level, as will allow of an easy descent into the valley of the river St. John's, above the mouth of the river Presqu'ile.

These difficulties are not formidable however, and obviated in a degree—the more serious ones, found, running directly into and out of the village of Woodstock.

In an engineering point of view, a much cheaper route than either of these, (in the writer's opinion) could be found by slightly encroaching upon American territory and these difficulties be totally obviated, but as this seems undesirable on account of shutting out, in a degree at least, the trade and communication from that portion of the rich and fertile valley of the river St. John's, naturally having Woodstock for a centre, true policy seems to dictate the adoption of a central route between the two extremes—though cheaper than one, and dearer than the other, by which the growing trade of both frontiers can be made contributory to the line.

As an inducement to the adoption of this policy, the people of Houlton have a branch line, projected and chartered, which, eventually, in way-travel, must be an important feeder to the main line; as, in all probability, it will be the only outlet for the trade of the famous Aroostook region for many years.

Assuming this route then, which crosses the high road about seven miles from the village of Woodstock, and five from the village of Houlton—as the one probably to be adopted;—and correcting the error that the former village is the northern terminus of the N. B. & C. Railway as connected for; (whereas, as yet the choice of routes for the last fifteen miles remains an undecided question,—we shall have a basis upon which to rest our calculations forward.

Mr. Buck, in his letter states that £5000 per mile will cover the cost of construction. Now make all due allowances for the different superstructure (heavier iron, &c.) required to build it equal to the other portions of the Grand Trunk Railway, we may safely assume £7000 as a sufficient rate per mile to cover the cost forward, including a fair equipment.

Now then, with the distances (easily obtained from Mr. Wallace's letter)—about 160 miles I believe, in all—every one interested may at once arrive at a satisfactory conclusion with regard to the probable cost of this route, and satisfy their minds also, as to the entire practicability, and probably paying character of the scheme.

In the second place then, as regards the Military Road, it seems to the writer that Mr. Wallace has shown conclusively the utter futility of attempting its construction on the route surveyed by Col. Robinson, unless

the writer supposes Mr. Buck's remarks as that gentleman in his letter states in direct words, that £5000 per mile will cover the aggregate cost of construction including the equipment.—Standard.

the Imperial Government of England will father the scheme.

Build and equipped, it might be an invaluable aid to Canada in time of war, but it would require (as the writer thinks) a constant war with us quarrelsome Americans, (which God avert) to make it anything like a paying road.

On the other hand the peaceful development of country along the St. John's river and on the American frontier, caused, or at least, aided by the construction of a road connecting the two Provinces, would be constantly yielding to the line a rich return of increasing way-traffic.

The argument that the one requires 475 miles of construction through a country—the greater portion of which, as we are told is almost incapable of any great agricultural development; while the other requires only 160 miles of construction and would open to development one of the finest timber and agricultural regions in North America; seems to the writer's mind to be one of overwhelming force, in favour of the route through New Brunswick.

The only objection to it that can be plausibly sustained,—its unsuitness for military purposes—surely ought to give way, before this array of figures.

We have never heard of the Grand Trunk Co's regretting their connection with the line to Portland, (now under their sole direction) then why not let the same liberal policy guide them—seeking for a more easterly outlet (if necessary)—of connecting with the line proposed, and partly constructed, by a sister company in New Brunswick.

But the truth still remains, (as many will say) that neither of these routes when complete, will be exactly fit for military purposes, and hence the desirability of the North Shore route over either of the others.

This may be strong argument to Canadians from a military point of view, but have they no desire for a more immediate connection with their sister Province of New Brunswick? Have they no word of encouragement for these few determined men who alone by energy and force of character, have struggled on, mile by mile and from year to year, against the greatest discouragements, hoping at some future day to meet them?

Have they set their minds, so firmly, upon defence in time of war, as to entirely withhold their hands from assisting their brethren of a sister Province, towards opening one of these great artificial channels for peaceful intercommunication and trade—through which, and into which run the thousand little streams that water the earth with prosperity and plenty, and contribute so effectually towards fraternizing, liberalizing, and civilizing mankind?

If so, then it seems to the writer that in looking afar off for what they consider to be a pearl of great price, they are slighting one of very little less value, now being offered at their own door.

If, then, these suggestions may tend towards keeping this matter before the public, and that they are not so lengthy as to preclude their insertion in your paper, I am yours most respectfully,

JOHN H. BELCHER.
Freeport (near Portland) Me., 13th January, 1860.

SHIPWRECKS.

A letter from Constantinople, received at Paris, Jan. 2, contains the following account of the loss of an English merchantman (three-masted, name unknown, and all hands, on the 23 of November last in a violent gale of wind on the coast of Asia in the Black Sea. The English Bark Elizabeth was wrecked the same day on a sand bank near Chilly, a village situated on the Black Sea. The crew were fortunately saved.

The inhabitants of the village, on hearing of the accident (says the writer of the letter), proceeded to the shore, and some of the crew of the Elizabeth were endeavoring to save themselves by swimming, and fearing that they should not have strength to reach the shore, plunged into the sea, and were so fortunate as to save the three men, one of whom was a pilot.

The captain and four of the crew remained on board. The Palicaris made repeated signals to the captain and the others to throw themselves into the water, but they hesitated to do so. A wealthy inhabitant of Pasa, who happened to be a spectator of the scene, addressed the Palicaris, and said he would give five purses (2,500 piastres) to any one who would save the shipwrecked sailors. At the same moment a raft was floated off from the Elizabeth. The Palicaris swam out to the raft, and succeeded in reaching it. One of them quickly detached a cord from his wrist and tied it to the raft. The captain, four sailors, and three Palicaris were on the raft, and it had been drawn some distance towards the shore, when, unfortunately, the rope broke. The Palicaris then

dived under the water, brought up the rope and again tied it to the raft, which was safely hauled into Chilly at 5 o'clock in the afternoon. A few minutes afterwards the Elizabeth experienced the fate of the three-masted English merchantman, and was smashed into a thousand pieces. Nineteen of the crew of the English ship were drowned.

THE SACRIFICE OF VANITY.

Black hair comes mainly from Brittany and the South of France, where it is collected principally by an adventurous virtuoso, who travels from fair to fair, and buys up and sunders the crops of the neighboring damsels. Mr. Francis Trollope, in his 'Summer in Brittany,' gives a lively description of the manner in which the young girls of the country bring this singular commodity to market.

Being at a fair in Colloenne, what surprised me more than all, by the singularity and novelty of the thing, were the operations of the dealers in hair. In various parts of the motley crowd, there were three or four different purchasers of this commodity, who travel the country for the purpose of attending the fairs, and buying the tresses of peasant girls. They have particularly fine hair and frequently in the greatest abundance.

I should have thought that female vanity would have effectually prevented such a traffic as this being carried to any extent; but there seemed to be no difficulty in finding beautiful heads of hair perfectly willing to sell. We saw several girls sheared, one after another, like sheep, and as many more standing ready for the shears, with their caps in their hands, and their long hair combed out, and hanging down to their waists.

Some of the operators were men, and some women. By the side of the dealer was placed a large basket, into which every successful crop of hair, tied up into a wisp by itself, was thrown. No doubt, the reason of indifference to their tresses, on the part of the fair Bretonnes, is to be found in the invariable mode which covers every head from childhood upwards, with caps, which entirely prevents any part of the hair from being seen, and, of course, as totally conceals the want of it. The money given for the hair is about twenty sous (tenpence), or else a gaudy cotton handkerchief; they net immense profits by their trips through the country. The hair is the finest and most silken black hair that can be procured.

The destination of the imported article is, of course, principally the boudoirs of our fashionable world; and the glossy ringlets of the poor peasant girl of Tours, parted with for a few pence, as a nest egg towards her dowry, have doubtless aided in procuring a suitable helpmate for some blue spinsters or fast dowager of May fair.—Treatise on the Hair.

STEAM IN NAVAL WARFARE.

Amongst the changes which steam-propulsion for ships of war will introduce in naval operations may be included the abandonment of the blockade system. For a steam fleet is in a degree to the fleet blockaded, as if well supplied with Armstrong's incomparable guns, and other descriptions of rifle cannon, and with abundance of mortars for firing at high elevations—will be able to destroy from afar the fleet, or the arsenal in which the ships are crowded, and probably both of them at the same time. Thus it will not be necessary to keep a steam fleet before an enemy's port during long intervals of time, as was the case formerly with our blockading fleets of sailing ships, which were often in vain—from the enemy's remaining close in port—kept knocking about in all weathers on the sea, with great danger to the ships, and at enormous expense to the nation.

The steam fleet of France has, during the whole of that period, been in a state of progressive augmentation; the Government of that country having steadily acted upon the commendations propounded in the 'Enquete Parlementaire' (1849), and it is now equal, if not superior, to that of Great Britain—the author having procured a copy of that document in 1853, deemed it his duty to submit to Her Majesty's Government copious notes and extracts from the proceedings of that commission, showing the vast sums voted and proposed to be employed during the ten years which were to follow. The author, also, pointed out the spirit of rivalry, if not of hostility, both implied and expressed in that official document. These notes were printed confidentially in 1854, at the private press of the Foreign Office; and he must observe that we ought to have begun as unostentatiously as the French began, to take countervailing measures, in order to maintain the numerical superiority of the British steam fleet, instead of deferring the step, as it was deferred, during several years. By this postponement, the progress made by the French becoming generally known to the public, the country is thrown into consternation by the announcement that there must be made immediate and extensive additions

to the British navy, in order to make up for the time which has been lost.

Owing to the Morocco war, the price of provisions in Gibraltar is almost fabulous.—Fowls are 18s a couple; eggs, 5d. a piece; and everything else edible in proportion.

SURGICAL OPERATION.—In Philadelphia last week, a man was attacked with a pain in the stomach, which speedily developed all the symptoms of a dangerous disease known as strangulated hernia, or the glutination of the intestine to the side or wall of the stomach, which stops the natural passage, and causes the contents of the stomach to be discharged from the mouth. A surgeon was called, who opened the cavity of the stomach and remedied the difficulty by separating the intestine from its unnatural connection, and the patient, it is said, is rapidly recovering. In the opinion of the surgeon, death must have resulted had the operation been delayed a few hours longer.

An Irishman employed about a store in Boston was one day surprised and delighted by the entrance of an old acquaintance. After a ten minutes jollification the caller left, when Pat's employer said to him: "So Pat, you knew that chap in the old country?"

"Sure I did; an' it's a lucky day I met with him here. It's a fine boy he is with all his family. His granfather was a general, he'd have been a general himself if he'd not come away. 'But what was he after in your pocket?'—I thought I saw him putting his fingers there rather slightly."

Clapping his hand to his pockets, Pat ascertained that both watch and pocket book were missing.

"Murder!" cried he, gesticulating like a whale with a dozen harpoons in his sides. "The thale, the spalpeen, the coorse! I know him well, wid all his family. His granfather was hanged, and he'd have been hanged himself if he'd not run away."

Sir Walter Scott used to tell a story of a woman in Leith, who, summing up the misfortunes of a black year in her history, said: "Let me see, sir; first, we lost our wee calant; and then Jenny; and then the gude man himself died; and then the coo died too, poor bizz; but to be sure, her hide bro't me fifteen shillings."

Don't attempt too much. Knives that contain sixty blades, four cork screws and a boot jack, are very seldom brought into action; and for this reason, in attempting too much, they become so clumsy and ponderous that men of small patience can't "get the hang" of them.

The darkey who greased his feet so that he could not make a noise when he went to steal chickens, slipped from the hen-roost into the custody of the wner. He gave as a reason for his being there—"Dat he cum dar to see ef de chickens sleeped with dere eyes open. He was cooped."

"Pony," one of Thayer's Minstrels, said that his lady love died from the following complaint: "She kotched cold in her chest, and it settled down into her trunk, went through her valise, an' burst open her carpet bag."

Punch, says that it has been proposed to tax stays, but it was objected to on the ground that it would diminish consumption.

CHAMPION BOAT RACE BETWEEN ENGLAND AND THE UNITED STATES.—Joshua Ward, the American champion oarsman, has signified his readiness to the Newburgh Regatta Association to accept the challenge of Robert Chamber's, the champion oarsman of England, to row him a race for \$2,000.—The Newburgh Regatta Association agrees to pay Mr. Chamber's expenses, which will amount to \$500, provided that the race is rowed in Newburgh Bay. The whole amount required to be raised is \$3,000—\$500 to pay expenses, and \$2,500 as the amount to be rowed for. It is more than probable the committee will have \$500 in the stock, in addition to the \$500 for expenses, leaving \$2,000 to be taken in New York and other places. The Secretary of the Newburgh Regatta Association has been directed to open a correspondence on the subject with the various regatta associations throughout the United States.

We understand that the Officers of the New Brunswick Regiment of Artillery attached to the several Companies already formed in this City, Carleton and Portland, held a meeting on Tuesday evening last, to take into consideration various matters connected with the interest of the Corps. They resolved to apply to the Provincial Go-

vernment, for the erection of an armory in the City, for the safe keeping of all such arms and accoutrements as may be supplied to them by the Home Government.

The uniform to be adopted is the Blue Jacket, with Red Collar; Blue Pants with Red Stripes; and Blue Cloth Cap, with Patent Leather Peak and Red Band. The dress of the Officer to conform as near as possible to that worn by members of Companies. We are much pleased at this decision, as the uniform will be neat, and at the same time inexpensive.

The strength of the Corps is now about four hundred and fifty, and constantly increasing. They meet for drill every evening in the week.—[New-Brunswick.]

ODD EVIDENCE.—Dr. Gray, in his erudite and entertaining notes on "Hudibras," records the deposition of a lawyer, who, in an action of battery, told the Judge that the defendant beat the client with a certain wooden instrument called an iron pestle.

LATE MARRIAGE.—M. Talleyrand was enjoying his rubber, when the conversation turned on the union of an elderly lady of respectable rank. "How could Madame do S—make a match?" a person of her birth to marry a valet-de-chambre!" said one of the players. "Ah," replied Talleyrand, "it was late in the game; at nine we don't reckon honors."

VERY MEAN.—A funny story is told of a man who stole a five dollar bill out in Indiana. His counsel tried to prove that the note was not worth five dollars, it being at a discount, in order to lessen the crime.—The prosecutor said that he knew the prisoner was the meanest man in the State, but he did not think he was so ill-fred mean as not to be willing to steal Indiana money at par.

The Ellsworth American states that there were eight girls from the town of Hancock in that County, at work in the Pemberton mills at the time of the disaster; and they were all more or less injured.

The result of the investigation of the Pemberton Mills disaster has shown that the cause of the fall of the building was the insufficiency of the cast iron pillars used to support the floor.

There has been a revival of religion at Bombay, India, among the British residents.

We learn from the Sentinel that a daily union Prayer Meeting was to commence this week in Woodstock, to be held at noon.

Petitions have been presented to the Maine Legislature to remove the seat of government to Portland from Augusta.

Go It.—A grand trotting match is appointed to take place at the St. Croix Trotting Park on or about the 10th May, between a celebrated Clydesdale and a Morgan horse.

At Presque Isle, on Thursday evening last, Mr. McGuire, aged 80 years, died while sitting in a chair, reading the Bible.

An ice-boat, with sail, was brought into use on the St. Croix on Tuesday and attracted a large crowd.

On Saturday afternoon, the number of skaters on the St. Croix exceeded 300, comprising young and old of both sexes.

Secretary Cobb has decided that hay grown in the British Provinces must pay duty of 15 per cent, on being imported into the United States.

The Miranichi Gleaner says the messes are rampant in all parts of Restegouche, but in Palhouse it has visited almost every house—it deals rather gently with all it seizes.

The office of the New York Ledger was destroyed by fire on Sunday morning.

A pretty young lady telegraph operator from an inland town, was in Ulica the other day and saw a railroad train, track, depot, &c. for the first time in her life.

A BASQUINE is very fashionable at this season in Paris. It is a pretty little garment which is worn over the body of the dress, open in front, and almost tight to the waist, where it forms a pretty half-flounce.—These made of oriental cashmere, embroidered in bright colored arabesques, have a charming effect. Velvet cloaks, trim with the deep lace, will be made in the winter, say the modes.

