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A ROYAL

ROAD

Sam Day.



A ROYAL ROAD.

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A ROYAL ROAD:
BEING
THE HISTORY
OF
London & South Western Railway,

From 1825 to the present time.

BY
SAM FAY.

TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

1882.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES:
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P R E F A C E .

Encouraged by the favour accorded the following pages by my fellows in the South Western Company's service, and whom I cannot sufficiently thank for their support, I venture to launch A ROYAL ROAD upon the more trying waters that lie outside the pale of railway life.

In introducing this history to the reader, I may say that I have striven, and I trust successfully, to compile not only a record of the struggles, triumphs and defeats to which one of the oldest and most important railway companies in England has been subject, but also a biographical sketch of past responsible officials, together with a description of the various appliances at their disposal for the manipulation of traffic.

If this, my first attempt at authorship, should serve only to rescue from oblivion the names and acts of those who helped to build up a great railway system, my object will have been attained; and if it should in any measure create greater public interest in our iron roads and those who conduct them, I shall be amply rewarded for those hours of leisure devoted to its compilation.

SAM FAY.

Traffic Department,
Kingston-on-Thames Station,
September, 1883.

A ROYAL ROAD.

CHAPTER I.

A Want—A Water Remedy—Novel Locomotion—Ideas peculiar and Estimates extraordinary—A Scheme Afloat.

Early in the present century, when England was recovering from the Continental wars of which the battle of Waterloo was the termination, British shipowners, smarting under the losses inflicted by the enemy on their vessels, together with the frequent and tiresome delays caused by easterly winds, which sometimes sealed up the passage of the Downs for weeks, heartily longed for a certain and expeditious means of transporting their ships' cargoes from the Southern Coast to London, so as to avoid the dangers of sailing through the Downs. With this end in view, an extraordinary scheme for a ship canal from Spithead to London was projected, at an estimated cost of £4,000,000. Mr. Giles, a well known engineer, was appointed to survey the country, but after considerable discussion as to its practicability, the idea was abandoned, and the hopes of shipowners, which had for the time been raised, were dashed to the ground. In 1825, reports reached Southampton of the completion and success of George Stephenson's line of railway from Stockton to Darlington. A few enterprising men in the neighbourhood appear at once to have been seized with the idea that such a railway from Southampton to London would answer all the purposes of a canal and prove the salvation of London merchantmen. So a railway was projected, or rather, perhaps, suggested, for we doubt if the promoters had much faith in the establishment

of the, at that time, novel mode of locomotion. Their ideas of utilizing the railway were confined entirely to the conveyance of merchandise ; passenger traffic had then hardly been thought of, for it was not until the 10th October, 1826, that Stephenson ran the first passenger carriage from Stockton to Darlington. This carriage, called the " Experiment," was formed of an old coach body fastened upon flanged wheels.

The promoters of the line from Southampton to London being the first to propose a railway in Southern England, were as a natural consequence met with ridicule in all directions, and their scheme was regarded as the outcome of disordered imaginations. The principle of railways had scarcely been recognized in the north, where the only opportunity existed for practical knowledge ; much less in a town so far removed from the scene of operations as Southampton. Even supposing the public to have been as well informed in 1825 as they were ten years later, it is very improbable that the scheme would have floated. The times were out of joint ; trade was bad ; the political world was in a state of excitement, and on the Stock Exchange a mania for Greek loans had been followed by the inevitable panic. So the scheme fell through.

Six stormy years passed away. The trade of the country was still bad, and the distress, especially amongst the agricultural classes, fearful. This was notably the case in Hampshire, where, in the latter part of 1830, the labourers, who declared their sufferings to be past all endurance, rose *en masse* and levied blackmail on the inhabitants of the villages adjacent to Basingstoke, Winchester, and Andover. Meanwhile in the North, the Stockton and Darlington, and the Manchester and Liverpool Railways gradually obtained favour and paid good dividends, till shrewd men saw the coming change and prepared to profit by it. On February 26th, 1831, a private meeting was held at the residence of Mr. Dottin, M.P. for Southampton ; the old London and Southampton scheme, plus the establishment of docks at the latter town, was revived, a committee of investigation appointed, and £400 subscribed to

meet the first expenses ; the services of Mr. Giles, the engineer previously mentioned, were also secured. On the 6th of the following April, the prospectus of the " Southampton, London and Branch Railway and Dock Company " was issued, capital £1,500,000, divided into shares of £25 each. The promoters were William Fitzhugh, Robert Shedden, Philip LeFevre, John Story Penleaze, George Henderson, John King, William Colson Westlake, Edwin Godden Jones, Richard Davidson Pritchard, Robert Johnson, Samuel LeFevre, William James LeFevre, and Samuel Raymond Jarvis. A public meeting was held the same day in the Town Hall, Southampton, Colonel Henderson taking the chair. His speech has been preserved verbatim, and gives us an insight of the ideas and expectations of the promoters. After describing the route, he called the attention of his audience to the price of coal in the central parts of the proposed line, where he stated its price ranged from fifty to sixty shillings per chaldron, whereas at Southampton it was from twenty-three to thirty shillings only. A calculation had been made, founded upon the census of 1821, of the population within ten miles on each side of the proposed line ; and this calculation showed it to be about 135,000 persons. Assuming this to be accurate and allowing about five persons to each family, there were 27,000 families to be supplied with fuel. All knew that the consumption of fuel in different families varied according to their means, and ranged from 120 chaldrons of the great landowner, to the chaldron and a half or a bushel per week of the poor man. He (Colonel Henderson) had had some difficulty in fixing an average consumption for the 27,000 families in the town and country parishes near the proposed line ; but, from the best information at his disposal, he believed that five chaldrons on an average for each family might be considered a fair consumption, thus :— 27,000 families, exclusive of Southampton and neighbourhood, using 5 chaldrons per annum, would amount in the aggregate to 135,000 chaldrons, and supposing a charge of 6s. per chaldron to be the average charge for conveyance along the

whole line, the income from this source would alone amount to £40,500. He might be told that the whole supply would not go from Southampton, but his reply was that it mattered not from which end of the line, whether from London or Southampton, the supply be sent, for if the railway offered the cheapest mode of conveyance, a preference would be given to it over every other means, and the profit would be the same. The gallant Colonel appealed to the humane and charitable to support the undertaking on account of the benefit it would confer upon the poor, while at the same time they would effect a saving in their own coal bills of five per cent., and also receive a dividend from the carriage of coals alone of £2 per cent. If his reasoning held good in respect of coals, it must be equally valid in reference to numerous other articles, such as sugar, teas, groceries of all descriptions, timber, wines, foreign fruits, silks, manufactured goods of all kinds, and indeed every article of necessity or luxury which was not the produce of the district. But the benefits would not end there, for the railway and docks would give a facility, rapidity, and cheapness of transport and of shipment to all the produce of the district. He would ask, therefore, might they not hope for the warmest support of every inhabitant along the line, even if the advantages were no greater than those which he had shown? But when it was manifest that the profits upon the undertaking would yield an ample return from many other sources, they might justly expect to be cheered on in their progress by the unanimous approbation of the whole population of the district. The next item on his scale of profits would arise from the conveyance of passengers. It had been shewn in a report by Capt. Stephens that 100,000 persons embarked and disembarked annually from steam and other passage vessels at Southampton. The majority of these came from distant parts of the country. It was a reasonable assumption therefore to calculate upon 100,000 passengers annually using the railway, and taking these at 10s. each for long and short journeys, they had a profit of £50,000 per annum upon passengers.

Captain Stephens had shewn in his report that the quantity of goods and parcels passing through the district annually was about 80,262 tons, and that the cost of carriage by road was about £68,278. If these could be transported along the railway with increased celerity and safety at one-third of the cost, or at £21,091, were they not to infer that preference would not only be given to the railway over every other means of conveyance, but that a great increase would take place in the quantity of goods so transported? He calculated the income on the carriage of foreign fruits to be £20,000; fish traffic, £3,650; Jersey, Guernsey, and Isle of Wight, £3,000; corn, hops, &c., £3,000; coasting and western trade, £10,000; French and Irish traffic, £4,000 each; timber and building materials, £4,000; West Indian and Canada trade, £5,000 each; United States, £3,000; and South American, Mediterranean, Portuguese, Spanish, and East Indian, £1,000 each; total income, £181,241. The working expenses were estimated at £61,241, leaving a profit of £120,000 per annum, or 10 per cent. upon the estimated outlay. He considered that two locomotive engines making two trips a day each, would be sufficient for passengers at the opening of the railway, and that three engines would be adequate for the transport of goods. By reports from the engineers on the Darlington line, the rails and chairs were expected to last thirty years; on the other hand the Liverpool line engineers, where the traffic was greater, expected the rails and chairs to last but twenty years. He might be asked on what data he formed his calculation that two engines would be sufficient for transporting 300 passengers daily, or 100,000 annually along the line; or that three engines would suffice to transport the goods mentioned. His answer was, that one of the last improved engines, called the Samson, transported upwards of 100 tons, exclusive of the weight of the carriages, in about two hours and a half from Liverpool to Manchester, with an expenditure of only 20s. worth of fuel. If, therefore, engines of equal power were employed, one engine could transport daily

in two trips 3000 passengers, allowing fifteen persons to the ton ; but his allowance was only 300 passengers to two engines, at two trips each, so that he was supposing only one twentieth part of the power to be used. Again, one engine of equal power with the Samson could transport 31,300 tons of goods annually, exclusive of Sundays. Three such engines could therefore move, making each only one trip a day, 93,000 tons, and when this quantity was brought upon the rail it was needless for him to say that the income would be such as to enable the proprietors to increase their number of engines with advantage. If he were asked on what grounds the calculation had been formed for completing the railway at the cost of £1,200,000, his reply was, that contracts had lately been entered into for completing a railway at the rate of £14,000 per mile through a very difficult country. They might therefore expect to complete theirs at about £10,000 per mile ; but even taking £14,000 as the cost, this, for seventy-eight miles, would amount to £1,092,000. Supposing their road to be sixty feet wide, it would require the purchase of 566 acres of land ; but allowing 650 acres to be requisite for warehouses and other purposes ; and that they should be called upon to pay £100 per acre, which was more than five times the value of the poor heath over which the railway would mainly pass, they might contemplate an outlay at the utmost of £1,092,000 for seventy-eight miles, at £14,000 per mile ; £65,000 for 650 acres at £100 per acre ; and £43,000 for contingencies ; total £1,200,000. He would now draw the attention of his audience to the docks, which formed a part of the undertaking. It would be apparent to everyone who had considered the subject, that the docks and the railway were intimately connected, and of such paramount importance to each other that the one without the other would be unproductive ; for were the docks to be constructed without the railway, the cargoes of vessels could not be transported into the interior, nor the return brought to the coast ; and if the railway were to be called into existence without the docks, there would not be sufficient traffic to produce a beneficial

return. The two together would, however, render the measure complete, and the benefit would be reciprocal. He felt the great difficulty of forming calculations upon prospective commerce, and of stating anything like the amount of profit which might be anticipated from the dock part of the undertaking. But when he took into consideration the geographical position of the port, with all its local advantages, its facilities of entrance and exit, its safety from the elements, its protection from an enemy, and its adaptation for commerce—when he could pronounce professionally on the facility and economy with which docks could be constructed at Southampton—and when he contemplated the great advantages which such works would yield to shipping, by offering them a safe asylum, by relieving them from the dangerous passage through the Downs, and of capture by an enemy,—he confessed he could not comprehend how such manifold and manifest advantages could fail to produce their hitherto unvaried results. He had been told that it was difficult to move commerce into new channels; but he would fearlessly say that this was a mistake. It was a mistake to suppose that the enlightened British merchant would confine his commercial speculations to one particular spot—that because he had been successful in one corner of the empire, he would be unwilling to adventure in another. The influence of the British merchant's enterprise and capital was to be traced in every part of the civilized world, and he was ever ready to foster new outlets for commerce, and to encourage new channels for industry. To such men as these Britain owed her commercial greatness; to such men as these he looked for support in the undertaking, and he trusted he should not look in vain. He concluded by calling attention to the national importance of the undertaking, and thought it required no stretch of imagination to foretell that, in the event of a war, it would afford that shelter to commercial shipping which had ever been a subject of engrossing importance, but which, since steam navigation, must be, in the minds of reflecting men, one of painful anxiety. A warm supporter of the project had

said—"If your docks and railways are not carried into effect, more value to shipping and merchandise will be lost to England in the two first years of a war, than would suffice to pave your railways with gold instead of iron, and to face your docks with silver instead of stone." As to the advantages to the port of Southampton, he thought there could not be a doubt that the influx of commerce would far exceed any calculation which he could venture to lay down, and he would predict without pretending to any prophetic inspiration, that, before three years had expired there was not one man of all whom he saw before him, who would not lament that the undertaking had not been sooner set on foot.

Questions were put to the chairman as to the cost of engines. From his replies we gather that he estimated the cost of a locomotive, of equal power with the Samson, at £500, and the expense of working it 20s. per week. A Mr. Birnie, of Basingstoke, gave it as his opinion that a water communication might be made from Southampton to Basingstoke for half a million, and there joining the Basing Canal, answer nearly all the purposes of a railroad, and at much less expense. He did not consider there was any great advantage in carrying goods with so much rapidity. Mr. Birnie's opinion did not however appear to be shared in by the majority of Col. Henderson's audience, for they showed themselves very enthusiastic on behalf of the scheme as far as cheering went.

Although little or no opposition was manifest at this meeting, it must not be supposed that the sanguine expectations of the promoters were held by the public generally. Quite the reverse. It was looked upon by outsiders as a mad enterprise and the calculations of Col. Henderson were described as visionary. Many of its foremost advocates being politicians, it was said to have been promoted for political purposes. As for those engaged in the coaching interest they merely shrugged their shoulders, in a manner clearly expressive of pity for any who believed such a scheme would ever become a reality. They did not however actively oppose the promoters; probably they

thought such a project would not require any of their assistance in falling to the ground. But they reckoned without their host. The promoters were not men to be turned aside by ridicule or daunted by difficulties. They proceeded to draw up a code of rules and regulations for the government of the Company until the Act of Parliament could be obtained, and showed themselves so far in earnest as to enter into communication with the leading men of Bath and Bristol for a branch line from Basingstoke, through Hungerford, Newbury and Devizes, to those towns. Their rules and regulations contained amongst others the following clauses :—

“That (as the interests of the Corporation of Southampton may be affected by the intended operations of the Company) the Directors shall be at liberty to appoint the Mayor of Southampton for the time being a Director by virtue of his office, not only for the year of his mayoralty but for the next following year.”

“That John Fleming, Esq., M.P., of Stoneham Park, John Masterman, Esq., of the City of London, banker, Abel Rous Dottin, Esq., M.P., of Bugle Hotel, Southampton, and James Barlow Hoy, Esq., of Midenbury House, near Southampton, having consented to become Trustees of the trust funds, to be subscribed for the purposes of the said undertaking, they are hereby accordingly appointed and declared to be such Trustees thereof.”

“That George Henderson, Esq., be the Chairman of the Board of Directors.”

“That Robert Johnston, Esq., be one of the Deputy-Chairmen, and that the Board of Directors be empowered to appoint other Deputy-Chairmen.”

“That the Hon. Peter Boyle de Blaquiére, be the Treasurer of the proposed Company, and that he have a seat at the Board of Directors, and be entitled to vote as a Director accordingly; but that he be disqualified from subscribing for, or holding any shares in the said Company.”

“That John Barney, Esq., be the Solicitor of the proposed Company or undertaking, and that the Directors have power to appoint one or more Solicitors residing in or near London or Westminster.”

“That Edward Loney Stephens, Esq., be the Secretary to the proposed Company or undertaking.”

With a view of facilitating the proposed branch railway to Bath and Bristol, instead of planning a straight line

from Southampton to London, a bend was made at Basingstoke ; the alteration caused a slight increase in the mileage, but the promoters considered this drawback to be more than compensated for by the help which they thus expected to induce the inhabitants of the Western counties to accord the undertaking. With the exception of Winchester, which then had a population of about 8,000, there were no towns of importance directly on the line of route. Basingstoke was a small market town ; Aldershot Camp had not been called into existence ; London did not even extend to Nine Elms, a neighbourhood described by a chronicler of the period as low and marshy, studded with windmills and pollard trees and Dutch like in appearance. Here it was proposed to erect the terminus of the line. As for Southampton, it boasted a population of only 19,000 ; its shipping accommodation was of the poorest description ; unsightly mud banks surrounded the town, and shipmasters were often heard to declare that instead of being called upon to pay port dues, they themselves should be paid for coming thither. The coach traffic to the latter town averaged 1,060 passengers per week, the number of weekly journeys being 104. It was not altogether upon traffic to and from the places mentioned from which the estimate of revenue was compiled. Towns as far distant as Devonport, Gloucester and Cheltenham were expected to add their quota to the total, by means of coaches running to the nearest point on the railway.

CHAPTER II.

A London Meeting—Passing of the London and Birmingham Bill—The Bristol Extension—Increased Estimate of Revenue—Private Meeting of Noblemen and Gentlemen connected with the Western Counties—Application to Parliament—Evidence—Success.

Actively following up the project detailed in Chapter I., the promoters left no stone unturned to convert landowners and men of position on the line of route to a favourable opinion of the undertaking. Colonel Henderson also visited Bath and Bristol for the purpose of learning the views held in those towns respecting the proposed branch from Basingstoke; he had previously travelled to Manchester in company with several of his colleagues, and made himself practically acquainted with the working of a line of railway. It was originally intended to apply to Parliament in the session of 1832 for power to construct the line, but when the time arrived, the majority counselled delay, on account of the great expense, and the uncertainty as to the necessary number of shares being taken up. The London and Birmingham promoters had given notice of application to Parliament for their line, and doubtless the London and Southampton directors were anxious to see what degree of success the former company could obtain, before venturing to approach Parliament themselves. It was therefore decided to postpone the application *pro tem*. In January, 1832, a meeting was held in London, where the promoters had the influential advocacy of Sir Thomas Baring, M.P.; the plans of the line and the advantages likely to accrue therefrom were pointed out to the gentlemen present, and Mr. Giles, the engineer, answered many questions respecting the cost of construction. The Dock portion of the project had by this time been abandoned, and the capital reduced to £1,000,000, divided into shares of £50 each. It was resolved to form a London committee, of which Sir Thomas Baring was

chairman, the other members being C. Shaw Lefevre, M.P., J. S. Penleaze, M.P., R. Williams, M.P., John Masterman, J. Rivett Carnac, Robert Shedden, H. Shaw Lefevre, and John Bush Warner, Esquires. The Southampton Committee was also re-arranged, and comprised the following gentlemen:— G. Henderson, Esq., Chairman, The Honourable P. B. De Blaquiere, James Barlow Hoy, Edwin Godden Jones, M.D., William Fitzhugh, W. Colson Westlake, John King, W. J. Le Feuvre, and William Ward, Esquires.

The London and Birmingham Bill passed safely through the Houses of Parliament. The cost of obtaining the Act reached a total of £90,000, thus proving how wise was the advice given to the London and Southampton promoters. On July 11th a meeting was held at the City of London Tavern, Sir T. Baring, M.P., in the chair. The honourable baronet congratulated the meeting upon the prospects of the undertaking as evidenced by the passing of the London and Birmingham Bill. He had been an advocate for delay because he thought time ought to be afforded those who might embark their money in the speculation, to fully consider the plan, and form their own estimate with respect to its feasibility. It was now the opinion of many that had a subscription been opened at the time of the former meeting, £200,000 at least would have been put down; but he rejected the proposition, because he wished those who entered upon the undertaking not to depend on the opinion of others, but judge coolly and dispassionately for themselves before parting with their money. Colonel Henderson read a report from the Committee appointed to consider the benefits likely to arise from collateral connection with other places, and the Bristol Extension, whereby a communication would be opened up with Ireland and Wales. The Committee acknowledged the obligation they were under to the London and Birmingham promoters for paving the way in Parliament. They were of opinion that the Bristol extension should be brought in by a separate Bill after the passing of the Southampton line. They continued to receive assurances of the concurrence and support of the land

owners along the line. As an instance, they made mention that Sir T. Baring had not only given his consent that the railway should pass through his land, to the extent of about seven miles, but had signified his intention of taking in shares whatever compensation he might receive. The Committee concluded their report by calling attention to the fact that the London and Birmingham Company had established, by evidence before the House of Commons Committee, several profitable sources of revenue which the London and Southampton promoters had not included in their estimate. They now considered themselves justified in inserting those profits, which would result in bringing the estimates up to a gross annual income of £359,250 16s., or nearly thirty-six per cent. per annum upon the outlay of one million.

On the 23rd of the same month a private meeting of noblemen and gentlemen connected with the Western counties of England, and with the South of Ireland and Wales, was held at the house of W. Courtenay, Esq., 18, Duke Street, Westminster, for the purpose of taking into consideration the proposed railway and its probable results. After details of the measure had been gone through, much interesting information was given by several gentlemen present, among them an extensive cattle salesman, who pointed out the advantages of bringing cattle by rail for the supply of the London markets. He stated the losses of farmers and graziers by the method of driving, then in vogue, to be very great. The number of cattle coming to London annually from Hants, Wilts, Dorset, Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall, was about 6,000 sheep and lambs; and 50,000 cattle, and of country killed meat about 3,446 tons, which last could, he said, well afford to pay at the rate of a farthing per lb. for carriage over a distance of fifty or sixty miles. He considered that the supply of country killed meat would be increased at least four-fold, which would yield to the railway a return of £30,000 a year.

The sense of the meeting, after discussion and examination of the plans and calculations, was decidedly favourable to the

undertaking, and the gentlemen present unanimously expressed and thus recorded their opinion:—"That this meeting highly
 "approves of the plan submitted, and the steps which the
 "Committee of Management has taken for establishing a
 "railway communication from London to Southampton, and
 "feels confident that the cheap, safe, and expeditious conveyance it will afford, must be productive of great benefit to
 "the South Western parts of England; and also, if a branch
 "be carried to Bristol to the Southern parts of Ireland and
 "Wales.

"That this meeting can recommend the undertaking, as
 "offering a means of employment to the poor, promoting industry, increasing trade, improving the internal resources of
 "the nation, and as promising an ample return upon the
 "invested capital."

Notwithstanding the encouragement and assistance accorded the promoters, it was not until the session of 1834 that application to Parliament was made. Witnesses were called who estimated the profit at £207,485 19s. 3d. This amount was divided into "present traffic estimated at railway prices," and "prospective traffic;" the former being made up as follows:—Coach passengers, £118,498 18s.; posting passengers, £7,082 8s.; coach parcels, £12,711 16s. 8d.; waggon traffic, £29,768 6s.; cattle traffic, £27,155; total, £195,216 8s. 8d., less cost of maintenance of way and locomotive power, £87,798 11s. 5d.; profit, £107,417 17s. 3d. The prospective traffic comprised, £23,333 6s. 8d. upon the amount of fish then caught in the Torbay Fishery; 100 per cent. increase on passengers, £118,498 18s.; increase on country killed meat, £4,666 13s. 4d., and increase on heavy goods, £5,569 4s.; total, £152,068 2s.; less cost of maintenance of way and locomotive power upon such increased trade, £52,000; profit upon prospective traffic, £100,068 2s. Among the witnesses called to prove the national and local importance of the line were Admiral Sir J. Thomas Hardy,

one of the Lords of the Admiralty, the Hon. Capt. Elliott, Captains Ward, Cater, Stephens, and Forder, of the Royal Navy, who bore testimony to the advantages which commercial vessels would enjoy, particularly in time of war, and during adverse winds, of receiving and discharging their cargoes at Southampton, instead of encountering the dangers of the passage from the Isle of Wight to London. General Sir Willoughby Gordon, Quarter-Master General of the Army, also gave evidence as to the great advantage which the line would afford to the military service of the country. No expense was spared to obtain evidence upon all matters connected with the undertaking. The fishery and agricultural interests were strongly represented, the latter testifying to the comparative cheapness with which the railway could be constructed, a surplus agricultural population having reduced the price of labour to a very low rate. The principal evidence in support of the estimate of prospective traffic was afforded by the Manchester and Liverpool, and Stockton and Darlington Lines; travelling upon the former had increased three-fold and upon the latter upwards of twenty-fold from the date of opening. Mr. Giles expected to open the Southampton line for the distance of at least twenty miles out of London in the course of two years, and to complete the whole work in three years. Provisions were expressly inserted in the Bill that no call should be made exceeding £5 per share, and that three months at least should intervene between any two calls. The liability of the shareholder was not to exceed the amount of capital subscribed. After months of anxiety the promoters were rewarded by the passing of the Bill through both Houses of Parliament. The cost of obtaining the Act amounted to £31,000.

CHAPTER III.

Rival Schemes—Manchester to the Rescue—Fighting the Great Western.

If the London and Southampton Directors looked forward to a period of comparative inactivity after the passing of their Bill, or thought that less care and watchfulness would be needed when power had been obtained to construct the line, their pleasant illusions were soon rudely dispelled. The sanction of the Legislature thoroughly roused the coaching interest—no mean power in those days,—and their previous supineness suddenly changed to unwonted activity. They began to think that after all, there might, perhaps, be something in the scheme, and if so, their business would be seriously injured. Toward the close of the year 1834, these opponents were augmented by the promoters of a line called the Great Western, which had been thrown out by the Lords in a previous session. This scheme was originally very incomplete, consisting partly of railway and partly of canal communication between the Metropolis and Bristol; it was now proposed to ask Parliament for leave to construct a line from London to Bristol direct. As the London and Southampton Company's proposed branch from Basingstoke to Bath and Bristol was also to be taken to the House in the same session, the Great Western were naturally brought into rivalry with the former Company. When therefore it was decided at the first general meeting of the London and Southampton subscribers, held at the City of London Tavern, on the 24th of October, 1834, to make a call of £3 per share to enable the engineer to prosecute the excavations with vigour during the winter months, every effort was made by their opponents to prejudice the shareholders and the public against the undertaking.

Anonymous circulars and pamphlets by the thousand were issued ; advertisements and paragraphs were also inserted in the newspapers crying down the line. The principal objection urged was that the line could not be constructed at the cost ; this was founded mainly upon the authority of Stephenson, who averred that in cutting through St. George's Hill, Weybridge, "the whole wealth and strength of the Company would be for ever buried." Looking at Stephenson's previous and subsequent career, and the engineering difficulties he overcame, in comparison with which the Weybridge cutting is a mere trifle, it is hard to understand such a remark emanating from him. There is reason to believe that he was actuated by a desire to pay off an old score against Mr. Giles, who, in his evidence on the first Liverpool and Manchester Bill, said, "No engineer in his senses would go through Chat Moss if he wanted to make a railway from Liverpool to Manchester." This evidence was instrumental in procuring the rejection of the Bill, a result which was to Stephenson one of the most severe reverses he met with in the course of his life. The great engineer's assertion, from whatever cause it arose, gave opponents a convenient handle, and one of which they made every use, to hurl their arguments respecting the cost of construction at the heads of the unhappy directors. Another objection to the line was that it could not be finished in the time stated. One sapient gentleman prophesied that the railway would never be made, or if made, never used ; another said it would be used only for the conveyance of "parsons and prawns—the one from Winchester, the other from Southampton." So persistent and fierce did these onslaughts at length become, that at the commencement of the year 1835, to own being connected with the Southampton Railway, was, in the words of a prominent shareholder, "to make choice of being considered either a fool or a rogue."

Half the capital had been found in Manchester, and there the shareholders, with the experience of the Liverpool and Manchester line before them, boldly stood to their guns. At a

meeting held on the 5th of January, 1835, at the Royal Hotel in that town, they strongly urged upon the shareholders in Edinburgh and Glasgow—where committees had lately been formed—the vast importance of supporting the Basingstoke and Bath extension. Again, at the first half-yearly general meeting, held on the 27th of February, 1835, Mr. Reed—subsequently secretary of the Company—was deputed by the Lancashire shareholders to express their views upon the proposed extension. They objected to any of the Southampton funds being used for the purposes of the line, but advocated the incorporation of the two Companies, should the Act be passed.

The Great Western promoters in the meantime were by no means idle. Public meetings were held at various places on the line of route; in Bristol more especially, great efforts were made to obtain support. At one meeting a Mr. Ramsbotham appealed to the well known cuteness of Bristol men by citing an old saying to the effect, that “if you shake a Bristol man, a Jew and a Quaker in a bag, it is odds on the Bristol man coming out first.” Such reasoning as this, coupled with the high-sounding name of Great Western, and the fact that it was described as the Direct Bristol Railway, gained many supporters, and the line became the favourite.

The Parliamentary inquiry into the merits of the rival schemes extended over 46 days. Many landed proprietors and the Eton College authorities joined the Southampton Company in opposing the Great Western. During the proceedings the Chairman of the House of Lords Committee—who was afterwards described by Mr. Easthope as “something like the counsel for the Great Western,”—let fall a remark which led the Southampton directors to offer their rivals a junction at Frimley, but this, together with a proposal that the road from London to Basingstoke should be made jointly by the two Companies for their mutual benefit, was rejected. The Great Western Bill was passed. At the next half-yearly meeting of the Southampton proprietary, the chairman, Mr. J. Wright, in commenting upon their defeat, said they had, in compliance

with the desire of a large body of proprietors, felt it incumbent on them to join in opposing the progress of the Great Western Railway Bill in Parliament, under the impression that the Basingstoke and Bath Line was the best for the interests of the London and Southampton proprietary. Independently of these considerations, the directors believed that this would afford the most favourable opportunity for disproving by evidence on oath, the gross misrepresentations which had been industriously propagated to the prejudice of the Southampton Railway. The latter object had been obtained ; the refutation had been complete. The superiority of the Basingstoke and Bath Line was also proved ; notwithstanding which, the promoters of the Great Western Line had succeeded, by means unlooked for as unprecedented, in obtaining a vote in their favour.

With this barren result the shareholders were forced to be content.

CHAPTER IV.

Commencing Work—New Directors—Dutch Canals *versus* Railways—
Discontented Shareholders—Resignation of the Engineer—
Unexpected Expenditure.

During the progress of the contest described in the last chapter, Mr. Giles, the engineer, and Colonel Henderson,—the latter resigning his position as director to become general superintendent,—were busy arranging contracts and laying out the line from London to Basingstoke. It was stated at the second general half-yearly meeting held on August 31st, 1835, that the Company were in possession of thirty miles of line between the points named, and that contracts had been made for the supply of 6,000 tons of permanent iron rails, together with locomotive engines, and a large stock of waggons. The engineer found labour very cheap and plentiful. The excavations and embankments were commenced in various places, and brick grounds were opened upon the line for bridge building purposes.

At the meeting referred to, the appointment of John Watkins Drew, Vincent Eyre, John Lewis, Simon M. Gillivray and Henry Waymouth, Esquires, as directors was announced; these gentlemen taking the places of The Hon. P. B. De Blaquiére, G. Henderson, J. Mackillop, J. S. Penleaze and R. Williams, Esquires, who had resigned. The shareholders unanimously voted £500 per annum to defray the expenses of the directors. After granting this amount they urged upon the latter the necessity of completing the line at the earliest possible moment, so as to be the first railway out of London, and Mr. Giles stated that the first twelve miles of road would be opened within eighteen months.

Railway schemes now began to multiply, and in the year 1836 we find the Brighton and South Eastern Companies,

amongst others, applying to the London and Southampton directors for leave to form junctions with their line. Although so many new railways were projected, opponents were as numerous as ever, and aired their ideas at every possible opportunity. One newspaper gave the views of a large canal proprietor upon the subject, which albeit amusing, doubtless coincided with the opinions of many. He said, "I foresee what the effect will be—it will set all the world a-gadding. Twenty miles an hour! why, you will not be able to keep an apprentice boy at work; every Saturday evening he must make a trip to spend the Sabbath with his sweetheart. Grave plodding citizens will be flying about like comets. All local attractions will be at an end. It will encourage flightiness of intellect. Veracious people will turn into the most immeasurable liars; all their conceptions will be exaggerated by their magnificent notions of distance. And then, there will be barrels of pork, and cargoes of flour, and chaldrons of coals, and even lead and whiskey, and such like sober things, that have always been used to sober travelling, whisking along like a set of sky rockets! It will upset the gravity of the nation! Think of flying for debt; a set of bailiffs mounted on bombshells would not overtake an absconded debtor, only give him a fair start. Give me the old, solemn, straightforward, regular Dutch Canal, three miles an hour for expresses, and two for jog and trot journeys, with a yoke of oxen for a heavy load. I go for beasts of burthen, it is more primitive and scriptural, and suits a moral and religious people better. None of your hop-skip and jump whimsies for me." This gentleman's prognostications were most likely coloured by the fact that he was interested in a rival mode of locomotion, but no such excuse can be urged on behalf of the *John Bull*, a paper then commanding a large circulation and proportionate influence. The writer of an article therein, after calling railways "a new fangled absurdity," thus delivered himself:—"Does anybody mean to say that decent people, passengers who would use their own carriages, and are accustomed to

their own comforts, would consent to be hurried through the air upon a railroad, from which, had a lazy schoolboy left a marble, or a wicked one a stone, they would be pitched off their perilous track into the valley beneath ; or is it to be imagined that women, who may like the fun of being whirled away on a party of pleasure for an hour to see a sight, would endure the fatigue, misery and danger, not only to themselves but their children and families, of being dragged through the air at the rate of 20 miles an hour, all their lives being at the mercy of a tin pipe, or a copper boiler, or the accidental dropping of a pebble by the way." Such were the opinions of a by no means inconsiderable section of the British public, prior to the opening of a railway out of London.

The Southampton Docks Bill was passed in this year (1836), Mr. Giles being the engineer ; he also undertook the survey of a line from Bishopstoke to Portsmouth. These new duties necessarily occupied a great portion of his time, and the London and Southampton line suffered in consequence. Early in the year only ten miles of road had been formed, comprising however some of the heaviest works. In September, twenty-two miles were reported complete. The shareholders now began to be discontented at such slow progress, and the northern proprietors appointed a deputation to inspect the line and view the state of the works. This resulted in the resignation of Mr. Giles. He had no doubt great difficulties to contend with, the multiplication of railways not only caused a great increase in the rate of pay, but the labourers being in such demand, became unmanageable and worked only when they thought proper ; the extreme wetness of the season also interfered with the progress of the works. To add to the discontent of the shareholders, owners of property unexpectedly demanded a high price for their land, and claims for compensation also reached an alarming figure. There were one or two exceptions among the landowners, notably Mr. Bainbridge, of Shapley, who not only rendered the Company all the assistance in his power, but gave the

land necessary for a road through his estate free of all expense, and he it was who turned the first sod on the line. In addition to land, iron and other materials rose in price. The Company's first contract for iron rails was made at £7 18s. 6d. per ton, the price now reached £14 per ton. As stated elsewhere, the original estimate for land was £65,000; the actual cost exceeded £300,000. Other railway companies, later in the field than the London and Southampton, were subject to even more extraordinary claims, in one instance £24,000 were demanded for two and a half acres, and £1,054 awarded by a jury.



CHAPTER V.

Stephenson's Pupil—An Amended Act—A Friendly Coach Proprietor— The Great Contractor.

Mr. Joseph Locke, a pupil of Stephenson's, and engineer of the Grand Junction Railway from Birmingham to Liverpool, was Mr. Giles' successor. Upon his arrival early in 1837, he found about twenty-five miles of road formed at various places, and the Company in possession of nearly the whole of the land necessary for the line, including six and a half acres adjoining the site of the proposed docks at Southampton, which had been obtained from the Corporation of that town for a nominal consideration. In addition to the proposed Portsmouth branch, a company had been incorporated called the South Western, for making a line from Basingstoke, through Salisbury to Taunton, and another line was under survey from Basingstoke to join the London and Birmingham Railway; all three schemes being promoted by independent companies.

The directors were on the point of applying to Parliament for an amended Act, to enable them to make a deviation, so as to avoid tunnelling; also for power to raise £500,000, a sum which unexpected expenditure had shewn to be necessary to effect the completion of the line, and to furnish engines and other stock, the latter not being included in the original estimate. It was proposed to create 16,000 new £25 shares, each share to be entitled to the same dividend as the original share of £50, giving the holders of original shares the option of taking new shares in rateable proportion to the shares then held by them. This Bill became law in July, 1837.

Mr. Locke's first step was to alter the form of contract entered into with the persons who were making the line,

objecting to the system favoured by Mr. Giles, by which men of but little capital, giving no security, contracted to make a cutting or embankment for so much per cubic yard. On getting the easiest half done, it was their custom to decline going further without an extra price. The Company having no bond for the performance of the work, were either obliged to yield to their exactions, or have the work indefinitely delayed. Mr. Locke's plan was to let the work to a responsible man, who would give a money guarantee for its execution, and engage to keep his work in repair for a certain period after completion, so that it would be to his interest to avoid scamping. The services of the majority of the small contractors he dispensed with entirely, letting to Mr. Brassey all the unfinished works from Wandsworth to the River Wey Navigation. The new engineer was strongly imbued with all the tact and energy needed in dealing with large bodies of men, and his activity soon began to bear fruit, the works progressing so rapidly, that the directors were able to announce at a meeting held in August, the great probability of the line being opened to Woking in the following May.

Robert Garnett and Thomas Cook, Esquires, of Manchester, were elected directors in this year, in the room of E. G. Jones and J. Whitchurch, Esquires.

Reports having been again circulated to the effect that the traffic would be insufficient to pay a dividend, the directors became anxious to obtain an accurate return of the existing traffic by coach. This brought upon the scene Mr. Chaplin, a great coach proprietor, and one who was destined to play a prominent part in the history of the Company. He estimated the passenger receipts at £128,824, and the parcels at £20,253; other authorities, reckoning from the reports of inspectors placed for a fortnight at nine different stations on the Southampton and Portsmouth roads, and on the Basingstoke Canal, calculated upon a total annual revenue of £245,260. From these figures the directors expected a dividend of six per cent.

Shortly after this Mr. Chaplin formed a closer alliance with the Company. The firm of Chaplin and Co., of which he was the principal, were at the time owners of 64 coaches and 1,500 horses, the annual return from the business producing £500,000. This immense concern, which had been worked up from very small beginnings, was conducted with unparalleled success. The firm also possessed many first class hotels in various parts of the country. Foreseeing the inevitable result of railway competition, Mr. Chaplin urged upon his partner the desirability of disposing of the greater part of their plant. Almost the whole of the stock of coaches, horses etc., was consequently sold, the firm reserving only so much as was necessary to enable them to contract for the railway omnibuses and the branch coaches. Having thus turned the greater part of his property into money, the next question with Mr. Chaplin was, what he should do with it. He adopted a course not very usual, but strongly indicative of great strength of mind. With his property realized and placed in safety, in such shape that it could be immediately demanded, he left England, peremptorily closing up all avenues by which any business communications could reach him, and then went for six weeks into the heart of Switzerland, there to cogitate in silence and solitude over his future prospects and proceedings. He came to a conclusion which turned out most fortunate for him. He returned to England, and guided probably by his knowledge of the line, he embarked a considerable sum in the Southampton and London Railway.

At the seventh half-yearly meeting, held on February 28th, 1838, the directors were authorized to borrow a sum not exceeding £350,000. The intention of an independent Company to apply to Parliament for powers to construct a branch line to Guildford from Woking was notified. The Chairman, Mr. Easthope, M.P., announced positively that the line would be opened to Woking in May, and in the course of his speech paid a high tribute to the energy of Mr. Brassey, the contractor, whose exertions had contributed so much to

the forward state of the works. Mr. Easthope said of him "he is one of the most able, the most punctual, and energetic men I ever met in my life." The son of a Cheshire yeoman, Mr. Brassey had at this time only just entered upon his connection with those undertakings in which he amassed his immense fortune. His connection with the Southampton Company was a long one. The amount of capital involved in the works executed by him on this railway alone exceeded £4,500,000, the average number of men employed on the line being 1,500. Before his first contract with the Company had expired, his fame as a reliable man had procured him engagements in all directions, not only in England, but also on the Continent and later on in America, till in the zenith of his career he had in his employ an army of navvies and other workmen numbering 75,000. He was admitted to the Legion of Honour, Victor Emmanuel made him a Knight of St. Maurice and St. Lazarus; and from the Emperor of Austria he received the Order of the Iron Crown, then given, it is said, for the first time to a foreigner. Between the Southampton and London engineer and Mr. Brassey a strong bond of friendship existed, and next to his own surpassing energy, his strong common sense, his modesty and simplicity of character, it is probable that he owed his marvellous success in life to the early patronage of Mr. Locke and of the Company whose history these pages record.

CHAPTER VI.

Royal Patronage—Opening to Woking—Race Traffic—A Further Extension—The Line Re-christened—Sunday Trains—The Railway open throughout.

The time was now fast approaching when all prophecies and estimates of success or failure of the new mode of locomotion between London and the provinces, were to be placed beyond the realms of controversy, and advocates and opponents of the innovation anxiously awaited the result. Contrary to the hopes of promoters, the Southampton Company did not run the first train out of London; that honour was snatched from them by the London and Birmingham Company, who opened a portion of their line in 1837. A mile or so of railway had been opened at Deptford in 1836, but it was intended merely as a show, with the usual attraction of bands of music, &c. The Southampton Company were not far behind, for thanks to Mr. Locke and Mr. Brassey, the directors, accompanied by several noblemen and members of Parliament, were enabled to make an experimental trip to Woking and back on May 12th, 1838. The speed attained exceeded twenty miles an hour, and the trip was in every way satisfactory. A banquet was subsequently given at the Clarendon Hotel, Mr. Easthope, taking the chair, and being supported on the right by the Duke of Sussex (uncle of Her Majesty the Queen) and on the left by the Earl of Carnarvon—Success to the undertaking—the future “high road to Europe”—was of course drunk with enthusiasm, and the Duke announced his belief in the Southampton Railway becoming one of the most favourite lines out of London.

It must have been a proud day for the directors to find a member of the Royal Family of England according their

offspring patronage and support, after the months and years of anxiety, to say nothing of misrepresentation and personal abuse to which they had been subject. It was to them altogether a new experience, and they doubtless accepted the Duke's presence as a happy augury of more peaceful and flourishing times.

On the 19th of the same month a second party, consisting of nearly four hundred ladies and gentlemen, was taken to Woking Common in two trains of nine and ten carriages. On every eminence along the line admiring rustics gathered in thousands to cheer the train, and on Woking Common, where tents had been pitched and a cold collation provided for the visitors, a great crowd had assembled. One of the party described the outward journey as somewhat slow, on account of a stiff head wind prevailing, the effect of which was not diminished by several gentlemen taking their station on the tops of the low square roofed carriages. On the return, one train attained a speed of nearly thirty miles an hour; the engine of the other burst a tube, and its arrival in London was retarded in consequence.

Four days later, without any special demonstration, the line to Woking was publicly opened, a service of five trains running in each direction. In addition to Nine Elms and Woking, six stations had been built, viz., Wandsworth, Wimbledon, Kingston, Ditton Marsh, Walton, and Weybridge. Upon presenting themselves at the various stations, intending travellers were given a handbill setting forth the Company's regulations for working the line. One clause of this document enjoined passengers not to alight from a train or open a carriage door without the assistance of the Company's servants; another informed them that upon approaching habitations, or a curve in the line, the guard of the train would blow his whistle, to warn the people not to trespass on the railway. For the first few days passengers flocked from all the country side, and patronized the line for the mere novelty of the thing. Epsom races occurring in the following week, the Company advertised

their intention of running eight trains to Kingston on Derby day, for the accommodation of the racing public. To the utter astonishment and alarm of officials arriving at Nine Elms Station early on the morning of that eventful day, a crowd of about 5,000 persons was found at the station gates. Several trains were despatched but still the throng increased, till at length the doors were carried off their hinges, and amid the shrieks of the female portion of their number, the mob broke over the booking counter, leaped through the windows, invaded the platform and rushed pell mell into a train chartered by a private party. Finding resistance useless, the officials sent for the metropolitan police, and at twelve o'clock a notice was posted on the booking office window announcing that no more trains would run that day. The Company's first experiment in the conveyance of race passengers cannot be described as a very successful one; it is evident, however, that they were not discouraged, for a few weeks later they were found advertising trains to Woking for Ascot races. The second venture appears to have been conducted as well as the few wheezy locomotives at their command would permit. During the first four weeks the receipts were £3,085 15s. 11d., representing 291,279 passengers; as the summer advanced, the traffic gradually increased, till a total of £11,059 12s. 3d. for 98,795 passengers was credited for the twelve weeks ending August 13th. This exhibited an amount of traffic greatly in excess of Mr. Chaplin's estimate, which was thought a very sanguine one. No goods or cattle had up to this time been carried.

On September 24th of the same year, a further section of the railway was opened to Winchfield, which had the effect of bringing the majority of the coaches running to the south west and west of England to that station. The traffic was found to be stationary for the remainder of the year, the opening of the extra distance having done little more than sustain the same amount of traffic as that between London and Woking during the summer months. The experience of the

first half-year not only proved the existence of a far greater traffic than had been supposed ; it also taught the directors that the working expenses greatly exceeded their estimate, being $58\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. upon the gross receipts.

The question of providing Portsmouth with direct railway accommodation next occupied the serious attention of the directors. The Portsmouth Junction Line, promoted by the shareholders as a separate undertaking, had failed, under the opposition of the inhabitants, to pass the House of Commons, they being in favour of a line by way of Horsham to join the Brighton Railway. Immediately after its rejection they appear to have changed their minds, for a deputation was sent to the Southampton directors, asking if they were disposed to give them a line similar to that which they had defeated. In the meantime, the Lancashire shareholders, as principals in the Portsmouth Junction Bill, suggested that the Southampton and London Company should furnish the pecuniary means for making the line. This course was adopted, the whole of the shares being taken by proprietors of the parent line. The objection of the Portsmouth people to the line was actuated by rivalry existing between their town and Southampton. The very name of Southampton was odious to them, and so far was this jealousy carried, that it was only necessary to say that a thing came from Southampton to have it villified at Portsmouth, or say that it came from Portsmouth to have it deprecated at Southampton. "Why should we," said Portsmouth, "be under the wing of Southampton, and be indebted to the Southampton line for railway accommodation." Finding the difficulty of carrying their Portsmouth and Gosport Bill in the face of such opposition, the directors hit upon the happy expedient of inserting a clause in the Bill to sink the objectionable name of Southampton—though such it was only to the good folk of Portsmouth,—and to give their railway the more appropriate title of "The London and South Western." It was doubtless obvious to the directors that sooner or later a change of name must be made, for as the line extended, the

original title would be not only inappropriate but misleading ; the change might therefore as well be made first as last, especially when it served to divest it of that element which a large and important town in the district deemed so objectionable.

On June 10th, 1839, a party of directors travelled from London to Winchfield and formally opened the line from that station to Basingstoke. They were met along the line by the usual groups of cheering yokels, and at Basingstoke they partook of the usual cold collation. At the same time another party of directors opened the section from Southampton to Winchester. This extension brought Southampton within five hours of London, the eighteen miles between Basingstoke and Winchester being performed by coaches.

One result of this extension was the receipt of the following denunciation from the clergy of the diocese of Winchester :—

“To the Directors of the London and Southampton Railway Company.
Gentlemen,

We the undersigned clergy of Winton and Southampton and their vicinities, beg most respectfully to invite your serious attention to the following memorial.

We are deeply impressed with the conviction that the religious observance of the Lord's day is not only a duty binding upon us as Christians, but also that it is eminently conducive to the happiness and welfare of man as a social being ; and consequently that whatever tends to lower its authority, or affords a temptation to its neglect or desecration, must exercise a most prejudicial influence upon the well being of society. We perceive with the most unfeigned regret, that the day of religious rest is continually desecrated by the running of the trains upon the railway under your superintendence and with your sanction. We feel many strong grounds of objection to this practice, which we cannot but consider as a direct infringement of a divine command. We lament that a large body of men in your employ are practically altogether prevented from enjoying that season of cessation from worldly business which of right belongs to them, and are precluded from attending the worship of God with their fellow Christians. But we have other weighty reasons for entering our solemn protest against such a desecration of that Holy day. Being most of us charged with the spiritual oversight of parishes, which from their contiguity are materially affected by the railway, we

observe with deep concern that our parishioners are drawn away from attendance upon the services of the Church, and our congregation diminished by the absence of many, who, until this temptation allured them, were accustomed to attend their respective churches. We would suggest that the divine blessing can scarcely be expected to rest upon an enterprise in which the systematic desecration of the Lord's day is openly sanctioned. We would protest against the practice, as tending to corrupt public morals, as well as dishonour God, and bring the ordinance of religion into neglect. We earnestly hope that the expression of these our deliberate convictions, and our serious remonstrances may induce you to reconsider the propriety of allowing the practice of which we have complained to continue, and we humbly trust that the unanimous voice of those who are bound to watch over the moral and spiritual welfare of their parishioners, will have the effect of arresting an evil, which we feel satisfied will materially interfere with the best interests of the community.

We remain &c.,

C. J. HOARE,

Archdeacon and Prebendary of Winchester, &c."

This Sunday question was no new thing; it had been mooted by shareholders at previous half-yearly meetings, the Chairman then stating, that the board did not feel justified in determining to suspend trains on that day. Had the object of the memorialists been to elicit a crushing reply, they could not have attacked a better man than Mr. Easthope. As a journalist and proprietor of the *Morning Chronicle*, then the leading Liberal daily, he was, as the following letter will show, quite in his element in inditing an answer to the Hampshire divines:—

"Nine Elms Station,

July 12th, 1839.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to acknowledge your memorial, addressed to the directors of this Company, wherein you express your strong disapprobation of trains running upon the railway on Sundays. You impute to us indifference to the religious condition of our servants, and state that we practically prevent their attention to religious duty. You charge us with sanctioning the systematic desecration of the Lord's day, and thereby exposing ourselves to the displeasure of Heaven, which you suggest to be likely to lead to the failure of the enterprise in which we are engaged. We feel these accusations to be very severe, coming as they do from a large number of dignified clergymen, who may be expected to

mingle charity in the expression of their opinion. We deem your accusations unjust, and therefore we respectfully invite you to a reconsideration of them and we trust that when you have bestowed on the whole subject that full and careful reflection which may be expected from your body, you will then not refuse to retract imputations, which you must feel to be unfounded. The Company is, by Act of Parliament, compelled to run trains on the railway on Sunday for the convenience of the Post Office. We view the railroad as a substitute for public highways and therefore feel that it would not be just toward the public, or within the discreet exercise of our duty, to stop travelling by railway on Sunday, seeing that the public conveyances cease to afford the accommodation formerly given. It is also manifest that travelling by railroads greatly reduces the animal labour formerly employed on the public roads, and consequently reduces the quantity of human labour required for conducting the employment of horses. It must also be obvious that if any body of proprietors assumed to themselves the right of stopping the public and cheap means of travelling on the railways now that the other public conveyances have been removed, it would subject them to the imputation of obstructing the necessary and reasonable movements of those who cannot provide private carriages even for purposes of necessity. We further submit to you that the whole question of Sunday travelling is one that justly and properly belongs to the Legislature of the Kingdom to determine, and ought not to depend on the caprice of railway companies. We entreat permission to press on your serious reflection the severity and injustice of highly influential and dignified portions of the clergy of the land creating religious prejudices against individuals engaged in the conduct of extensive public establishments, who are desirous of conforming to the laws, and anxious to repress, so far as it is within their power, everything calculated to injure the general interests of Society.

I have, etc.,

JOHN EASTHOPE,

Chairman of the L. & S.W.R."

For years nothing more was heard of the Sunday train question.

The amount available for dividend to July 31st, 1839, was £27,730 5s. 4d.; on this a dividend of 15s. per share was paid, a similar dividend being declared the following half year. During the latter period the receipts averaged £2,952 10s. per week.

On the morning of May 11th, 1840, the neighbourhood of the termini at Nine Elms and Southampton presented a bust-

ling and animated appearance, flags and banners bearing the arms of the Company floated from the various inns and public houses, and the entrances of the stations were similarly decorated. The object of this display was to signalise the opening of the Southampton line throughout. Shortly after eight o'clock a body of directors, preceded by bands of music, arrived at Nine Elms, and amid the cheers of the bystanders steamed away for Southampton, where three hours later their train was received by a salute of 21 guns. A corresponding up train met with a mishap, the bursting of a tube in the boiler, resulting in a delay of an hour and half. On this occasion Mr. Brassey gave the "cold collation" at Warren Farm near Andover-road station; he also, in addition to other entertainments to his workmen, provided an ox, which was roasted whole on his premises at Popham Green. The general jollification amongst the Company's servants on this day was such as to inspire a portion of the Southampton press with apprehension of some terrible disaster, and they describe with startling minuteness "the only accidents in consequence," as the decapitation of a dog who got in front of a train, and the smashing of a pair of gates at Northam in the middle of the night by an engine making a passage through them. Beyond a display of fireworks, very little enthusiasm was manifest at Southampton, the celebration of the event being reserved till June 20th, when, after one of those squabbles which appears to be inevitable in a town where political feeling enters into the transactions of every day life, a grand banquet was arranged. The Duke of Sussex and the Directors attended, as did also Lord Palmerston and M. Guizot, French Ambassador at the Court of St. James. The day was observed as a general holiday, dinners were given to the poor, guns were fired, fireworks displayed, and the town illuminated. "And thus" says an enthusiastic local paper, "was the opening glory of Southampton celebrated by her happy and grateful sons."

CHAPTER VII.

Early Superintendence—Primitive Booking Arrangements—The Staff, their Uniform and Duties—The Stores, Locomotive and Carriage Departments—Passengers, their Grievances—Goods Traffic—Signals—Method of Working the Line and Result.

When, in the spring of 1838, the necessity presented itself to the directors of finding a competent staff to take possession as soon as Mr. Brassey's rough and ready levies had completed a portion of their work, a Mr. Davis, accompanied by a small staff of porters, was induced to leave a northern line and undertake the instruction of the employés whose experience of railway work had up to that time been *nil*. Upon the commencement of traffic, Mr. Davis became superintendent at Nine Elms; beyond that station his authority did not extend, for Mr. Easthope was really the manager of the line, although all orders came from Mr. Read, the secretary, or Mr. Morgan, his assistant.

In 1839, upon the recommendation of Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Stovin was appointed traffic manager, but still Mr. Easthope continued to interfere personally in all departments. He not only gave directions concerning the working of traffic, but appointed the majority of the employés, nine-tenths of whom, it was wickedly said, were "free and independent" voters of the Borough of Leicester, for which Mr. Easthope was M.P. The engineers' department being interfered with as much as any other, Mr. Locke at length rebelled, and threatened to leave the concern. After many affrays had taken place between him and Mr. Easthope, their differences became a board question. At this time the chairman was not very popular with his colleagues; they recognized in him a clever man, possessed of great tact and ability, but so ambitious and fond of power was he, that upon their giving way to him, the

position of chairman was altogether beneath his notice, and he assumed that of dictator. Finding himself in a minority he resigned in 1840; Mr. Garnett taking his place, with Mr. Chaplin as vice-chairman. From that date Mr. Stovin's authority over the traffic and goods departments became absolute.

Mr. Davis, superintendent of Nine Elms, was an Irishman, troubled with a very fiery temper, which led to his receiving a request from the board to resign, and accept the less onerous duties of agent at Weybridge. His chief booking clerk, Mr. Godson, succeeded him, and a short time after, although not officially recognized as such, that gentleman really acted as superintendent of the whole line under Mr. Stovin's authority. Mr. R. Gunnell superintended the country terminus, moving on to Winchfield, Basingstoke and Southampton as the line became opened. Mr. Tolfrey succeeded him at Woking; Mr. Mears, his chief booking clerk, was installed as agent at Winchfield, and his goods and parcels clerk, Mr. Louth, took charge of Andover Road station. Upon the Gosport line opening, Mr. Louth removed to Bishopstoke, while Gosport station was under the command of Mr. Watkins, who subsequently succeeded Mr. Gunnell at Southampton. Mr. Miller, from one of Mr. Chaplin's London offices, followed Mr. Tolfrey at Woking, superintending that station and Guildford until the appointment of Mr. Stratton to the latter.

Passengers were booked over an open counter till the year 1847, when the authorities, coming to the conclusion that a score of impatient individuals all demanding tickets at the same time to as many different stations was calculated to confuse their clerks, erected partitions, so that only one passenger might present himself at a time. The tickets were small slips of paper torn from a book containing five slips on each leaf. Stamps were provided to impress on each ticket the particular station to which a passenger wished to travel, also to show the date, and in addition a way-bill was handed the guard, giving the number, class and destination of

passengers from each station. A large bell fixed on the roof of the terminal stations was rung for five minutes before the departure of each train; at intermediate stations a small hand bell sufficed.

From the year 1838 to 1841 the guard's uniform consisted of a chocolate coloured frock coat with very dark trousers; a scarlet coat with silver buttons and lace collar was then substituted, to be exchanged six years later for one of blue, having a scarlet collar; blue trousers with two rows of scarlet piping down the seam also came into use at that time. When this latter alteration was made, Mr. P. Laurentz Campbell occupied the post of secretary, in succession to Mr. Morgan, who, finding the scrip and share business quite enough to employ his attention, was appointed treasurer. Mr. Campbell came from the Board of Trade Offices; he was a perfect martinet with regard to uniform, and for a man to be literally a button short constituted in his eyes a very serious offence. A guard's lot in those days could not be described as a happy one; his seat was fixed on the roof of a first class carriage, from which spot he worked his brake—a very rude and simple contrivance, consisting of a shaft or rod underneath the carriage, attached to the brake blocks, with a connecting rod running up to the guard's seat. In summer or in winter, by night and by day, through tunnels and cuttings the guard occupied this exposed position; and it not unfrequently happened that in bitter winter weather friendly hands were needed to lift this gorgeous but invaluable official from the seat to which he had become frozen.

When the line was first opened, policemen were more numerous than any other class of servants; they acted as signalmen and ticket collectors, and until the date of the extension to Basingstoke, policemen were stationed along the line at certain distances; they were subsequently taken off their beats and sent to various stations. Their uniform comprised a swallow-tailed chocolate coloured coat, dark

trousers and tall hat with a leather crown. Porters wore fustian jackets, having a badge on the arm, and their caps were of the favourite colour—chocolate : in 1841 dark cord came into use.

Agents and clerks received their salaries quarterly, the uniform staff being paid weekly at the stations to which they were attached, each agent retaining traffic cash for that purpose. Some cases coming to light where agents had obtained credit for more money than had really been paid to their men, a paymaster (Mr. Ward) was appointed in 1847, an arrangement giving great satisfaction to the employés. The year 1848 saw a provident fund established for the relief of sick or disabled servants, the nucleus of which was formed from an amount of £250, representing fines inflicted upon officials for various offences. Six hundred, out of a staff of six hundred and fifty-nine, became members of this society in the first year of its existence.

In 1840, the office of superintendent of stores was created; Mr. Dover being the first to serve in that capacity. During his term of office a great fire occurred at Nine Elms, when not only were the buildings and a quantity of valuable stores consumed, but considerable damage was done to the rolling stock. The fire originated in an oil store, to which a naked light had been incautiously introduced by the storekeeper.

Mr. Brassey had entered into a contract to keep the 77 miles of line from London to Southampton in repair for ten years, at the sum of £24,000 a year. He undertook to keep the embankments, cuttings, tunnels, rails, and sidings in efficient repair and to the satisfaction of Mr. Locke. At first the directors were found congratulating themselves upon this arrangement, but before Mr. Brassey's contract had expired they longed for the time to come when they would be relieved from so great an expenditure.

The original stock of engines and carriages was purchased for £21,115; each locomotive costing £1,500; four years
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later, when the Company owned 49 engines, they could each be obtained for £500 less. Nothing but coke was consumed by them, and as the price of this article frequently reached £2 per ton, it proved one of the heaviest items in the working expenses; engine cleaning also became a very costly operation, through the absence of sheds for berthing. Mr. Woods was the first locomotive superintendent, being succeeded by Mr. Gooch, in 1841. The carriage department was presided over by Mr. Joseph Beattie, whose first duty upon taking office led him to rebuild and furnish with stronger springs all the carriages in his care. They had been built in haste by inexperienced people, who did not know where to apply the strength in a railway carriage, probably from their not having built one before; and as they were constructed on the lines of an old stage coach, they had the fatal objection, in common with all original rolling stock, of being too light and slight for railway work. All carriages were of a chocolate colour, and the middle door of each first class was decorated with the Company's crest, a dragon's wing being painted on the side doors. A first class compartment—there were three in each carriage—seated six passengers, and as in addition to being very low, they were likewise very narrow, travellers' knees were pressed uncomfortably hard against those of their opposite neighbour. Much as a first class passenger might grumble at the small space allotted him, his fellow traveller in a second class had far greater discomfort to complain of; his seat was a bare board, his knees in as close proximity to his *vis a vis* as in the superior carriage, and unless provided with a good umbrella the chances argued in favour of a wet skin, for all second class carriages were open to the weather on either side. First class luggage was loaded on the roof, while all belongings of second class passengers were deposited in two boots placed across their carriage, underneath the seats, and opening from the outside. Composite carriages, made up of one first and two second class compartments, built expressly for coach passengers, carried all their luggage on the roofs, where at each

end a seat was fixed for the guard or any of the Company's servants.

For people who had been accustomed to the outside of a coach, or the less rapid travelling of a road waggon, no covering whatever was deemed necessary, indeed, no provision was made for their accommodation until trains ran through from London to Southampton, and then they were only conveyed by one day goods train in each direction. A frame work with seats, fitted on the bed of a carriage truck, constituted the vehicle in which third class passengers travelled in those days ; the frame work was removed upon the truck being required for its ordinary purpose. The composition of these goods trains gave a wag of the day an opportunity to observe that "in some of the trucks was the swinish multitude, in others a multitude of swine." On a wet day the condition of poor wretches condemned by poverty to travel in such conveyances may be more easily imagined than described ; if they turned their backs to the storm the rain ran down their necks, if they faced it their eyes became blinded and their pockets filled with water ; an umbrella was a useless impediment, and their truck really resolved itself into a species of horizontal shower bath from whose searching power there was no escape. Add to atmospherical disadvantages the tumbling and shaking which six hours shunting in a truck with dead buffers will produce, and one may conceive the drenched and bruised condition in which these *miserables* arrived at their journey's end. In 1842, finding that passengers fought shy of these vehicles, third class carriages were attached to the first morning trains, "which" said Mr. Chaplin at a half-yearly meeting, "will not only give the industrious poor a greater chance of security, but also encouragement for early rising." An Act was passed by Parliament in 1845, compelling railway companies to run one cheap train daily, charging at the rate of one penny per mile, and travelling at an average speed of twelve miles an hour for the whole journey ; passengers to be provided with seats and

protected from the weather. Only the latter clause affected the arrangements then in force on the South Western, and to remedy this carriages were built with two glass lights in each roof, but no glass windows at the side or to the doors; there were spaces all along the sides at the top for air, closed by curtains. Third class travelling on the South Western was then described as the best in England, few companies favouring their customers with glass in any part of the vehicle; in the majority of instances too, their seats were very narrow, and, apparently with a design to afford a maximum of discomfort, were ranged round the carriage sides.

An enterprising individual hired a train during the summer of 1841, running it at low fares with such marvellous profit and success, that the Company were not long in following up and encouraging this evidently profitable source of revenue; thus laying the foundation of modern excursion traffic.

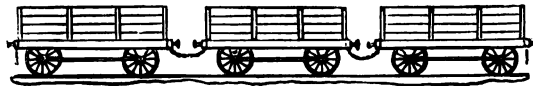
When goods traffic was commenced, all waggons were attached to the last passenger trains in the day, but upon opening to Basingstoke a goods train was run, conducted by three boys from fourteen to sixteen years of age. The vagaries of these youngsters were not, however, suffered to continue for any length of time, and a man soon took their place. As with the passenger, so with the goods guard, he was not provided with a brake van, he had, in fact, no brake to work, the stopping of his train depending entirely upon the engine brake. A vehicle called a Noah's Ark was placed at the guard's disposal; it had two swing doors on one side and a sloping roof, and carried small packages for roadside stations. Ordinary goods waggons were about twelve feet in length, very roughly finished, with dead buffers, and minus side chains and springs to the drawbars. In consequence of weak engine power some little difficulty was experienced in starting a heavy load, especially on an incline. Under such adverse circumstances the guard resorted to the expedient of placing a scotch under the last pair of wheels, so that the engine driver might

put back to get all his waggon chains slack, and then take it with a run. This manœuvre very often resulted in a portion of the train being left behind through chains breaking. Equally unsatisfactory were goods traffic receipts, for some years falling short of the estimate. This probably arose in part from the principle on which such traffic was conducted, the Company merely finding waggons and power for those who were already engaged in the carrying trade.

Up to 1840 the only signals provided were flags by day, and common horn lanterns by night. Standard signals were then erected, and a revolving light at Nine Elms; but distant signals did not come into use until eight or ten years after.

In starting one train after another on the same line of rails, the only precaution deemed necessary to ensure safety was that of keeping a following train until its predecessor was "well out of sight." Such a haphazard system soon produced a plentiful crop of accidents. On June 18th, 1840, an engine ran into a train at Farnborough, smashing two horse boxes and injuring several passengers. On August 15th of the same year a goods train left Southampton for London; after going six miles the load was found to be too heavy, and a portion was left behind in charge of the guard. He sent a boy back to warn the following train, but the 11 o'clock mail, consisting of thirty first class carriages propelled by two engines, ran into the goods and many passengers were injured. An accident also occurred at Vauxhall on October 24th, 1840, when a fast ran into a mixed train. It appears that a policeman was sent down the line by the station clerk at Wandsworth (Mr. Hilditch) to warn the fast train by showing a light. After stopping a minute or two, that official thought he had been on the spot long enough, and returned to his station. He appears to have been somewhat out in his reckoning, for before the mixed train reached Vauxhall the fast caught it up. One woman was killed. On other lines there were even more serious results, and a great outcry was naturally raised by the public press, who made all sorts of suggestions. One

James E. McCabe inserted a long and costly advertisement in the *Times*, wherein he states "he feels that it is incumbent upon every man, however humble his ideas may be, to give any suggestion he may consider likely to prevent accidents." He goes on to describe the means which he proposes to adopt, viz., have the engine a mile or a mile and a half in advance of the train, connected with it by a sufficiently strong rope. "In the event of an accident" he observes, "the engineer only would be imperilled." Notwithstanding the undoubted ingenuity and eminently philanthropic character of Mr. McCabe's device, no record can be discovered of its adoption by any British railway.



CHAPTER VIII.

Southampton and Portsmouth Grievances—Branch Lines to Guildford, Salisbury and Epsom—The Atmospheric—Dividends—A Royal Road indeed—"Castleman's Corkscrew."

Before railway communication between London and Southampton had been established twelve months, several large steamship companies made the latter port a place of call, and thus the primary object of the line became fulfilled. Southampton also, thanks to representations from influential South Western shareholders, was selected as the starting point for the West India Mails, and in 1841 the same body formed a South Western Steamship Company to ply between Southampton and France. Later on endeavours were made to obtain an Act, giving the Company power to own or hire such a line of steamers, but a Parliamentary Committee considered this clause at variance with the Act of Incorporation and struck it out. From that time forward the Steamship Company was conducted as a separate undertaking, in close connection, however, with the railway. Notwithstanding the obvious fact that Southampton as a town rapidly rose in importance and prosperity, its inhabitants were by no means well pleased with their new railway, sighing aloud for a return of the "good old coaching days" when travellers were not whisked off by train as soon as they landed, but put up at a hotel for a day or two, spending their money freely.

In November, 1841, passenger traffic commenced on the Gosport line, but after a few days' trial, Mr. Locke advised a suspension, being fearful of the stability of Fareham tunnel, which had given him no end of trouble, and cost £15,000 above his estimate. On February 7th of the following year traffic was resumed. Two years later Portsmouth people began to

cry out for better accommodation than this line could afford, and an extension of the Brighton system was proposed, quickly followed by a South Western scheme, *viâ* Fareham and Cosham, to Portsmouth and Chichester. Then came a direct London and Portsmouth Atmospheric, with a counter South Western direct line *viâ* Guildford and Midhurst. Thus while Southampton people were saying their town was ruined because of railway facilities, the inhabitants of Portsmouth were prepared to prove their ruination from an exactly opposite cause. After a protracted inquiry, the Brighton Company's line, backed by the military element, who were promptly accused by South Western advocates of producing long petitions signed by regiments of soldiers, passed through Parliament, the other schemes being thrown out.

The advantages of direct railway communication soon began to be recognized in towns indirectly served by the South Western, and renewed appeals for assistance were received from Guildford and Salisbury. Application for powers to construct a branch from Woking to the former town meeting with success, it was made by an independent company, and opened on May 5th, 1845, becoming South Western property in the same year. A Salisbury line had been proposed in 1839, when Mr. Easthorpe, asked at a half-yearly meeting what support the directors were prepared to give such a branch, said, "The directors felt that when they effected the work they had now in hand, they would have done a pretty large and very toilsome duty, and, speaking as an individual director, beyond what was connected with this line, he certainly would never undergo the toil of constructing another railway. He did not doubt the directors would give every assistance in their power to the continuation of the Salisbury line, but for the directors to take upon themselves the construction of such a line would be a very bold measure." A year later the directors received a deputation who asked for co-operation in a branch starting from Hook Pit, between Basingstoke and Winchester, to Salisbury. Nothing came of

it; but in 1843 the South Western brought in a Bill for a single line from Bishopstoke to Salisbury estimated to cost £280,000. At the same time a branch to Epsom, surveyed in 1842, an extension of the terminus in Nine Elms Lane to Wandsworth Road, and a Bill for converting their share capital and loans into transferable stock were also sought. The last two clauses became law, but a Croydon and Epsom atmospheric railway was preferred to a South Western branch from Wimbledon. This atmospheric principle, upheld by Mr. Brunel, the Great Western engineer, soon threatened to rival the older system. Between the line of rails a large pipe was laid, in which a piston was inserted, attached by a shaft to the framework of a carriage. The propelling power was the ordinary pressure of the atmosphere acting against the piston in the tube on one side, a vacuum being created on the other by the working of a stationary engine. Mr. Brunel introduced it on the South Devon Line, where, after spending £300,000 in experiments, it was found that the conveyance of one hundred pounds worth of passengers cost about £108. This discovery sounded the death knell of atmospheric pressure as a substitute for locomotive engines.

In addition to projects materially affecting South Western interests, assistance had been requested on behalf of a line from Paris to Rouen, of which Mr. Locke became engineer and Mr. Reed chairman. Mr. Chaplin and many other South Western shareholders embarked largely in the scheme, as a connecting link between London and Paris *via* Southampton.

While these extensions were being projected, traffic on the main line rapidly increased, and at the same time the directors managed to reduce working expenses to 43 per cent., thus enabling them to pay dividends of five and six per cent. On one occasion they were accused of paying a dividend out of capital. It appears that a sum of £173,605 was due upon Gosport shares and upon some new stock, called "tenths," but in order that the produce of the daily traffic might not be idle, it was applied to the purposes of capital, so

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that they might keep off to the latest possible period the calls which otherwise must have been made earlier. The money applicable to the purposes of a dividend, namely, the net earnings of the line, were thus applied to the purposes of the call, and out of the call the dividend was subsequently paid. It so happened that but for this unauthorized method of procedure, a sum of £90,000 would have been lost through the bankruptcy of the company's bankers, Messrs. Wright; and no dividend whatever could then have been paid. As it was £3,538 were lost in the ruin of that establishment.

The year 1843 saw Her Majesty the Queen a passenger on the South Western, and on the same occasion the Duke of Wellington, who was strongly prejudiced against all railways, performed his first trip in attendance upon Her Majesty. Prior to this the Duke used his own coach when travelling between London and Strathfieldsaye, his place in Hampshire, although South Western directors had informed him that a special train was always at his command. In speaking of this occurrence at a shareholders' meeting, the Chairman said, "We have recently been deemed worthy of the patronage of royalty, and I am proud to say that both Her Majesty and the noble Duke of Wellington expressed themselves highly pleased with our mode of conveyance. I think we may, from all accounts, anticipate that Her Majesty will almost include in her domestic arrangements one of our stations." Since that time Her Majesty has indeed included the South Western in her "domestic arrangements," honouring it more, perhaps, than any other railway in the kingdom. Her Majesty's sons too, the Dukes of Connaught and Albany, reside on this line, and few, if any, royal visitors to English shores return to their native country before admiring from the windows of a state coach the varied beauty of the scenery through which it runs. As no line is more favoured by royalty than the South Western, its claim to the title of A Royal Road may be considered as beyond doubt.

Soon the Company came to loggerheads, for a second time,

with the Great Western. It really began in 1848 when an independent company projected a line from Basingstoke to Newbury, which was to be worked by the South Western. Their Bill passed the House of Commons, but a Committee of the Lords threw it out. Newbury was looked upon by the Great Western as their territory, and the following year found their surveyors on the hills of Dorchester and Weymouth and upwards to Bath. This roused Mr. Chaplin to wrath; "It is our legitimate country," he said, "it is in our traffic tables, and I think their (the Great Western) going so far out of their way as Bristol towards Exeter, must have told us that they did consider it was ours and that it was for us to occupy it." At the same time a coast or forest line, irreverently termed "Castleman's Corkscrew," from Mr. Castleman, its chief advocate, was proposed from Southampton to Dorchester. The South Western board were rather inclined to favour this scheme, but its promoters took such high ground, insisting that the Company should "never henceforth project a single inch of railway to the west of Salisbury," that no alternative was left but an opposing scheme from Salisbury to Dorchester and Weymouth, and another from Salisbury to Yeovil. Lines from Basingstoke to Newbury, Didcot, and Swindon were also projected. These proposals were of course stigmatised by the Great Western as aggressive, while Mr. Chaplin, who had succeeded Mr. Garnett in the chair, went back some centuries for his title to the western road. "About 180 years after Christ the Romans found a way through, and laid it down for us, therefore I think" he told the shareholders "that is going far enough back to define a title for a line of country which will exclude us altogether from the epithet of aggressors." A few days after Mr. Chaplin had refused to recognize Mr. Castleman's right to dictate terms to the South Western, an announcement was made that the Great Western had undertaken to work the "Corkscrew" or "Water Snake," as one individual derisively called it. At this time the Board of Trade was all powerful, and railway promoters had to obtain

the approval of that tribunal before taking their Bills to Parliament. The Coast line and the Great Western Company's Wilts and Somerset scheme obtained favour, whilst South Western plans were rejected; but a sop was thrown to the latter by refusing sanction to the working agreement between Mr. Castleman and the Great Western. An "amicable arrangement" was then come to with the latter company, and by suggestion of the Board of Trade a lease in perpetuity of the Southampton and Dorchester line, at £20,000 a year and half the surplus profits, was taken by the South Western. Great opposition was offered to this scheme by the Woods and Forests Commissioners and it was not allowed to run through any wooded portion of the New Forest.



CHAPTER IX.

The Mania.

A great uprising in the railway world was imminent and the original ideas of railway men that nothing more was to be done than lay down a line and all the traffic within fifty miles would be drawn upon it, was exchanged for a theory that "every village ought to have its railway and every village *should* have its railway." On the stock exchange, where railway shares had hitherto met with comparative neglect, excitement set in, soon to be worked into a mania. Throughout the year 1845 surveyors were overrunning the country in all directions, their services being in such request that some of them were paid at the rate of fifteen guineas a day. They lived like lords at country hotels and played practical jokes upon all and sundry. Occasionally through opposition on the part of a landowner their work had to be carried on at night, and a tale went the rounds that an old gentleman who objected to have his land surveyed, shot at them from his bedroom window. He was rewarded by hearing a heavy fall, which upon inspection proved to be a theodolite. Morning brought him a polite note to the effect that he was welcome to the instrument "to see how far it is into the middle of next week." Engineers, lawyers and newspaper proprietors also reaped a rich harvest, and it was stated that an eminent Q.C., was offered a thousand guineas for a speech, and that his clerk's fees in one session exceeded £3,000. Two newspapers had on one day, two special trains, one from Liverpool, the other from Dover to London, entailing a cost of at least £50, for the sole purpose of obtaining a few hours in priority of intelligence. Tradesmen left their counters and merchants their offices to gamble in scrip with

other speculators in the open street. People no longer asked "How's your family ; " that query was exchanged for "How's your railway." The vagabonds of society were let loose, knavery reigned supreme ; nor was excitement confined to any particular class, dignified clergymen being described in exchange parlance, as " bulls," while titled ladies figured as " stags." As the mania spread, stock markets were opened in provincial towns, where, as in London, vast concourses of men bought and sold in a state of such furious excitement, that a betting ring at our largest race meeting fails to supply its parallel. Throughout November newspapers appeared with " Supplement No. 1, Supplement No. 2, Supplement No. 3," and last, though by no means least a " Supplementary Supplement " filled with railway prospectuses at fifty guineas a column. There was the " Brighton and Cheltenham Direct," the " London and Holyhead Direct," the " Grand London and Dublin Approximation Railway," the " Bristol, Bath, and Dover Direct," the " Manchester and Southampton," and hosts of smaller " Directs " and " Grands " with their opponents, for each line had its rival, one line only being good till its adversary appeared. It was subsequently discovered that the promoters of one line were not unfrequently advocates of its opponent. As November 30th, the day on which plans were to be lodged with the Board of Trade, drew near, extra pressure was put on ; solicitors and engineers had no bed for a fortnight ; lithographers were equally busy, one eminent firm bringing nearly four hundred lithographers from Belgium, and failed nevertheless with this reinforcement in completing their work. November 30th fell on a Sunday, and throughout the day special trains bearing solicitors with their plans steamed into London from all quarters. Where express trains were not available, post horses were in readiness in all parts of the kingdom. Tales were told of post boys being bribed, and in one case an attorney found that at 9 p.m. he was progressing only at the rate of four miles an hour. Neither threats nor persuasion had any effect upon the post boys. Finding

entreaties unavailing, the attorney leaped from the carriage, unfastened the traces and thrashed the post boys till they roared for mercy. He then resumed his seat and completed his journey at the rate of fifteen miles an hour. Special trains were refused to parties promoting lines in opposition to existing railways, the South Western for instance, refusing the Manchester and Southampton. In the north of England, where a solicitor had been met by refusal, a hearse was procured, plans, sections, and clerk placed inside and a special train ordered to take it to London. Throughout the evening and up till midnight Whitehall was blocked by cabs containing anxious promoters with their rolls of parchment, some even then arriving too late. Of 1263 projects—three-fourths arrant bubbles—which had but a week or two before been flaring away with traffic tables and big promises of dividends in prospect, only 775, many of them at the last gasp, managed to lodge their plans in time. Upon these schemes coming before Parliament in the session of 1846, the country was ransacked for witnesses—landowners, farmers, millers, and tradesmen, to go to London, live on the fat of the land at the best hotels, and give evidence in favour of or against Bills. The result showed that committees decided without discrimination, and a regular scramble for Bills took place, or to quote Mr. Chaplin, “it was a perfect lottery,” where the most unscrupulous were the most successful. As time went on weak points began to disclose themselves. Shareholders were found to be men of straw who could not meet their calls; a notorious example being introduced to the House of Commons by the Marquis of Clanricarde, where one Charles Guernsey, the son of a charwoman, and a junior clerk in a broker’s office at 12s. per week, had his name down as a subscriber for £52,000 worth of shares. He had doubtless been made a tool of for the purpose by the brokers, his employers. The utter rottenness of these bubble schemes soon became apparent. Poor dupes took alarm, their scrip—their fancied wealth, became worthless; embarrassment, or irretrievable ruin stared them in the

face, and a panic equalled only by the fury of its forerunner—the mania, ensued. Of those who were drawn into the speculating vortex, few escaped, and the year 1847 was a dark one for many a home in old England.

An investigation of these precious schemes laid bare a state of wholesale speculation, bribery and fraud unexampled before or since. In some cases no books whatever were kept, and, as a rule, the lawyers were found to have been guilty of the most disreputable practices. A bill submitted by one of these worthies, and made public, is certainly a curiosity in its way. The following are a few of his charges:—"To 13 clerks, referencing, exclusive of travelling expenses, £1,064; to copying reference books, £420; to examining the same, £56 14s.; to self and three clerks engaged one day and one night assisting engineer, November 28th, £29 6s. 8d.; to ditto, November 29th, £29 6s. 8d.; to about 12 days' attendance on different promoters, £52 10s.; to ditto, 10 days, £50 10s.; to journey, 18 days, exclusive of expenses, £94 10s." This last item was often repeated, and the lawyer claimed from his clients (the Exeter, Dorchester and Weymouth Junction Coast Railway) altogether £5,000.

The central figure around whom all this madness raged was one George Hudson, a man reared behind a New York counter, who was left money by some relative or another, and speculated successfully in railway shares. He accumulated vast wealth, bought estates from dukes and lords, and found admission into the House of Commons as M.P. for Sunderland. When the fever was at its height the "railway king" was a king indeed; duchesses petted him, noble lords shook him heartily by the hand, his admirers subscribed £20,000 for a statue to be erected in his honour, and, save in the House, Cabinet Ministers were forced to take a back seat in his presence. When attacked in the House of Commons, he said in the course of his defence, "I have known what it is to live in popularity and favour and to enjoy the confidence and smiles of the world. I have known the bitter reverse. I bear

against it, I hope, with the fortitude with which it is right for a man to bear it who is conscious of his own innocence. I am ready to unravel and unfold everything." His pleadings fell upon unwilling ears. The evil results of his reign were too widespread for sympathy to reach him. His kingdom was swept away, the crown fell from his brow, his ill-gotten gains were wrested from him, and George Hudson, upon whose "yea" or "nay" fortunes once hung, died at last in abject poverty.



CHAPTER X.

A Spirited Policy—London and Suburban Extensions—Portsmouth Schemes—From Salisbury to the Land's End—Broad *versus* Narrow Gauge.

Of the many South Western schemes promoted during the mania, by far the greater number were projected in order to preserve their territory from attacks by speculators and rival companies, with whom it became a favourite battle-field. The directors acted very cautiously until the year 1846, when, yielding to the taunts of shareholders, they abandoned their "sluggish policy" for one more in unison with the spirit of the times. This change was received by the shareholders with acclamation, and at a meeting held in November of the year named, they authorised the directors to embark in extensions involving nearly $7\frac{1}{2}$ millions of money. Their applications to Parliament were generally successful, whilst with the public the line was popular, consequent upon a reduction of rates and fares to a figure unheard of before. This pleasing state of affairs, added to a good dividend, was quite enough to justify the directors in closing a half-yearly report with the following paragraph :—"The directors feel called upon, after a mature review, and consideration of all the circumstances affecting the present position and future prospects of the South Western Company, to express a very decided opinion that its affairs were never at any former period in a condition so promising ; and they feel confident that time, and perseverance in the course which the proprietors have commenced with so much spirit, are alone necessary to prove the correctness of this opinion." A few months later the crash came, transforming their self-satisfaction into a feeling of intense anxiety, and compelling a speedy abandon-

ment of that course which they had “commenced with so much spirit.”

The numerous lines proposed may, with the exception of one or two minor branches, be divided into three divisions, viz.:—those affecting the London and suburban district, the Portsmouth lines, and those projected from Basingstoke westward. The most important railway near London to which those days of excitement gave birth, was one designed in 1844, when no less than four distinct applications were made to the South Western directors for support in making a line from Richmond to Nine Elms, and thence onward to Waterloo Bridge. Richmond, then as now, was a favourite haunt of Londoners, and its traffic by road was sufficient to keep 98 omnibuses going daily. Before a bill was presented to Parliament, the South Western adopted that portion of the scheme from Nine Elms to Waterloo Bridge, and took a lease of the remainder. In Parliament much opposition was met with, but after a protracted inquiry the committee, who had gone over the route from Nine Elms to Waterloo, passed the Bill and it received Royal assent in 1845. An extension from Richmond to Staines and Windsor next appeared, promoted by an independent company, but so great was the opposition in the district, that not until the utmost excitement prevailed, could the necessary support be obtained; then a loop line from Barnes through Hounslow, and branches to Egham, Wokingham, Chertsey, and Farnborough were added. Mr. Locke’s estimate of the cost of these combined schemes was £1,000,000, of which two-thirds were to be found by the South Western. This was not the first attempt made by South Western directors to reach Windsor, a line from Weybridge through Chertsey to the Royal Borough, having been proposed in 1844, in opposition to a Great Western scheme by way of West Drayton and Staines. These Bills were passed in 1847, and notice of a further extension to Slough given, but the latter was by

arrangement abandoned, the Great Western making a branch from Slough to Windsor, and the South Western obtaining permission to cross the Park and build a station in Windsor, a privilege till then denied them.

On July 25th, 1846, twelve months after Parliamentary sanction had been given, the Richmond railway was publicly opened, becoming South Western property in the same year. Its construction cost only £170,000, the original estimate being £260,000, thus furnishing another proof of the economical way in which Mr. Locke executed his work. On the day of opening a train of sixteen carriages conveyed the directors and their friends from Nine Elms to Richmond, receiving a hearty welcome all along the line of route, and culminating in a great demonstration at Richmond. A brass band played the National Anthem as the train ran into the station, a small park of artillery fired salutes from the beautiful ait below the bridge, the Lord Mayor, accompanied by a numerous party, came up in his barge, and a dinner, followed by a ball, was given at the Castle Hotel to about 300 ladies and gentlemen. The traffic exceeded the directors' most sanguine expectations, upwards of 100,000 passengers using it within two months after its opening.

Shortly after the Waterloo Bridge extension had been passed, a further advance into the Metropolis was decided upon, and a line to London Bridge was accordingly sought, and obtained in the year 1846. At the same time branches to Hampton Court; Chertsey from Weybridge; and Farnham and Alton *viâ* Guildford, were passed, whilst an unsuccessful attempt to reach Epsom was made for a second, or rather third time, a scheme having been abandoned in 1844, in deference to the opinion of the Board of Trade. The South Western also proposed a branch to Watford, to open up a direct north and south communication, but this project never reached Parliament.

Upon the outbreak of the mania, the Direct Portsmouth

Atmospheric scheme, being a continuation of the Croydon railway, was revived, compelling a rival Guildford, Chichester and Portsmouth Company, with branches to Petersfield and Portsmouth Dockyard, to be started by the South Western. An arrangement was at the same time made with the Brighton Company, who were then on bad terms with the Croydon line, to become half owners of their Chichester and Portsmouth extension, passed in the previous session. Only those small portions of the South Western scheme between Guildford and Godalming, and between Portsmouth and Fareham were sanctioned by Parliament, their rivals obtaining all they asked. Meanwhile the Brighton Company made peace and effected a union with the Croydon Company, who "had a tail in the Direct Portsmouth line." This amalgamation led to a breach in the good relations till then existing between the South Western and Brighton Companies, affecting, as it did, an agreement of "mutual protection" entered into early in 1845. At that date the South Western had purchased an iron tramway, running from Wandsworth to Croydon, intending, by its agency, to effect a junction with the Croydon and Brighton lines; this tramway they sold to the latter company, and agreed to give them running powers from Wandsworth to Nine Elms and Waterloo. A further agreement executed to defeat their common enemy, the Atmospheric, provided that a Guildford and Chichester railway was to be promoted by the South Western, and supported by the Brighton, the former undertaking not to promote, or sanction any line east of the proposed railway, except an Epsom branch; while on the other hand the Brighton agreed not to make, or aid in making, any line west of their railway, except a line to Horsham, or any branch not exceeding ten miles. When the Brighton became connected, through the Croydon line, with the Atmospheric scheme, they found this agreement hamper their action with regard to an amalgamation. All sorts of difficulties and complaints were started in consequence, and among other things it was argued that the London Bridge extension was a breach

of the agreement, being east of the South Western line. They also demanded the insertion of a clause in a Bill, then about to be introduced, to fix the toll which would be payable by them from Wandsworth to Waterloo, and to give them by statute law rights in the Waterloo Station. This the South Western refused to sanction, and a break up of the joint committee, which had been sitting for weeks to regulate matters connected with the Chichester and Portsmouth extension, followed. Notices were then given by the South Western of application to Parliament for another line to Portsmouth, a manœuvre which brought the Brighton round, and they agreed to an equal ownership of the Atmospheric line by the two companies, and "a general co-operation by them for supplying the public wants throughout the country intermediate between their respective trunk lines." Such was the position of affairs when the panic came and scattered their well laid schemes to the wind.

Although a Great Western broad guage line from Reading to Basingstoke had, in accordance with the absurd ideas of the Board of Trade, been granted, the South Western directors did not give up entirely an idea of providing direct and unbroken communication between the Midland and Northern districts and the Southern coast. They fully recognised, they said, the importance of forming a junction with the lines centreing at Oxford "in conformity with the views of the Government," but were deterred from action by the vast amount of works which it appeared to them absolutely necessary that the Company should promote or assist in Parliament. In the meanwhile several schemes for effecting somewhat similar objects were started, a Manchester and Southampton line among the number. To keep out this, a branch from Romsey to Redbridge was proposed, but Parliament rejected it, and the Manchester line was subsequently thrown out by the Lords. The next session saw two Manchester and Southampton Bills presented. Against

these the South Western asked for power to purchase the Andover and Redbridge Canal and convert it into a railway. Parliament granted their request and arrangements were then made to give the Manchester and Southampton promoters running powers over it, in the event of their obtaining an Act in the following session. But alas ! in 1848 no one could be found possessed of sufficient assurance to mention, much less present, such a Bill in Parliament.

Among the minor measures promoted successfully were branches to Lymington and Weymouth from the Dorset Line. The last named had met with great opposition at the hands of Southampton people, who applied for injunction after injunction to restrain the Company from carrying the line through their town. They appeared to labour under the delusion that a terminus at Southampton West would be of greater benefit to them than a junction, as passengers would, in the former case, be compelled to walk or drive from one station to another to the advantage of carriage proprietors and tradesmen generally. Selfish interests were not, however, allowed to stand in the way of public convenience, and on June 7th, 1847, the Dorchester line was opened. Trains had been advertised to commence running over it a week before, but the Southampton tunnel—as though in league with local hostility—fell in, thus causing a week's delay. Beyond a banquet at Ringwood, under the presidency of Mr. Castleman, who had stuck to his "Corkscrew" despite bad report, ridicule and abuse, there was no public demonstration.

The "adventurous spirit of the times" soon put an end to all arrangements respecting a division of territory west of Basingstoke, and an obstinate and costly struggle commenced between the South Western and Great Western Companies. Impressed by "the great importance of saving distance between Salisbury and London, and the conviction that the line must become hereafter one of no ordinary traffic," the former Company projected a railway from Basingstoke to

Salisbury in 1844, three years before that *viâ* Bishopstoke was opened. To this their rivals objected, but upon appeal to the Board of Trade a Bill was allowed to be presented. Then the Great Western in violation, Mr. Chaplin said, of their agreement, proposed an Exeter extension. The extensive powers of the Board of Trade were now upon the wane, and their idiotic awards, which had caused useless expense and inconvenience to the public at large, gave rise to a formidable agitation. It was urged that although chiefs of the Department might be blameless, yet their decisions were coloured by opinions of permanent officials, who probably had some interest in the points at issue. Finally Sir Robert Peel unexpectedly withdrew his powerful support, and thus pressed on all sides, the much abused Board was overthrown. In the unavoidable absence of support from that quarter, nothing, according to the South Western Chairman, remained but "to occupy in a spirited manner the whole district unprovided with railway facilities." Mr. Chaplin further observed, "we have already got a line to Salisbury, and on what principle we are to be shut out of the remaining district to Exeter, it is hard to conceive." Independent companies, supported by the South Western, who agreed to provide one-fourth of the necessary capital, accordingly promoted lines from Salisbury to Yeovil, and from Exeter to Yeovil and Dorchester. A "Devon and Cornwall Central Railway," with whom the South Western had been in communication two years before, was also included in this arrangement. The latter project comprised lines from Exeter to Falmouth and Penzance, with branches to Bodmin and St. Austell. These comprehensive schemes roused the whole West to enthusiasm. Immense petitions were signed, and large meetings held in support of the "Great Trunk Line." At a meeting convened by the Mayor of Exeter, upon the requisition of 4000 householders, it was stated that a petition bearing the signatures of 50,000 Cornishmen would be presented to Parliament. The famous "battle of the guages" had just commenced; it may almost

be said the West saw a first clash of arms between the rival plans, which, after raging for months in the form of a pamphlet war, was continued before a Parliamentary Commission. By that body Mr. Brunel and his allies were quickly overthrown. Upon the respective merits of the gauges there was naturally much discussion in the district. Yeovil people objected to a branch line, and, in consequence, advocated the broad gauge. It was in this town that an orator loftily declared "he stood on the broad gauge of truth and public good, and could not be opposed but on the narrow gauge of selfishness and interest."

In Parliament the Cornwall scheme was rejected for non-compliance with standing orders, but the Salisbury, Yeovil and Exeter group was referred to a Select Committee, of which Mr. Becket Denison was chairman. Mr., subsequently Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, appeared as counsel for the narrow gauge, and, on behalf of his clients, refused a compromise thrown out by the chairman, that the proposed line from Yeovil to Exeter might be constructed for both broad and narrow gauge. The Great Western scheme was at length thrown out and the narrow gauge passed, but in the Lords a committee declared that, although railway communication was greatly needed in the district, they did not consider it expedient to pass the Bills as they were then shaped.

Upon their defeat both interests immediately proceeded to frame more formidable and comprehensive schemes for presentation to Parliament in the Session of 1847. The South Western adopted the Salisbury and Yeovil project, to which they added branches to Shaftesbury, and Wincanton, with a cross country line from Wimborne, through Blandford, Sturminster, and Wincanton, to Bruton. The Exeter Yeovil and Dorchester Company, assisted as before by the South Western, also added branches to Sidmouth and Lyme Regis. An Exmouth branch, aided by a South Western subscription, had been passed in the previous session. West of Exeter

even more extensive lines were proposed, and these were undertaken solely by the Company, the original promoters retiring in their favour. The direct line to Truro was shortened and improved; branches were thrown out to St. Austell, St. Columb, Padstow and Plymouth, and from Okehampton to the Taw Vale—now North Devon—Railway. The Bodmin and Wadebridge line was purchased, shares were taken in a scheme then on foot for improving Sutton Pool Harbour (Plymouth); an agreement was made with the Taw Vale Company to find one-fourth of their capital, and to take a perpetual lease of their railway and works. Mr. Locke's energy and engineering skill were employed on these extensive schemes, not only in his official capacity, but as one of the principal promoters. He was rewarded by the people of Honiton, who elected him as their parliamentary representative. At the same time Mr. Chaplin took his seat for Salisbury, to which town the branch from Bishopstoke was opened on March 22nd, 1847.

The struggle in Parliament completely put that of the previous session into the shade, so numerous were the witnesses produced, and so regardless of expense were the contending forces. For a Bill to pass the ordeal of Standing Orders was no easy matter, and it sometimes happened that a comma turned upside down, or a letter misplaced was sufficient to condemn a whole scheme. The Cornwall lines were again subject to a scrutiny of this kind, and in addition several influential memorials were presented against them. By mutual consent these were referred to the examination of independent engineers, who conducted an inquiry on the ground. Their decision was adverse to the scheme, which was thus prevented from consideration by Parliament on its merits. For this the South Western took revenge by opposing, successfully, the rival plans, and so keeping the district open.

East of Exeter they fared better, but it was a long and obstinate struggle before the House of Commons committee. Each point being vigorously contested, a month was occupied

in discussing the narrow gauge schemes alone, and when the Great Western case was finished the committee had completed their fiftieth sitting. Mr. Cockburn took three days to reply, and then a decision in favour of the South Western was given.

At Salisbury, pealing of bells and firing of cannon announced the broad gauge defeat, and from that city to Exeter great joy was manifest at the result. Final victory was, however, to be again delayed. A ministerial crisis appeared: Parliament was dissolved: the unlucky Bill could not be sent to the House of Lords, and it again fell through.



CHAPTER XI.

A Bad Time—Quarrelsome Shareholders—The Waterloo and other Extensions Opened—The Chairman on the Defensive—Abandoned Spoils.

After the storm came a calm! After the mania came a re-action! Shareholders no longer jeered at directors' "sluggish policy" or urged them to provide every village with a railway: on the contrary they raised a cry of "close the capital account," and tried their hardest to withhold even profitable expenditure. Commercial confidence had been shaken to its very foundation by the panic, and the threatening aspect of affairs at home and abroad served to intensify the prevailing uneasiness. There were troubles in India and Ireland. In Paris there was a revolution. The Pope fled from Rome. There was a tumult in London, and general distress prevailed in the provinces. That "mysterious, but universal sickness of a single root," which Lord Beaconsfield tells us in *Endymion* "changed the history of the world"—the potato disease—appeared, and to crown it all, the government deemed additional taxation absolutely necessary. To those entrusted with the management of extensive lines of railway it was a time of great and well nigh overwhelming responsibility.

In the session of 1848 South Western measures were limited to the smallest compass, only those Bills postponed on account of the dissolution—which after a victory so costly, but so complete, they could not well throw over—were re-introduced. Parliament had ordered that companies should prove their ability to proceed with lines before submitting a Bill to the House. Mr. Chaplin had one or two interviews with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and a meeting of



WATERLOO STATION AND ENGINE HOUSE, 1848.

shareholders was held to confirm the directors' proposals, which were to apply again for the Salisbury and Exeter lines and the Blandford branch. These projects were not carried unanimously, a small band of opponents led by Mr. Alexander Hoyes, a shrewd business man, and Mr. Puncher, whose name fitted him like a glove, voting against them. In moving an amendment Mr. Hoyes declared that the directors crammed the western extension down the shareholders' throats, and the only results were the election of Mr. Chaplin as M.P. for Salisbury, and Mr. Locke as M.P. for Honiton. Permission having been obtained to proceed with the schemes, a very influential meeting was held at Shaftesbury, every landowner of note, with one exception, attending, Mr. Chaplin and Mr. Locke appearing on behalf of the South Western. Their opponents appeared to be disheartened, for no effort was made to stop the Bills in the Commons. Some resistance was anticipated in the last stage, but after an inquiry of five days their lordships came to a favourable decision and the Salisbury and Yeovil, and Exeter and Yeovil Bills received Royal assent on July 22nd, 1848. At the same time Acts for amalgamating the Dorset line with the South Western, and authorizing the latter to work steam boats for fourteen years between Southampton and France and the Channel Islands were passed.

As the monetary pressure and general distress exhibited no signs of improvement, the directors pledged themselves to suspend operations on the London Bridge extension, the Andover and Southampton, and Dorsetshire branches, and to make no call for Western lines till the following year. Meanwhile several important lines were opened for traffic, the Waterloo extension on July 11th among the number. This line cost about £900,000. "We have placed on the railway" the chairman stated, "between Nine Elms and Waterloo four distinct lines of rails, in order that we may have no trouble or inconvenience in future in the traffic; and also, that whatever may be the adventurous schemes of the age in future, whatever

may be the probability of introducing lines South of London, we may not only have ample means of conducting our traffic, be it what it may, but of ability to let others come and hire, that we may benefit by their enterprise and industry on our property." The Waterloo station was built upon ground formerly occupied by hay stalls and cow yards and by dung heaps and similar nuisances.

On February 14th the Weybridge and Chertsey line was opened: on August 22nd a train service commenced between Richmond and Datchet: on September 1st the line from Fareham to Cosham was brought into use, and a month later saw trains running direct to Portsmouth.

In 1849 other branches were completed: passengers on pleasure bent being first conveyed to Hampton Court in February of that year. For some time no engines were used upon that branch, and the trains were hauled to and from the junction by horses. On August 22nd the loop line from Barnes to Smallberry Green was brought into use; that portion from Smallberry Green to Hounslow being opened on February 1st, 1850. In October, Godalming, and the hop growing district of Farnham first heard the railway whistle. On December 1st Windsor station was opened.

Mr. Chaplin had anything but a pleasant duty to perform in presiding over the general meeting of shareholders, held on August 18th, 1849. He had to tell of a dividend reduced from 9 to $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., caused by £2,814,033 worth of additional stock, raised during the mania, participating for the first time in a dividend. The shareholders were consequently in no amiable mood, although their chairman announced a general reduction in salaries and wages throughout the entire establishment, and informed them that the directors would take nothing for their services. There had been a great uproar at the previous meeting upon a proposal to lease the South Western steam boats at 5 per cent. upon the share capital of that company. The directors were upheld at a poll demanded upon the question, but Mr. Puncher and other

kindred spirits were by no means pleased, and embraced the first opportunity to continue a disturbance. They wanted to blame someone for their poor dividend, and commenced an experiment on the chairman. How much of a certain 7 per cent. preference stock did he hold? they asked, and when a satisfactory answer came to that question, Mr. Puncher favoured his brother proprietors with a few observations. There was the "pass system which directors' friends found so convenient." "Oh! nonsense," interrupted Mr. Chaplin, "the directors have no friends." Then Mr. Puncher was not satisfied with the reduction of wages. There were too many servants employed, and too many carriages running in each train. He had been down to Farnham and seen "a long train with only one passenger to go by it—a fat old lady, who enjoyed the luxury of having five porters to assist her into the carriage." The meeting over, rumours were circulated that Mr. Chaplin's connection with the carrying firm of Chaplin & Horne was incompatible with his position as chairman: that he held more than his share of 7 per cent. preference stock, and that he had not paid up his calls. All this, despite the fact that auditors (Mr. Hoyes of Bitterne Grove, Southampton, and Mr. Close of Nottingham) had been appointed in the previous year. Mr. Chaplin issued an address defending himself against these charges of "dishonest and corrupt conduct." He traced his connection with the Company's affairs from the first, stating the capital—about a quarter of a million—held by him in the undertaking and projects connected with it, and said that if, instead of quarrelling among themselves and making charges or casting imputations, which had no justification in fact or fairness, they devoted themselves to the careful working and development of their property there was yet prosperity in store for them. During the trying years of 1847-8 he had lent the Company £48,000, at $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., and had paid for new shares to the amount of £108,000, taking only his proper proportion. It was true that some calls had not been met, caused by his inability to realize,

without inordinate sacrifice, £40,000 worth of stock in the Paris and Rouen railway, then much depressed by the revolution in Paris. A special general meeting of the proprietors was called, and Mr. Chaplin moved the appointment of a committee "to investigate the charges and statements made against the integrity of the directors." The committee reported that they found much to blame and regret, and that wrong as many transactions decidedly were, Mr. Chaplin made the interests and prosperity of the Company his first object, and from a long and constant connection, considered his own affairs identified with those of the South Western. The Chairman was again elected without a dissentient voice, and the Earl of Morley and Mr. Ker-Seymer, who had vacated their seats, were requested to continue their services.

While this squabble was proceeding the parliamentary powers obtained at so much cost and energy, and over which shareholders had rejoiced, grumbled and finally quarrelled, were fast expiring. The directors called a meeting to decide upon a course of action, when so marked was the opposition to a creation of further liabilities, and so obvious the utter impossibility of raising capital, that no way was open but an abandonment of all lines in abeyance. Thus the important London Bridge line, where much property had been purchased, and the Western extensions, to obtain which cost £400,000, were abandoned. The other branches, excepting that to Alton, were also given up, and west of Salisbury the only property to show for the excessive cost of parliamentary powers were some shares in the North Devon and Sutton Harbour Companies, and the ownership of a short mineral line from Bodmin to Wadebridge.

CHAPTER XII.

The Electric Telegraph—Mechanical Improvements—Competency of the Staff—New Secretaries—The Traffic Manager Emigrates—Arrival of Mr. Scott.

The growth of the South Western from a trunk line of 77 miles to a system embracing 242 miles of railway, naturally brought about a corresponding change in the Company's staff and stock. Necessity, it is said, is the mother of invention, and despite the discouraging influence stringent economy presented to all progress for some years after the mania, many initial hindrances to safe and efficient management had, in a space of twelve years, been removed by the help of science. First and foremost came the electric telegraph, with its wondrous power of flashing intelligence from station to station. As early as 1844 experiments were made between Nine Elms and Wimbledon on Bain's principle, but with only partial success. Then Messrs. Cook and Wheatstone came forward with an invention which they held would answer every requirement. The Government were at the time anxious to improve telegraphic communication between the Admiralty and Portsmouth Dockyard, then carried on by means of signals from hill to hill. Messrs. Cook and Wheatstone undertook a contract for 21 years, at £1,500 a year, to provide an electric telegraph between the points named; they entered into negotiation with the South Western to give them a line of way, and eventually an arrangement was come to by which the Company found half the necessary capital, and took half the profits. When completed, in 1845, it was the longest and most important line of electric telegraph established in England. South Western authorities could scarcely have foreseen the important influence this grand discovery was destined to bear upon the

future development and working of their traffic—a discovery supported by them simply with a view to profit arising out of the Government contract, and the few private telegrams they expected to obtain—but its all important usefulness in the economy of a railway forced itself upon their attention, and additional wires were soon run up for the Company's own business between the principal stations.

The locomotive department, where every detail was open to improvement, presented a fine and inexhaustible field for scientific study. During Mr. Gooch's tenure of office some advancement was made, and when that inventive genius, Mr. Joseph Beattie, succeeded him in 1850 as locomotive superintendent, efforts in the direction of efficiency were re-doubled. Engines of greater weight, strength and speed took the place of original stock, and while these were being built, Mr. Beattie turned his attention to the task of reducing the cost of manufacturing engine coke. His process proved very successful, and subsequently coal in a raw state was used to feed the engine fires.

Side by side with mechanical progress and efficiency marched the Company's human agents. In the place of employés ignorant of even the elementary principles of railway work, upon whom the Company were in their early days dependent, a new class of men sprang up—men, so to speak, to the manner born. They entered the service in their youth, growing with the traffic; able and competent, as new lines opened, to take important positions and conduct the Company's business with credit and satisfaction. Naturally in a new industry, different, and sometimes antagonistic classes of society were drawn together, and twenty years after the line opened many traces of this diversity still existed. In no grade was it more noticeable than in that of station master. At one station a man with the education and address of a gentleman, one who took his place in the best society of the neighbourhood, might be found; at another a rubicund visage and peculiar phraseology proclaimed the Company's chief officer

to have had, at some remote period, an intimate acquaintance with the fast becoming obsolete stage coach. Here might be seen a village shopkeeper in charge; there a broken-down farmer paced the platform. Time, ever remorseless, gradually weeded out these evidences of an age when railways were not, planting in their places professed railway men, who had worked their way up in the service.

Although the staff advanced in competency and general intelligence, it cannot, unfortunately, be said that they met with much encouragement during the screwing economy period forced upon the directors by commercial depression. True, that from 1849 the Company gave £150 per annum to the South Western Friendly Society, and, in 1851, a sum of £1,300 was divided among the staff in bonuses, for extra exertions in conducting the Great Exhibition traffic; but it took many years to bring back the old salaries and wages, and to efface the bad impressions created by a cutting down policy. The amount of £1,300, be it stated, was not shared in by the chief officers, they had received consolation for reduced salaries in a more gratifying and substantial manner. In a half yearly balance sheet for 1850 a paragraph appeared, stating, that in the directors' opinion, it would be advantageous to the Company for a portion of the executive officers' salaries to vary with the net revenue of the railway; and in subsequent reports, under the heading, "Commission to Executive," amounts varying from £600 to upwards of £2,000 were inserted.

Liberal as commission arrangements were, they do not appear to have been conducive to a settled and contented staff of officers, there being many changes at a time when the Company were most in want of reliable men. Mr. P. Laurentz Campbell, the secretary, died in 1848, after a short but faithful service of three years. His advice and experience had been of great value to the Company in their dealings with the Board of Trade, so valuable that Mr. Chaplin proposed a grant of £1,000 to his widow; but shareholders were not then in a humour to vote hard cash to anyone but themselves,

and as loud murmurs greeted the proposition it was reluctantly withdrawn. Mr. Campbell was buried in the Garrison Church of Portsmouth, a town in which he took great interest, using his utmost endeavours on behalf of South Western projects in that direction. It is melancholy to relate, in connection with his Portsmouth advocacy, how he became a pioneer of the railway he had laboured to introduce to that town—the first South Western train running into Portsmouth station conveying his dead body. After Mr. Campbell's death new secretaries followed thick and fast; Mr. Wyndham Harding succeeded him, but he only held the position four years; Mr. A. Bulkley took his place in 1852, and the following year saw Mr. Crombie in the secretary's chair.

In 1852 an unexpected change took place in the management of the traffic department. Mr. Stovin, in addition to other duties, conducted the goods traffic, and this had been in a very unsatisfactory state for several years; shareholders anxiously inquired at each meeting if some improvement could not be made, and at length a committee was appointed to report upon the question. Their decision really amounted to an approval of the system in vogue, and in consequence nothing was done. Mr. Stovin, according to a statement made at the next half-yearly general meeting, had become somewhat deranged in health and mind, and his books were in a state of confusion. He was granted three weeks holiday to recruit, but in the exercise of a wise discretion, and without any preliminary advertisement, he suddenly left England for America. Upon his accounts being examined a deficiency of about £3,000 was discovered. Indirectly the Company's loss exceeded this amount by some thousands, several carriers preferring claims against the Company, and one in the West of England became a bankrupt, being deep in the Company's debt. At about the same time, too, either on account of distress caused by reduced salaries or a prevailing epidemic of low morality, a cashier and one or two others victimized the Company to a considerable extent, and it is pretty certain

that with the system, or rather absence of system, of audit then prevailing, not one third of the total defalcations was ever discovered. These losses pressed heavily on the South Western, and some years elapsed before they could be finally disposed of.

Mr. Stovin's sudden departure caused great consternation at head-quarters, but a very different feeling animated the staff, who viewed the *contretemps* with no little satisfaction, the traffic manager being anything but a popular man. He was usually honoured (?) with the title of "Black Prince," but whether this arose on account of his black beard and dark complexion generally, or by reason of his overbearing, inconsistent and despotic character, is not quite clear. From his safe asylum beyond the seas he wrote indignantly denying that he had been guilty of appropriating any of the Company's property, but when Mr. Chaplin offered to pay his passage to England if he would come over and explain matters, he maintained a judicious silence.

The directors soon obtained another manager, in the person of Mr. Archibald Scott, who was described by the Chairman as "coming with great experience and a high character from several railways in Scotland, including the Edinburgh and Glasgow, the North British, and the Edinburgh, Perth and Dundee." At a meeting held on August 17th, 1852, the day on which Mr. Scott was to commence his duties, a shareholder, presumably with a vision of Mr. Stovin's flight before his eyes, wished to know in what amount the new manager was to be guaranteed, and who were the bondsmen. Mr. Chaplin, in replying, observed, amidst laughter, that having been guarantee for Mr. Stovin to the tune of £500, he would take particular notice that he did not become bondsman for anyone again.

One of the earliest and most important results of Mr. Scott's management, was an alteration in the principle under which the goods traffic was conducted. Instead of entrusting carriers with so large a share in its management, the Company

became common carriers themselves and undertook the collection and delivery of goods and parcels. In addition to being passenger superintendent, Mr. Godson had the supervision of all goods traffic, excepting the district between Southampton and Dorchester, which was in the hands of Mr. Watkins, superintendent at Southampton. Mr. Taylor acted as goods manager at Nine Elms until 1853, when Mr. Hedger took his place.

Prior to Mr. Scott's arrival, endeavours had been made to encourage travelling by the issue of season tickets ; and family tickets were also issued to the Dorsetshire coast during the summer months. Although improvements on original plans were apparent in almost every department, but little attention appears to have been paid to comfort at the stations, such edifices being as badly built and as meanly appointed as ever. At Portsmouth, for instance, in 1848 the station under the joint control of the South Western and Brighton Companies was a miserable structure. Its one narrow platform was planked : the booking office and waiting room were constructed of deal boards lined with canvas ; and every part of the station was of a like character.

CHAPTER XIII.

A Proposal from the West—Mr. Castleman's Amendment—Mr. Chaplin resigns—A Solemn Pledge broken—An Action for Libel against the *Times*, and a Verdict of Manslaughter against the Chairman—Mr. Chaplin returns to power.

After all the excitement of a fiercely contested Parliamentary campaign, and the exaggerated hopes engendered by unconditional and complete victory, leaders of public opinion in the Western Counties were by no means prepared to see the powers, which they had laboured so zealously to obtain, thrown to the winds. Finding that the South Western shareholders set their faces hard against any extension, a proposal was made to the Board in 1851, by landowners and other influential residents, offering to undertake the construction of a line from Salisbury to Exeter, on receiving an assurance of moderate assistance from the Company. The directors decided that any subscription of capital toward such an object was altogether out of the question, but they agreed to work the line at 50 per cent. of the receipts. At the same time, residents on the abandoned Basingstoke and Salisbury line became restless, and gave notice of application to Parliament for powers to take over the South Western Company's unfinished works between Basingstoke and Salisbury, and make the line themselves. This roused the Company to action, and it was decided to push on the work without delay, but to construct a single instead of a double line. When these questions came before a special meeting of the shareholders for confirmation, affairs took an altogether unexpected turn, and the decision arrived at was within an ace of upsetting the whole course of South Western history. Mr. Castleman, ever on the look-out for an opportunity to improve and utilize the Dorchester line, moved an amendment in opposition to the directors—"That a Committee

be now appointed, of the shareholders, to consider and examine into the proposal of the Central and Coast schemes, and that the meeting be adjourned to receive their report." Extraordinary to relate, this amendment was carried, and accordingly, a week later, the Committee, of which Mr. Castleman was a member, submitted a report strongly in favour of extending the Dorchester line to Exeter, in preference to the Central scheme. Mr. Chaplin and other directors, who had devoted themselves to the Salisbury and Yeovil line, naturally tried their hardest to prevent so radical a change in South Western policy. A poll was demanded, and on the last day of the year 1851 it was declared; Mr. Castleman obtaining a majority of 970 votes, the numbers in his favour being 4,095, as against 3,125.

Through their change of policy the shareholders lost the services of the Earl of Morley as deputy-chairman. Mr. Chaplin remained at the head of affairs and tried to turn the tables upon the coast party, who were gaining ground in the directorate. In August 1852 a special meeting resolved "that it is very important to the interests of this Company that the original design of an extension line from Salisbury to Exeter should be carried out without delay, and that the question shall go back to the directors to report thereon to a special meeting in September." A committee appointed to consider the question, reported in favour of the Central scheme, and the meeting was adjourned for a month. Great preparations were made by both sides, the unusual course being adopted of issuing a circular signed by the Secretary of the Company, giving the names of directors who were in favour of the Central Line, and of those who opposed it. After considerable discussion the question was put "For the line to Exeter," and "Against the line to Exeter," the latter obtaining a majority. A poll was demanded, and then 12,389 votes were given in favour of the extension, and 12,610 against it. This was followed by the resignation of Mr. Chaplin as chairman, after holding that office for

ten years. At the time of his retirement notice had been given of an intention to apply to Parliament for powers to amalgamate the South Western and Brighton Companies, but like a much more ambitious scheme proposed three years before for the amalgamation of the North Western, the Great Western and the South Western, it quickly collapsed.

The Hon. Francis Scott succeeded to the anything but thankful office of chairman, with Mr. Hibbert as deputy, and he was not long in discovering that to fill the office successfully involved almost as much statesmanship and diplomatic skill as the conduct of the affairs of a great nation. The victory of Mr. Castleman's division was very shortlived ; it commenced under inauspicious circumstances and ended in the most tremendous row known to railway history. In 1853 the Great Western and Bristol and Exeter Companies projected a Devon and Dorset broad gauge line, against which the South Western lodged a petition. During the proceedings the Hon. F. Scott gave Parliament a pledge, that if they rejected the Broad Gauge Bill the South Western would make a double line from Dorchester to Exeter. On these conditions the Devon and Dorset line was thrown out, and the chairman's pledge was subsequently approved at a meeting of shareholders called for the purpose. But little notice appears to have been taken of the serious responsibility involved in this pledge until the directors advertised their intention to apply for parliamentary powers ; then, in consequence of a dear money market, a great outcry was raised. Mr. Snell at the head of a committee of shareholders, and Mr. Mortimer, a director, contended that the directors obtained authority to make the pledge under false representations, and that instead of the Dorset line yielding a profit of $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. as stated by them, a loss of £16,000 per annum was incurred thereon. Letters appeared in the papers declaring that the meeting sanctioning an extension from Dorchester was "packed." Indignant answers to these accusations, and a long leader in the *Times*, denouncing the directors, heralded the

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coming storm. In their report the directors averred that the question whether the Company should or should not carry out the line was not open to discussion, that a solemn engagement to go to Parliament had been entered into, and that it would be alike politic and just to fulfil it. The meeting was held on November 15th, 1853, at Hawkstone Hall, Waterloo Road. The proceedings were uproarious from the commencement; shareholders hissed and groaned, shouted and raved at each other for upwards of five hours, till at last the long suffering chairman lost his temper, and told them they certainly showed themselves eminently qualified to conduct a large mercantile concern! In his opening speech he argued as well as the systematic interruptions would permit, that only one honourable course remained open, and that was to plead the altered state of the times, and to decide whether the undertaking could be so varied as to carry it out substantially in a manner less burdensome to the Company than the exact and literal fulfilment might then occasion. How could he meet his colleagues in the House of Commons, he pleaded, if this solemn pledge were broken? "Tell them" roared Mr. Dickinson in reply, "that the captain tried to carry the ship on a shoal of rocks, and the crew mutinied and prevented him." This sally provoked great cheering. A shareholder asked where the money was to come from to make the line? "Borrow it," said the chairman. "But," retorted his questioner (referring to events then happening in the East, which ultimately lead to the Crimean War) "is the booming of cannon on the Danube, or the presence of the allied fleets in the Dardanelles indicative of cheap money?" Serjeant Gaselee, who was received with mingled cheers and groans, observed that he cared little whether he was heard or not, but he was unwilling that anyone should be allowed to say that the shareholders were unanimous on the question, or that any man should be permitted to slander him before a Committee of the House of Commons. When another committee sat he would insist on being himself examined, and then he would take care to reveal the horrors of

the "charnel house." He would have it pointed out how the people who were about to contract for the line sent in their proxies, how lawyers, engineers and contractors voted, and how it was thus possible to carry out a line in the very teeth of a minority whose interests were deeply concerned. It appears that the engineer for the Western line had employed persons to canvass for votes in favour of the extension. As may be imagined, Mr. Puncher was quite in his element at this meeting. "I have received as much as $9\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and now the dividend is down to 3" he wailed. He denounced the parliamentary contests of the directors, and said, in point of fact they were more for the purpose of putting money into the pockets of Bircham & Co. than for the benefit of the railway. Mr. Bircham attempted several times to obtain a hearing in order to repudiate this insinuation, which was without a shadow of foundation, but his presence was the signal for greater uproar than ever, and Mr. Beattie, a shareholder, narrowly escaped personal injury for daring to rise to order. A poll was taken on the following Saturday, when similar scenes were enacted, and upon the directors being found in a minority the cheering was tremendous. The chairman abruptly closed the meeting, but Serjeant Gaselee immediately took the chair and passed resolutions declaring it necessary to reconstruct the board of directors, and to pay all expenses of opposing their policy out of the Company's funds. On this occasion Mr. Puncher fairly surpassed himself,—“The only part of the chairman's speech which gives me satisfaction” he said “is his threat of resigning, and I hope he will quickly carry it into execution. With all respect for the private character of the directors, I look upon them as a nest of scorpions and the sooner we get rid of them the better.” When the pledge was given the market value of South Western capital became depreciated to the extent of nearly three quarters of a million, but after this meeting shares rose rapidly.

Upon such a remarkable manifestation of feeling, and the passing of resolutions virtually breaking faith with Parliament,

the chairman and four of his colleagues resigned. A parlous time it certainly was when the Hon. Francis Scott undertook a leading part in South Western management, and buffeted as railway directors frequently are, no one ever met with less encouragement in the office of chairman than he did. In addition to the serious consequences likely to follow a breach of faith with Parliament, he had the misfortune, when riding upon a new engine on its trial trip, to run over and kill an employé. A coroner's jury promptly returned a verdict of manslaughter against him, and it was not until the grand jury at the assizes threw out the charge that all anxiety on this score was removed. He subsequently became entangled in an action for libel against the *Times*, whose leading articles, written before and after the Hawkstone Hall meeting, were very hostile to the directors. They were couched in such strong terms that the chairman, considering them to have passed the bounds of fair criticism, prosecuted Mr. Harrison, the printer, for libel. Fortune, till then dead against him, became more kind and a verdict was given in his favour. To have involved a company in a dispute with Parliament, to be indicted for manslaughter, to become engaged in an action for libel against the most powerful journal in the world, and by way of adding insult to injury, to be described by a shareholder as one of a "nest of scorpions," does not, fortunately for the fraternity, come within the experience of every railway chairman; yet, during his short career of twelve months, such an ordeal fell to the lot of the Hon. F. Scott. For all this, a resolution, supported by Mr. Serjeant Gaselee, was passed at the next half-yearly meeting, expressing regret at his retirement, and thanking him and his brother directors for their services.

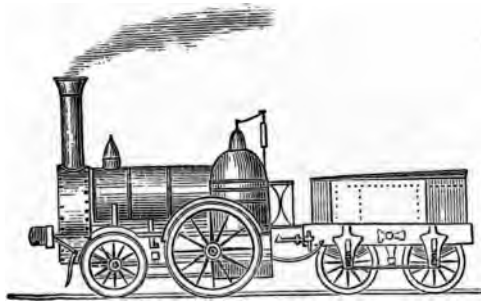
Parliament first took notice of the broken pledge in 1855, when a Bill was introduced dealing with the Basingstoke and Salisbury line, a portion of which from Basingstoke to Andover had been opened on July 3rd, 1854. The committee, to whom the Bill was referred, stated their regret that no

provision was to be found for redeeming the pledge given in 1853, and that they would, in the absence of any satisfactory proposal being made, insert a clause binding the company to carry out fully the terms of that pledge "on pain of the company's dividends being stopped." Upon receiving this emphatic minute the directors called a special meeting of the proprietors, and asked that the question might be left in their hands. "You will readily understand," said the chairman, "that the duty of dealing with it is not an enviable one, nor such as the board might not be very desirous of shifting the responsibility of meeting. But this would, in their opinion, be inconsistent with their duty; and I have therefore to say, on their behalf, that if you think fit to leave the further management of the pending Bill in our hands, it will be our endeavour to bring things to such a close as will be consistent with the best interests of the Company. We shall take care on the one hand, to express the feeling of regret entertained by the proprietors (which we believe to be unanimous), that this Company should have given, and should be unable to perform the pledge of 1853; and we shall, on the other, state our firm conviction that to effect the object then contemplated is now impossible. Beyond this, it does not appear to be judicious that I should at present go, but the proprietors, supposing they leave the business in our hands, may be assured that we feel the gravity of the Company's position in all its bearings, and will do our best to retrieve it." The Commons were satisfied with the directors' explanations, but when the Bill reached the Lords, a committee inserted a clause binding the Company to proceed with the Western line in the following session. At the Wharnccliffe meeting, the shareholders refused to agree to this, but the Lords held that the Wharnccliffe order did not apply to the clause, which they retained, and by way of retaliation struck out the whole of the others, including a clause for raising funds, so that had the Bill been passed the Company would have been compelled to proceed without the necessary capital. The shareholders were thus

forced into compliance, and in the following session a Bill was passed enabling the Company to make a line from Exeter to Yeovil. Arrangements had been previously made with the Salisbury and Yeovil promoters to work their line. Parliamentary interference in South Western policy did not, however, end with a settlement of the Western extension, and as late as 1860, when the Company were promoting a line to Kingston, a petition from Dorsetshire was presented to the House of Lords complaining that the pledge had not been fully carried out, the doubling of the Dorset line being a part of the undertaking. Several leaders on both sides of the House took part in a discussion upon the third reading, and when pressed to a division the Bill was carried by a majority of *one* only.

When the chairman and his colleagues resigned, a regular scramble for seats took place, and the shareholders became divided into two opposite camps, calling themselves "extensionists," and "non-extensionists." To add to the melee, Mr. Puncher contested the election of Mr. Close, the retiring auditor, offering to undertake the duties of that office for nothing. The result of the poll, however, could scarcely have been flattering to his self esteem, for he only obtained 5,124 votes against 23,016 for Mr. Close. Candidates for the directorate not only stated their own qualifications for office but questioned the fitness of others. The Hon. Ralph Dutton was objected to by one section, as an extensionist of the worst sort, for had he not in times past advocated a line from Romsey to Cheltenham? Mr. Melville Portal and Captain Mangles were similarly charged, the one because he upheld the Basingstoke and Salisbury extension, the other on account of his brother being a member of the Portsmouth Atmospheric Board of Directors. It was generally understood that Sir William Heathcote would take the chair, and after much discussion the names of candidates were submitted to him with a request that he would select six from the list. He picked out three from each camp—Mr. Mortimer, Col. Henderson, (the two retiring

directors), the Hon. Ralph Dutton, Lieut.-Col. Luard, Captain Mangles and Mr. Hutchins. In addition to these, there were, at this crisis, six other gentlemen on the board:—Mr. Chaplin, Count Eyre, Captain Johnston, Mr. Serjeant Gaselee, Mr. H. C. Lacy and Mr. Matthew Uzielli. Sir William Heathcote declined office, and Mr. Chaplin was again unanimously elected chairman. For the vacant seat caused by Sir William Heathcote's retirement, two candidates appeared—Mr. Snell and Mr. Willcox of the Peninsular and Oriental Steamship Company's board. Mr. Snell obtained the greatest number of votes, but the votes given for Mr. Willcox represented the greatest amount of stock. It was contested by the latter that some of his opponents' votes were spurious. A scrutiny was demanded, and as neither candidate would give way, Mr. Chaplin refused to declare the poll. After a long discussion it was decided to refer the matter in dispute to the Marquis of Chandos, but that nobleman declined the reference. Mr. Snell thereupon threatened legal proceedings against the chairman to compel him to declare the poll, and he ultimately took his seat.



CHAPTER XIV.

**A New Portsmouth Direct Line—The Brighton Company Unreasonable—
The Battle of Havant—Ruinous Competition—Mutual Concessions.**

While the Company were busy arranging matters with Parliament for a Western extension, an important scheme was being developed on their south-eastern frontier. The Portsmouth Direct Atmospheric line, which had been preferred to the South Western counter project, had, like many a better scheme, spent an immense amount of capital in obtaining an Act, and being utterly unable to proceed, its Parliamentary powers were allowed to lapse. The following incident will throw great light upon the extravagant way in which the promoters of that line squandered their money :—a certain landowner on the route gave them his support upon the condition that he should be paid £20,000 for a portion of his land, whether they required it or not. They did not take his land, but he was nevertheless paid the £20,000. Upon the Direct Atmospheric proving abortive, another scheme somewhat similar, but minus the atmospheric principle, called the Portsmouth Direct, was started. The South Western and Brighton Companies opposed the line without success, and the first sod was turned at Buriton by Mr. Bonham Carter, on August 6th, 1853. The South Western tried their hardest to induce the Brighton to join them in working the line, proposing to absorb it into the two systems ; but the Brighton shareholders, like most shareholders at that time, were prejudiced against extensions and refused to agree. The promoters of the line then made arrangements with Mr. Brassey, their contractor, to work the line for a term of years ; but this did not meet the views of South Western directors, who called a meeting of shareholders to consider the advisability

of leasing the undertaking. Sanction was readily accorded by the proprietors, and the South Western took possession. Then the Brighton acted a dog-in-the-manger policy; they would not assist in working the line, yet they objected to the South Western doing so alone. Endeavours were made to arrange terms for running trains from the Direct line into Portsmouth, the right to use that portion of the joint line from Havant to Portsmouth being disputed by the Brighton. Mr. Harrison, engineer to the North Eastern Company, was appointed arbitrator and failed to effect a settlement.

The Company advertised the line to be opened on January 1st, 1859, and at the same time gave the Brighton notice that a goods train would be run over it into Portsmouth on the morning of December 28th, four days prior to the proposed opening. To this the Brighton replied, that the passage of such a train through Havant Junction would be opposed, if necessary, by force. Being thus menaced, the South Western prepared for action, and when their goods train steamed down to Havant, early on the morning named, it was manned by upwards of a hundred platelayers and other rough and ready employes of the Company, under the orders of Mr. Scott and Mr. Ogilvie, Mr. Brassey's partner. The South Western train was not expected until about 10 o'clock, but Mr. Scott took time by the forelock, and reached the junction at 7 a.m. He found that the Brighton people had prepared for a surprise by removing the points, and placing an engine on the crossing during the night. No time was lost in re-laying the points, and then, being unable to effect a passage, the Brighton engine was forcibly seized and shunted into a siding. By this time the rival army had mustered in force, and before Mr. Scott could get clear they lifted a rail on their main line. The South Western goods was then on the crossing, blocking both lines, and in that position Mr. Scott and his force remained for two hours, waiting to see if his opponents would give way. At one time a serious fight appeared imminent, but at length, finding no good was likely to result from a further appeal to force, Mr.

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Scott retreated on Guildford, leaving the question to be fought out before the Court of Queen's Bench, in a fashion more in accordance with the recognized rules of railway warfare. The Brighton Company summoned several South Western men for assaulting their servants, and Mr. Ogilvie was fined one shilling and costs for his superfluous energy on the occasion. A mandamus was applied for, to restrain the South Western from running trains into Portsmouth, but in this the Brighton were defeated, and through trains commenced to run on January 24th, 1859. The line had been opened to Havant on January 1st, a service of omnibuses conveying passengers between that place and Portsmouth.

Exasperated at their defeat, the Brighton Company commenced a policy of senseless and wasteful competition. Third-class excursions to London and back were run daily at a fare of five shillings. The South Western of course followed suit, and as their route was the shortest it naturally found most favour with the public. Then the Brighton came down to three shillings and sixpence by all trains, and made their tickets available for two days. Not to be outdone, the South Western again met them on equal terms with a satisfactory result. Ultimately, finding they were getting the worst of the bargain, the Brighton threw up the sponge, and to the utter disgust of Portsmouth people, excursion fares were abolished, the two companies agreeing to divide all Portsmouth traffic in the proportion of two-thirds to the South Western and one-third to the Brighton. It was estimated that the companies jointly lost £80,000 during the time excursion fares were charged.

CHAPTER XV.

Death of Mr. Chaplin—Several Branches Opened—The Line Extended to Exeter—Local Rejoicings—Death of Mr. Locke.

Mr. Chaplin did not live to see the realization of that grand scheme of Western extension which owed so much to his powerful and enthusiastic advocacy. Ill health compelled him to resign his seat on the Board in 1858, and early in the following year his colleagues lost for ever the counsel his sterling common sense and unrivalled experience alone could bestow. He had piloted the South Western through crisis after crisis; he held the reins of power during the most perilous period of its existence; he was thwarted often, and undermined at his own Board; he was accused of seeking to serve his own ends, and several times the shareholders rose against him, but he never swerved for one instant from the straight course he had marked out for himself. The South Western knew him no more, but his ideas and the whole bent of his policy were indelibly impressed upon the subsequent history of the Company—so impressed, that the South Western of to-day, which affords the most incontestable proof of his foresight, may be said to be of his creation.

Although Mr. Chaplin did not live to see the Salisbury and Exeter line opened, yet several important lines in connection with that extension, and other branches were brought into use during his time. The North Devon line was opened in 1854, and the remaining section of the Basingstoke and Salisbury line, from Andover to Milford, was publicly opened on May 1st, 1857. On June 9th, 1856, a branch from Staines to Ascot was brought into use, and during the same year the Dorchester and Weymouth and Portsmouth Dockyard

branches were opened. At the same time the Company dispensed with contractors in keeping the line in repair, and acting under pressure from the Board of Trade, who had been memorialised on the matter, a portion of the Dorchester line was doubled. On July 12th of the year following a branch to Lymington was opened, powers for the construction of which had been obtained by an independent company in 1856, their original Act, passed during the mania, having lapsed. A line from Epsom to Leatherhead was opened on February 10th, 1859, and on the 4th of the following month a branch from Wimbledon to Epsom was first used by the public. These branches were constructed by independent companies, who were more fortunate than the South Western in their endeavours to obtain an Act. The Company made arrangements to purchase the latter line, while the former was taken over by the South Western and Brighton jointly. Another branch in this district—from Wimbledon to Croydon—was also bought in the same year by the Companies jointly.

The first sod of the westward extension was turned at Gillingham on April 3rd 1856, by Miss Seymour, sister to the chairman of the Salisbury and Yeovil Company. Although the balance standing to the credit of that company at their bankers was but £4 2s. 4d. on the eventful day, they nevertheless presented their fair patroness with a solid silver spade, a handsomely decorated barrow and an elegant pair of gauntlets with which to perform the ceremony. Mr. Louis H. Ruegg, in his interesting work, "The History of a Railway," graphically describes the scene. "It seemed" he says "as though, human adversaries having done their worst to impede, nature had now taken up the work of baffling and obstructing. That fickle jade, the weather, whirled sheets of water on our heads, blew garments into ribbons, and cast our speeches back into our teeth. And when the sodden field was left, and the party sought some protection from the bitter elements under a large marquee, Pluvius made his unwelcome way through the canvas, and, crowning insult of all, mingled our wine with water !

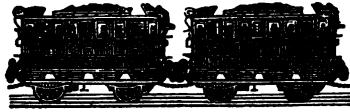
These would have been trials enough to break the hearts of many men, but the promoters of the undertaking had had too much of the buffetting of adversity to be depressed now ; and they simply raised the diluted champagne to their mouths with the quiet remark, ' We have had so much cold water thrown over us before that a bucket or two extra can make no difference now.' "

On May 1st, 1859, amidst various local rejoicings, the line was opened from Salisbury to Gillingham, and on May 7th, 1860, it was extended to Sherborne. At the latter town, where throughout the struggles for a central line public sympathy had been most cordial, the greatest enthusiasm prevailed. Over 1,000 school children were assembled at the station and sang the National Anthem as the first train ran in ; salutes were fired, bells rung, and a special service was held in the church, at which the preacher took for his text the words, " Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." In the following month the line was opened from Sherborne to Yeovil, and six weeks later, on July 18th, 1860, the remaining portion from Yeovil to Exeter was publicly opened. The authorities of the towns on the route were scheming and planning for weeks how best to give effect to their joy at the advent of the narrow gauge. A monster train, with the directors and chief officers, drawn by three engines, steamed out of Waterloo station at 8 o'clock, and from Yeovil downwards the directors' progress became a triumphal procession, the entire population turning out to give them a welcome. Long addresses, wishing the South Western prosperity and the directors every earthly blessing, were read at each station ; at Crewkerne the platform was kept by riflemen, bands played and thousands cheered the train upon its approach, while the number of gentlemen in white kid gloves and adorned with white rosettes was so great, as to be described by a reporter of the proceedings as resembling a " gigantic marriage ceremony " ; a dinner was subsequently given to the aged poor, and a tea provided for the school children. Axminster and Honiton were equally enthusiastic.

At the former town sports and amusements were provided, among them the somewhat remarkable spectacle of a cheese hunt—four cheeses being rolled down a hill, to be followed by a multitude of pursuers. At Feniton, Sir John Pattison and Sir John Coleridge were among those who tendered their congratulations. The demonstration culminated in a most fervent welcome at Exeter, where the directors were received by the Mayor and Corporation. Business was entirely suspended in the Cathedral City, and its streets were profusely decorated with bunting and triumphal arches. A tent had been erected on Northernhay and an elegant dejeuner provided, under the presidency of the Mayor. An emblazoned address was presented, and the directors were congratulated on having, “after a long period of opposition and difficulty, accomplished a desirable work, which has the merit of affording direct communication between the great national arsenals, thus producing lasting benefits.” In proposing the toast of “Prosperity to the City of Exeter,” the Hon. Ralph Dutton expressed the great regret entertained by his colleagues and himself, that Mr. Chaplin, who first conceived the idea of a western extension, had not lived to see that day. Mr. Locke, the engineer, also appeared for the last time on behalf of the South Western, and in replying to the healths of “The members for Honiton,” said “For sixteen years I have endeavoured to bring this line to bear, and I assure you that I have been engaged on no line that had more of my ardent feeling and energy.”

Two months after making this speech, viz., on September 18th, 1860, Joseph Locke died at Moffat in Annandale, aged 55. He had received the decoration of the Legion of Honour in 1845, and was president of the Institution of Civil Engineers from 1847 till his death. As an engineer, the principal point with him was the great economy with which all his works were carried out. His biographer says, “It was a principle of his that nothing should be called into existence which did not subserve the public interests to such a degree as to make them remunerate the projectors for the capital

invested in its creation. Railways and steamboats, with Mr. Locke, were commercial speculations ; hence if they failed to pay, they ought never to have been constructed." After his death, an estate at Barnsley, now called Locke Park, was given to that town by his widow, as a place of public recreation, and a statue of Mr. Locke has been erected in the park. In 1859 Mr. Locke presided at the first public dinner of the Railway Benevolent Institution.



CHAPTER XVI.

A Defensive Policy—A Great Western Assault on Southampton and a South Western Attack on Bristol—The Quadruple Treaty—New Branches Proposed and Opened.

The policy pursued by the Board under Captain Mangles' chairmanship, extending from 1859 to 1871, was one of defence, tempered by judicious development of the system. Shareholders were very watchful when the new chairman took office, and any extension, even if projected in opposition to a rival line, provoked much adverse criticism. In 1862 several proprietors inserted advertisements in various newspapers, stating that they were appalled by hearing of the proposed new lines, and they feared that unless steps were taken to protect the property, the shareholders would be involved in a common ruin. These little ebullitions gradually subsided, and during the latter period of his official career, Captain Mangles had an easy task to fulfil.

One of the most important matters with which the new chairman had to deal, was a determined attempt on the part of the Great Western to get into Southampton. In 1857 a broad gauge line was projected from Salisbury to Southampton, the promoters of which asked Parliament for powers to purchase the Andover and Redbridge canal. As in 1846, when a Manchester and Southampton line was proposed, the South Western opposed the broad gauge by offering to make a line from Romsey to Redbridge. Both schemes were rejected by Parliament. In the following session an independent company obtained an Act to make a line from Andover to Redbridge, and two years later they asked for powers to extend it northward to Newbury and southward to Southampton. The South Western opposed this strongly, and were fortunate

enough to procure its rejection. A second attempt in the next session met with a similar result. The South Western then entered into negotiation with the Andover and Redbridge Company for an amalgamation, but here the Great Western, who, upon the second defeat of their "cats paw" had explored the country from Basingstoke to Southampton and Portsmouth, stepped in, and entering into an open alliance with the Andover and Redbridge Company, sought the authority of Parliament for its absorption, and for making extensions to Newbury and Southampton. Here was war to the knife! In their half-yearly report for the latter half of 1862 the directors announced their intention of introducing a Bill to authorize the making of junctions with the Andover and Redbridge, and the lease or purchase of that undertaking. They also, by way of paying out the Great Western in their own coin, projected a line from Gillingham, through North Somerset and the Radstock coal fields, to Bristol. Mr. Locke had surveyed such a line in 1852; it may indeed be said, that a South Western extension to Bristol was a pet scheme of the eminent engineer's. The directors had however refused to support the line, and they now stated that from their desire to maintain good relations with all neighbouring companies they would certainly have been content to abstain from the projection of a railway through North Somerset to Bristol, had not the Great Western, after every effort by the Board to avert it, "declared war" against the Company and entered into irrevocable alliances for establishing a competing interest in Southampton. Under the circumstances, the directors unanimously determined on taking the necessary steps for extending the South Western to Bristol. Before Parliament the tussle was long and severe, ending, like many other such costly contests in a drawn battle. The South Western case was ably conducted—so ably, that when the chairman of the committee announced the rejection of both the South Western and Great Western schemes, he addressed Mr. F. T. Bircham, the Company's solicitor, and said that during a long experience

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he had never known an opposition case got up better. South Western directors were jubilant; they however expressed regret that the Bristol line had not been carried; they remained of opinion, they said, that the extension of the narrow gauge to that city would have been found both remunerative to the Company and protective of its general interests, and that it also promised beneficial public results, not to Bristol alone, but to an important intermediate district.

The effect of the Great Western defeat upon the Andover and Redbridge Company was simply crushing. They were completely isolated: and troubles followed thick and fast, till at length the promoters found themselves in Chancery, with a contractor's claim of £22,000 against them for work already performed. When matters reached this pass the South Western came to the rescue, and in 1863 a Bill was passed to amalgamate the unfortunate little company with its great neighbour. It was opened on March 6th, 1865.

The broad gauge bogey, or as South Western directors delighted to call it "the exceptional gauge," reared its head against the Company in a new quarter during the year 1858, causing some little trouble and anxiety. A broad gauge line was first projected from Brentford to Richmond. Being defeated, the promoters appeared in the next year with a yet more invasive measure. A second party also came upon the scene with a project for forming a series of railways through Richmond, Twickenham, Kingston and Hampton Court. In opposing these attempts the Company offered to improve Kew Junction and Barnes, and to make a branch from Twickenham to Kingston. This arrangement met with the approval of Parliament; the rival schemes were rejected, and, in deference to the wishes of the inhabitants of Kingston, who were up in arms at the thought of their station being on the Middlesex side of the Thames, the South Western agreed to introduce a Bill in the next session for an extension of their branch to Kingston town. This line was brought into use on July 1st, 1868.

At the same period there were no less than nine schemes before Parliament for connecting the railways north of the Thames with those on the south, by way of Kensington and Clapham Junction. The result of opposition and negotiation which ensued led to the withdrawal of all these lines with one exception—the West London Extension from Kensington to Clapham Junction. This scheme was first taken up by the North Western and Great Western, and subsequently supported by the South Western and Brighton. The four companies agreed to make and manage the line jointly. The South Western nominated two directors on the West London Board, and contributed £50,000 toward the cost of construction, an amount they were afterward compelled to increase. The line was first used on March 2nd, 1863.

Several other important lines were opened in the London district during Capt. Mangles' tenure of office, among them branches from Twickenham down the Thames Valley to Shepperton, and from Kensington to Richmond. An Act for the former, as a single line to be worked by the South Western, was obtained by an independent company in 1862, and opened on November 1st, 1864. The Kensington and Richmond line was promoted by the South Western in 1864 in opposition to four rival schemes. It was publicly opened on January 1st, 1869.

Parliamentary sanction was obtained in 1863 for an extension of the Chertsey line to Virginia Water, and during the same year an Act was passed for the construction of a junction at Clapham, to connect the South Western with the London Chatham and Dover system. An independent company also carried a Bill for a Tooting, Merton and Wimbledon railway, to be worked by the South Western and Brighton Companies jointly. The following year saw the Company asking for a line from Wimbledon to Kingston. This was granted, and the line brought into use on January 1st, 1869. The Wimbledon and Tooting line was opened on October 1st, 1868. On January 1st in the next year the South Western

commenced, by arrangement with the London Chatham and Dover Company, to run trains between Wimbledon and Ludgate Hill.

In 1865 a very venturesome and novel project, called the Whitehall and Waterloo Railway, was started by a company in close connection with the South Western, two of whose directors figured on the board. It was proposed to construct a railway under the Thames from Waterloo to Whitehall, connecting with the District railway, on what was called the pneumatic principle. A water tight iron tube was to be laid in the bed of the Thames, through which, according to the company's prospectus, trains were to be run at three minute intervals. Such a railway on a small scale had been on exhibition at the Crystal Palace, where it proved successful. Fortune by no means favoured the promoters, who, as soon as they commenced work, found themselves overwhelmed in the financial panic of 1866. At the end of that year £55,000 had been expended upon the scheme, two lengths of tube being laid ; but further the company could not go, and after a vain attempt to raise additional capital the concern was wound up. The iron tubes remain in the Thames to this day.

In 1867 the directors were approached by the South Eastern, Brighton, and London Chatham and Dover Companies, who had prepared a Bill for establishing a "working union," somewhat resembling, but in important respects short of an amalgamation of their respective systems. The South Western were asked to join, but a reply was given intimating that the directors did not feel justified in entertaining the proposal and the Bill was subsequently withdrawn.

In the counties of Hampshire and Dorsetshire several short but important branches were constructed, and the connection between the Company and the steam packets was also placed on a more satisfactory foundation. The vessels of the Steam Packet Company had always been owned by the South Western for all purposes of risk and responsibility, and they now, by an Act passed in 1862, became absolutely transferred to the

Company; the steam packet proprietors shares being commuted for a corresponding amount of South Western 4 per cent. debenture stock.

An independent company carried a Bill in 1859 for a line from Ringwood to Christchurch. It was opened three years later, and in the next session sanction was given to an extension to Bournemouth, then fast becoming a popular watering place. The branch became opened throughout on March 14th, 1870. Two years after, another independent company, who obtained an Act in 1865, opened a line from Wimborne to Poole, and on June 15th, 1874, it was extended to the western side of Bournemouth. The South Western agreed to work these branches at so much per cent. of the total receipts, and they were subsequently amalgamated with the Company's system.

A short branch from Gosport to Stokes Bay was brought into use on April 6th, 1863, and on September 1st, 1864, the South Western opened a line from Petersfield to Midhurst. It had been constructed by an independent company.

In 1865 a connection was made between Alton and Winchester, through Alresford, by means of a single line owned by a company whose Act dated from 1861. They had likewise obtained powers to construct a railway from Ropley to Bishop's Waltham, but the scheme was abandoned. A branch to the latter town from Botley had been sanctioned in 1862, and was publicly opened on June 1st of the year following.

Aldershot, which had been dependent upon Farnboro' for railway accommodation, became anxious for a more convenient station, and in 1865 a company was formed for constructing a line into the Camp. The South Western, considering the scheme objectionable, induced the promoters to withdraw, on condition that a Bill was presented to Parliament in the next session for effecting the object in a more satisfactory manner. Accordingly in 1865 the Company obtained an Act for a line from Pirbright through Aldershot, to Farnham. It was brought into use on May 2nd, 1870.

A military hospital having been built at Netley, a company of speculators were induced to project a branch from Portswood to that place. They were granted an Act in 1861, and the line was opened by the South Western in 1866.

In 1861 an independent company carried a Bill for a line from Salisbury, through Downton and Fordingbridge, to the Dorset line east of Wimborne. The Company agreed to work it, and the line was publicly opened on December 20th, 1866.

An extension of the Dorset line to Portland, to be worked by the South Western and Great Western jointly, was passed in 1862. It was to have been opened early in 1865, but difficulties arose between the South Western and the promoters, the former contending that it had not been constructed according to agreement. The matters in dispute were referred to an arbitrator, who decided in the Company's favour. Then a disagreement occurred with the Great Western, and it was not until October 16th of the year named that the extension became opened.

West of Exeter, where a great track of country remained unprovided with railway accommodation, extensive lines were projected. Several spurs were also thrown out from the Salisbury and Exeter line: that to Exmouth was opened on May 1st, 1861; Chard on May 8th, two years later; and the Seaton branch on March 16th, 1868. Soon after extending their system to Exeter the Company discovered that the North Devon line, in which they held two-fifths of the entire capital, being on the broad gauge, operated more as a feeder of the Great Western and Bristol and Exeter Companies than of the South Western. The Company therefore obtained a lease of the undertaking with option of amalgamation, and converted it into a narrow gauge. A junction was made with the Bristol and Exeter station at St. David's in 1861, and early in the following year South Western trains ran through to Crediton. On March 2nd, 1863, the North Devon narrow gauge was completed and opened to Bideford.

Upon the Company obtaining a footing in North Devon,

they were urged to continue their line to Ilfracombe ; and this watering place became, during the next ten years, a veritable bone of contention between the broad and narrow gauge interests. A company was formed in 1863 for carrying a line from Barnstaple to Ilfracombe, but they failed to obtain Parliamentary sanction. In the next year the Devon and Somerset Company brought in a Bill for a line from Taunton to Barnstaple and Ilfracombe. The South Western opposed by a branch from Umberleigh to South and North Molton, and an offer to subscribe £50,000 toward an Ilfracombe line, which had been again projected by independent parties. In the Commons success waited on the South Western, but the Lords came to an opposite conclusion, leaving the Company no option but to withdraw their proposed Molton branch, and to assent to an arrangement for the execution of an Ilfracombe line on the mixed gauge, at the joint expense of the contending companies. This arrangement did not commend itself to the Devon and Somerset Company, who were unwilling, or unable, to subscribe their proportion of capital. Three years passed by : the period allowed for the line to be constructed was fast expiring, and no sign being forthcoming of a satisfactory settlement, the Ilfracombe Company applied to Parliament for an extension of time. The Devon and Somerset Company also deposited a Bill asking to be released from their liability. The Committee to whom the question was referred, reported that in their opinion, the Act should be repealed. Thus the whole scheme fell through. In 1870 a new Bill was deposited by an independent Company, and an Ilfracombe branch, to be worked by the South Western, passed safely through Parliament.

The presence of the South Western in Exeter and North Devon evidently meant an advance, sooner or later, upon the mercantile and naval towns of Plymouth and Devonport. This fact the directors kept steadily in view, embracing every opportunity to obtain piecemeal the territory they had previously endeavoured to carry by a *coup de main*. Thus, when, in 1862, a company was formed to carry a line from Yeoford,

on the North Devon, to Okehampton, the South Western entered into an agreement to work and stock the branch. It was opened to North Tawton in 1865, and throughout to Okehampton two years later. An extension from the latter town to Lidford was, in 1865, projected by the Devon and Cornwall Company, whose engineer, in conjunction with the engineer of the Central Cornwall Company, had mapped out a series of lines to accommodate the entire country from North Devon to the Land's End. Parliament favoured these extensive schemes, and in addition to a Lidford and Okehampton branch, with running powers to Plymouth, granted lines to Hatherleigh, Torrington, and Bude. A branch to Bodmin was also carried, whilst the Central Cornwall promoters obtained power to connect Bodmin and Truro, with access over existing lines to Falmouth and the Land's end. In connection with these schemes the South Western obtained an Act to extend their North Devon line to Torrington. Fortified by previous successes the Devon and Cornwall Company appeared before Parliament in the following session demanding additional powers, including compulsory use of the South Western line from Okehampton to Exeter. Finding that the Legislature were disposed to grant such a measure, the Company opened negotiations, and offered to work the authorised lines, comprising in all fifty miles of railway. Subsequently the Great Western, Bristol and Exeter, South Devon and Cornwall Companies were drawn into the conference, and a remarkable contract, called the Quadruple Treaty, was drawn up. Time did not admit of the completion of arrangements, but the Devon and Cornwall, and Central Cornwall Companies withdrew their Bill in confidence that negotiations would be continued. The session of 1867 saw a Bill introduced at the instance of the South Western and associated broad gauge companies to give effect to the Treaty, by which the broad gauge lines, south and west of Exeter, were to be thrown open to the South Western, while the lines of the latter Company, including those of the Devon and Cornwall, and Central Corn-

wall, were to be open to the broad gauge. It was understood that any of the companies concerned might call for the withdrawal of the Bill, if it should appear to them expedient to do so. As might have been anticipated, where so many diverse interests were represented, a hitch soon occurred, and the Bristol and Exeter having made a demand upon the South Western, which was not granted, the whole thing fell through. Negotiations were, however, continued till 1872, when the Quadruple Bill was re-deposited, collapsing as quickly as before.

Upon the first failure of the Quadruple Treaty, the directors asked to be relieved from their liability with regard to a Torrington branch ; the lines in connection therewith having been abandoned. This request Parliament refused, and the line was opened on July 18th, 1872.

CHAPTER XVII.

**Changes in the Directorate and Staff.—Death of Mr. Joseph Beattie.
Serious disasters.—Introduction of the Electric Block System, and
other improvements.**

Captain Mangles resigned in 1872, and, like his predecessor, he did not live long after giving up the reins of power. He died in 1873, being succeeded by Mr. Castleman ; Mr. M. H. Marsh filling the vacancy on the Board. During the gallant Captain's thirteen years rule, many changes took place on the Board. Mr. W. S. Portal, who claimed a seat from 1862, resigned on account of ill health in 1865. Viscount Bury took his place. In 1868 Mr. H. C. Lacy died, and was succeeded by Col. Brent, who only retained the position three years, when Mr. Portal returned to his old love. The same year saw Col. Brent give place to Lieut. Col. the Hon. W. H. Campbell.

Among the chief officers changes took place in each department. Mr. Clarke succeeded Mr. Crombie, as secretary in 1862, the latter vacating the position for that of law clerk.

In 1867 the traffic department sustained a severe loss, by the death of Mr. Godson, superintendent of the line. One of the old school, with a keen appreciation of hard work, and a blunt John Bull manner, he organized and managed the body of men placed under his control with great ability and success. He earned the character of a strict disciplinarian, yet no one knew better how to recognize and reward merit in any of his subordinates. He was buried in the railway portion of the Necropolis Cemetery at Woking, whither his remains were followed by four hundred of his brother officers and servants. With the exception of the superintendence of Nine Elms

good station, which fell to the lot of Mr. R. H. Ming, Mr. Williams, till then superintendent of passenger traffic, succeeded to Mr. Godson's duties. At the same time two assistant superintendents were appointed, Mr. E. W. Verrinder, formerly superintendent of Waterloo station, for the London district, and Mr. John Tyler of Exeter, taking all lines west of Salisbury.

In 1865 Mr. J. T. Haddow became goods manager in place of Mr. Hibbert.

Two changes occurred in the engineer's department ; the first caused by the death of Mr. Errington, took place in 1863, when Mr. Galbraith became consulting, and Mr. Strapp resident, engineer. In 1870 the latter was succeeded by Mr. W. Jacomb.

The Company suffered an irreparable loss in 1871 by the death of Mr. Joseph Beattie, superintendent of the locomotive department. Mr. Beattie was brought up under his father as a contractor and builder, but had passed the greater part of his life with the South Western, having been introduced to them by Mr. Locke, who knew him on the Grand Junction Railway. He was a genius of the first order, one of the most clever men the South Western service has produced. His inventive talent gradually forced him forward into the ranks of the leaders of mechanical science, and his name will be long remembered in connection with many practical improvements in the details of the locomotive engine. The esteem in which he was held in the engineering world may be gathered from the fact that in the year 1860, at a banquet given in his honour by gentlemen engaged in engineering pursuits, a testimonial consisting of a silver dinner service and 500 guineas were presented to him, "as a record of their sincere estimation of Mr. Beattie's inventive and self-reliant mechanical skill, generous friendship and honourable conduct during his successful career." Mr. Beattie was 67 years of age at the time of his death. His son Mr. W. G. Beattie succeeded him as locomotive and carriage superintendent.

Mr. W. H. Preece, telegraph engineer, left the Company's service in 1864, and was succeeded by Mr. Langdon, who followed his predecessor's example in 1870 and joined the post office telegraph department. Mr. C. Goldstone then became telegraph engineer.

Two serious accidents occurred during Captain Mangles' time, sadly tarnishing the South Western Company's long and justly held reputation for safe travelling and immunity from disaster. The first happened in 1861, when a Portsmouth fast train ran off the line at Wimbledon. Doctor Baly, principal physician to Her Majesty the Queen, was killed and several other passengers injured. Three years later, on the occasion of Ascot races, a far more serious accident occurred in consequence of a special train running into the rear portion of another at Egham station. Several passengers were killed and many injured. This latter disaster, drew forth a letter from Her Majesty, who wrote to the directors through a secretary, expressing a hope that they would do all in their power for the protection of passengers, and adopt the same precautions as they did when she used their line. The directors promised that Her Majesty's wishes should be obeyed, and as an earnest of their sincerity, the block system of telegraphic signals was adopted shortly after, several thousands of pounds being spent upon it each succeeding year, until the whole line became subject to the influence of the precise and reliable interchange of signals thereby afforded. Telegraphic communication had been in operation between the principal signal boxes for some time previously, but the instruments in use were those of the ordinary speaking telegraph.

Another casualty, in the shape of the shipwreck of the Company's steamer "Normandy," befell the South Western in 1871. This vessel was lost through coming into collision in the Channel with the steamship "Mary." Captain Harvey of the "Normandy" and many of his officers and crew were drowned in endeavouring to save the lives of the passengers.

In addition to the complete revolution in traffic manipulation caused by a use of the electric block system, many other improvements, having for their object the comfort and safety of passengers, were brought into use throughout the various departments. In nothing was progress more noticeable than in the style and general appointment of the various classes of carriages. Very little attention appears to have been paid to comfort in such a quarter until the year 1859, when second class carriages were first provided with leather cushions and backs. From that date much was done, and when Captain Mangles retired, the superior classes were so appointed as to leave but little to be desired.

In 1868, consequent upon the Muller murder scare, a Bill was passed compelling railway companies to provide communication between passengers and guards. The South Western first tried a rope apparatus running along the outside of the train: subsequently electric bells were fitted up, but they were not successful, and a return to the rope speedily followed. The Company also placed small windows between each compartment of their second class carriages. These the British public, enamoured of privacy, soon condemned, and carriages so fitted became most unpopular. Such windows are known as "Muller lights" to this day.

Among the important innovations of this period were a Railway Clearing House, and an efficient system of audit, the details of which had hitherto been very unsatisfactory. Mr. Charles Harvey was appointed to take charge of the audit office in 1857.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Hon. Ralph H. Dutton succeeds Mr. Castleman—South Western Policy—Extensions in London and the Provinces.

Mr. Castleman's occupation of the chief seat on the board was of very short duration; he resigned in 1875, and died in the following year. During his time two independent schemes, destined to have an important influence upon the Southampton district, first saw the light. One project, called the Didcot, Newbury and Southampton Junction Railway, started from Didcot, running through Newbury to Micheldever, and connecting there with the South Western. By the other—the Swindon, Marlboro', and Andover—it was proposed to open up a direct route from Southampton to Swindon, and that district, by way of Romsey and Andover. The South Western opposed the former, and the Great Western the latter; but both obtained Parliamentary sanction in 1875.

Again the Company were unfortunate with their steamships, the "Waverley" being wrecked upon the Platte Bone rock, near Guernsey, in 1873; and two years later the S.S. "Havre" became a total wreck at the same spot. No passengers were lost.

In 1874 the doubling of the Direct Portsmouth line was commenced, and in the same year the South Western became possessors of all the southern parts of the Devon and Cornwall Company's undertaking, including the Lidford extension, with running powers over the Great Western, from the latter place to Plymouth. Independent Companies had obtained powers to construct branches to Sidmouth and Lyme Regis, which the Company arranged to work. They were, however, unable to raise sufficient capital, and applied for a modification of their

agreement with the Company, stating that the terms were not sufficiently favourable. The South Western met them in a liberal spirit, and the Sidmouth branch was opened on July 6th, 1874. The proposed Lyme Regis branch was abandoned. Ilfracombe was first served by a direct railway on July 20th, of the year last named, and the extension to Lidford was opened on the 12th of the following October.

The year 1875 saw the North Western commence a service of trains between Willesden Junction and Waterloo, and a great improvement was at the same period brought about at Waterloo station by the opening of a new entrance from the York Road.

The Hon. Ralph H. Dutton succeeded Mr. Castleman in the chair, with Mr. W. S. Portal as deputy, the vacancy on the board being filled by Mr. Arthur E. Guest. There were two other changes immediately previous, caused by the retirement of Mr. Marsh, and the death of Mr. Hitchins. Mr. W. B. Beach took the place of Mr. Marsh, and Mr. J. H. Mangles, son of the former chairman, succeeded Mr. Hitchins.

The policy favoured by the present board has not hitherto differed materially from those presided over by Captain Mangles and Mr. Castleman. Extensions by the Company directly have been eschewed, but every advantage has been taken of the efforts and invitations of landowners and inhabitants of towns asking for accommodation. When a great railway company projects a line into a new district, the whole population look upon it as a favourable and never to be missed opportunity to obtain compensation for residential or other injury, real or imaginary. But when the leading inhabitants of a town or county bring forward a scheme, each and everyone becomes anxious to assist; the landowners sell their land for a reasonable consideration, and compensation for injury to residential property assumes minor proportions. Moreover the witnesses before a Parliamentary Committee are enthusiastic, and a greater probability exists of getting the Bill safely passed. When this latter consummation has

been attained, the Company comes forward with a liberal offer to work and stock the line, and eventually it becomes amalgamated with the rest of the system. Such a policy has another advantage; for when a town, by its own efforts, obtains a line of railway, that line is looked upon as belonging to it, and no pains are spared to increase its importance and swell its traffic. This no doubt accounts in a measure for the great and undeniable popularity of the South Western in the Western Counties, where the lines have either been constructed by the residents, or undertaken by the Company at their special and earnest request.

Operations in the London district since the Hon. Ralph Dutton's accession to the chair have for the most part consisted of projects for improving the access to Waterloo station, and contests or arrangements with the District Company, who, tired of burrowing like a mole in the bowels of the great City, cast their eyes enviously upon the fair and rich traffic district of the South Western suburban system. The first battle occurred in 1872, when the District obtained powers to make a branch to Barnes. Two years later an extension to Hammersmith was granted them. As a result of negotiation the South Western agreed to give them running powers from Hammersmith to Richmond, so long as that route should be the only one in use by the District for connecting their system with Kew, Richmond and Barnes. On this condition the District abandoned their line to Barnes. They first used their powers to Richmond on June 1st, 1877, and on October 1st following, the Metropolitan Company were granted a similar concession. The District subsequently obtained a branch to Ealing, using a short portion of the South Western line from Shaftesbury Road station to Turnham Green. This branch they opened on July 1st, 1879. A District extension to Hounslow was next passed by Parliament, and opened in the present year. In 1881 an onslaught was made upon a new quarter of the South Western. A company, closely in league with the District, was formed for the purpose of carrying a line

from Guildford through Kingston to Fulham. A line across a part of the same country had been unsuccessfully promoted in 1863. As the South Western opposition, assisted by the Wimbledon Common Commissioners, was unable to stay the progress of the Bill, an arrangement was made with the promoters, by which that portion of the proposed line from Surbiton to Guildford was to be constructed by the South Western, who were also to be joint owners with the District of the remaining line from Kingston to Fulham. Running powers over the District from Fulham to South Kensington were also granted the Company, and arrangements made for through bookings between the principal South Western stations and all stations on the District. In the next session powers were granted the Company to construct a branch from the new Guildford line to Leatherhead, and a short line from South Kensington to Pelham Square, where it is proposed to erect a large West End terminus. At the same time the District sought to extend their Hounslow line to Twickenham, with running powers to Norbiton, where a connection was intended with the joint Kingston and London line. This, Parliament rejected. Meanwhile the Company have been busy making their line from Guildford to Surbiton, but a hitch has occurred with regard to the raising of capital for the Kingston and London railway, and during the present session a Bill has been passed authorising the Company to contribute more than half toward that undertaking. Thus a most formidable looking rival scheme has been converted into a South Western line. A new and beautiful residential district will be opened up; a West End terminus will be acquired; and the District line will, by means of through bookings, become an important feeder of the South Western. The future will decide what advantages a West End terminus and a close connection with the District will give, but it cannot be doubted that the flow of traffic through such a channel will be very great.

While the directors were making arrangements for a West End terminus, independent parties were endeavouring to force
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their hand toward an extension from Waterloo citywards. Last year three schemes were submitted to Parliament. Of these, two proposed to bridge the Thames and erect commodious termini within the City. The other, called the Charing Cross and Waterloo Electric Railway, followed the course of the abortive Whitehall and Waterloo Pneumatic Railway of 1865. As its name indicates, it is to be worked by electricity. Clauses were inserted in the Bill giving the South Western power to contribute toward the cost of the line and to work it. Of the three schemes two were withdrawn, the electric line only obtaining Parliamentary sanction. Desirable and practicable as an extension of the South Western to the City may be, it is doubtful, considering the enormous cost, whether such a line would pay investors within a reasonable period.

To minimise the drawbacks of possessing practically only one terminus in London, and that far removed from the City, the Company have used, and are using, every exertion to ward off congestion of traffic. A new and commodious station to accommodate the ever increasing race and suburban traffic was opened at Waterloo in 1879. This station has the longest platforms in London, and is admirably constituted for despatching large concourses of people. At Nine Elms, where formerly all passenger trains ran through the goods yard, a substantial viaduct has been erected. Lines for goods traffic only have also been laid down between Clapham Junction and Nine Elms. Mr. Chaplin's "four distinct lines of rails," which he, farseeing as he was, considered sufficient for "the adventurous schemes of the age in future," still carry all traffic between Nine Elms and Waterloo. Local lines are, however, being laid down from Clapham Junction to Esher on the main line, and from Clapham Junction to Barnes on the Windsor line.

In one direction the Company have adopted the unusual policy of a retreat. Their share in the Wimbledon and Croydon line, owned jointly with the Brighton company, was sold to the latter in 1879. The branch was of little or no service to the South Western.

Several attacks have of late been made upon the Company's suburban system. A scheme called the Wimbledon, Merton, and West Metropolitan Junction Railway, was passed last year. It starts from Wimbledon and runs across to Putney, connecting there with the authorized Kingston and London line. A short branch was also projected last year from the Epsom branch to Sutton, but Parliament refused to pass the Bill. A scheme called the Esher, Hounslow and Southall Railway was likewise presented to Parliament, and this the South Western were fortunate enough to defeat.

The Windsor, Ascot and Aldershot district has for some years been jealously regarded by the Great Western, who have made several attempts to tap the race and military traffic it affords. In 1873, the South Western in order to keep out other parties, obtained sanction to construct a line from Aldershot to Ascot. This line was opened to Frimley in 1878, and to Aldershot on June 1st, 1879. Last year the Great Western induced the House of Commons to pass an extension of their system from Windsor to Ascot, with running powers to Aldershot. The Lords, however, threw out the measure. The Great Western, not content with their defeat, again tempted fate during the present year with a like result. A more ambitious scheme proposing a line from Portsmouth through Aldershot to Windsor, was also thrown out last year, and a line from Staines through Chertsey to Woking has been rejected by Parliament during the present session.

The Didcot, Newbury and Southampton Junction, and the Swindon, Marlborough and Andover schemes, passed in Mr. Castleman's time, have since then become more ambitious. The one backed by the Great Western as a means of obtaining access to Southampton, the other upheld by the South Western for the purpose of counteracting their opponents, have lately provoked a series of hard fought Parliamentary battles. Last year the Didcot company introduced a Bill to abandon their branch from Whitechurch to Micheldever, and asked in lieu thereof powers to make a line through Winchester and into

Southampton direct. The South Western projected a counter scheme, including a branch to connect Whitechurch with the Andover and Redbridge line at Fullerton, and new stations at Southampton, with other improvements there. In Southampton great irritation had for some time existed at the departure of the P. and O. Company, and the probable withdrawal of other steamships from the port. Well prepared ground, therefore, existed for the agitators' handiwork, and Southampton people were well coached in the part they had to play. The South Western were described as all that was bad, whilst their opponents were lauded to the skies. The depression in the shipping trade, due principally to a revolution in England's eastern and colonial commerce, was debited to the Company. Each political party in the town tried to make as much capital out of the affair as possible, and to show their undying zeal for the town's welfare heartily supported the new scheme. The principal traders and shippers of Southampton remained faithful to the Company, but the vast majority of the people were enthusiastic on behalf of the Didcot line. Thus, despite a strenuous opposition by the South Western, the Great Western were successful in obtaining all the powers for which they asked. The committee, before whom the Bill came, nevertheless declared, that the line was not granted because of any shortcomings of the South Western. The Company were granted running powers over the Didcot line from Winchester to Whitechurch, and their short connecting branch from the latter place to Fullerton was also passed.

In the meantime, the Swindon, Marlborough and Andover Company, in conjunction with the Company, obtained powers to construct a line from Redbridge along the shore of the Southampton Water to a point opposite Cowes, in the Isle of Wight. In the present session they have been granted further powers, including a large pier capable of accommodating ocean going steamers, but which they propose to construct principally in connection with a steamboat service to and from the Isle of Wight. Over this branch, and also over the whole of the

Swindon Company's lines the South Western have running powers. From Swindon, another company in league with the Swindon and Andover line, are making an extension to Cheltenham, connecting there with the Midland railway, and forming a direct route from Southampton to Birmingham and the northern counties. This line will also bring the South Wales coal fields under South Western influence.

In the present session also the Great Western have, by means of an independent company, obtained a new route to Southampton; a branch from Pewsey to Salisbury, with running powers over the South Western to Chandler's Ford, joining there the Didcot line, having received the Royal Assent.

Thus a monopoly of Southampton traffic, which the South Western has enjoyed for upwards of forty years, has been broken up. Whether the exaggerated promises and high hopes of Great Western advocates in Southampton will be fulfilled remains for the future to decide. Certain it is that that company can have no greater interest in the port than the South Western, neither can they exert their influence on its behalf to a greater degree than the Company have done. To the latter Southampton owes much of its past prosperity; they used every influence to bring shipping to the port, and no effort was lost to retain it when there. The loss of a monopoly at Southampton has had one salutary effect upon the Company, having driven them into the new district of Swindon and Cheltenham, whither they would never have gone had not the Great Western obtained an entry into Southampton. The future will doubtless see extensions in that direction more fully developed, and the South Western, hand in hand with the Midland, competing with the Great Western for north of England and Welsh traffic. Considering the numerous attempts made by rival lines to effect an entry into the southern port, it is only surprising that a monopoly should have been retained so long. A glance at a railway map of the northern and midland counties exhibits a multiplication of

competing lines running into each large town, and the advent of the Great Western at Southampton may be taken simply as a sign of the times. The day has gone by when a company could look upon a large and important town, and say "Here we have a great and valuable traffic, no other line shall share it with us."

In connection with the Portsmouth and Isle of Wight traffic, several important powers have during the past few years been obtained. In 1880, the Portsmouth and Ryde steamboats were transferred to the South Western and Brighton Companies. A large railway pier and a short line of railway to connect with the Island companies, have also been built by the joint companies at Ryde. The railway was extended to Portsmouth Harbour in 1876, and a local company have obtained powers to make a branch to Southsea. It is to be worked by the joint companies. The Portsmouth Direct line was doubled by the South Western in 1879. A branch to give a direct and shorter route between Portsmouth and Netley and Southampton, has been passed during the present session. A clause in the South Western Bill likewise provided for an amalgamation of the whole of the Isle of Wight railways with the systems of the South Western and Brighton Companies, but this was opposed by Southampton people and eventually withdrawn.

During the present year the ambitions of the Didcot Company led them to attack the South Western traffic to Bournemouth. They projected a line from the authorized Southampton railway, through the New Forest, to Bournemouth. Prior to this the Company had announced their intention to make a cross country line from Brockenhurst to Christchurch, and to thus materially reduce the present route. A connection between the East and West stations was also included in the scheme. An endeavour was made, and not unsuccessfully, to stir up the inhabitants of Bournemouth on behalf of the Didcot proposals, but, unfortunately for them, a very decided opinion has of late been taken by the general public against railway

companies cutting through, and disfiguring, the natural beauties of our commons and forests. The Didcot scheme proposing to destroy the quietude of many well-known sylvian retreats in the historical Hampshire forest, a determined opposition faced the promoters, and they withdrew their Bill after a first reading. The South Western scheme, on the other hand, proposed a line through nothing but heath and barren land. The latter, meeting with little or no opposition, was passed by Parliament.

One other little branch in the Bournemouth district remains to be mentioned, viz., a line obtained by a local company from Wareham to the small but popular watering place of Swanage. The South Western have agreed to work this line when completed.

One of the principal extensions for which the present board will in the future be remembered, is an advance into the coal fields and agricultural districts of North Somerset. The Somerset and Dorset railway, formed by a fusion of the Somerset Central, incorporated in 1852, and the Dorset Central, incorporated in 1856, had been steadily going down hill, until in 1875 the South Western, finding that it was likely to pass into the Great Western Company's hands, induced the Midland to become joint lessees of the entire undertaking, the South Western retaining the greatest share. A portion of this railway, from Wimborne to Blandford, was for some years worked by the South Western. The line gives the Company access to Bath, and enables them to obtain a share of Bristol traffic. The friendly relations existing with the Midland Company have proved very beneficial, and promise to yield even greater and more satisfactory results. In the great city of Bristol the South Western are very popular, and a determined, though unhappily futile, attempt was made during the present year to give the Company a direct line to that town. The scheme, promoted solely by the leading inhabitants of Bristol, comprised a line from a point on the Company's western road near Andover, to

Radstock, running thence over the North Somerset line to Bristol, and terminating at a central station in the city. The Great Western of course opposed, and the Midland, as joint owners with the South Western of the Somerset and Dorset line, objected to the South Western running over the North Somerset railway. In deference to the Midland Company's opinion, the latter portion of the Bill was abandoned, and as a natural consequence the central station project was thrown overboard with it. The alternative was a line to Bath, connecting there with the Midland. Great demonstrations were made in Bristol and every influence was brought to bear on behalf of the scheme, but all to no purpose, and this, the third attempt to introduce the South Western into Bristol, was rejected by the House of Commons. Notwithstanding their defeat, the promoters have instructed their engineers to map out the best possible scheme for presentation to Parliament next year, when the Great Western will probably find, as the South Western found at Southampton, that a monopoly of the carrying trade to and from a great centre of industry is a thing of the past.

In the far west, although the Land's End has not yet been reached, considerable advances have been made in that direction, and Plymouth, after many a hard fight, is now served by the South Western. The line to Plymouth from Lidford, owned by the Great Western, was opened to the South Western on May 17th, 1876. A large station had been erected by the Company at Devonport; also an improved joint station at North Road, Plymouth. The day of opening was made the occasion of a great friendly demonstration toward the South Western. "Hail! All hail!! The Narrow Gauge Rail," and "Success to the South Western Railway," were mottoes freely distributed among the general decorations. The Mayor, Town Council, and the Mercantile Association walked in procession from the Guildhall, with bands of music playing, to the new Devonport Station, where they met the directors and general manager. Addresses of congratulation

were read by the town clerk and the secretary of the Port of Plymouth Chamber of Commerce, to which the Hon. Ralph Dutton made a suitable reply. After this about 750 guests sat down to a banquet in the extensive goods shed. The directors were so well pleased, that two days later they sent a hundred guineas for the charities of the Three Towns, as a recognition of the hearty reception accorded them on the opening day. Although the Company had obtained an entry, after a long and costly struggle, into Plymouth, the conditions under which that entry was obtained were anything but satisfactory. Running powers over a rival company's line, and that a single line, is never a very amicable arrangement. This the Plymouth people soon discovered, and during the present year they presented a Bill to Parliament embodying a scheme to give the South Western independent access to the Three Towns. Despite the fact that it was proposed to construct a line side by side with the existing Great Western route, and that that company used every effort to defeat it, the Bill has been passed by both Houses. A new central station for Plymouth will be provided, and the scheme is in every way calculated to give the South Western a firm grip of the traffic.

Two other branches have been opened in the West since Mr. Castleman's time; that to Sidmouth on July 6th, 1874, and from Okehampton to Holsworthy, on January 30th, 1879. An extension of the latter to Bude has been passed by Parliament. It is owned by an independent Company and worked by the South Western. Other extensions are contemplated in this quarter, a line from the Holsworthy branch to the Bodmin and Wadebridge railway, and from thence to Padstow and Launceston having been passed last year. The Bodmin and Wadebridge line was constructed as a mineral railway in the reign of William IV, and the shares were bought up by the South Western. It has never been amalgamated with the Company's system, a clause in their Bill this session seeking to effect that object, having been struck out on opposition by the Great Western. At the present time an open

passenger carriage is run on this line three days in each week.

Since the death of Mr. Castleman only three changes have taken place in the Directorate. Viscount Bury, having accepted office as Under Secretary of State for War, was, in 1878, succeeded by Mr. A. F. Govett, of Sandylands, Virginia Water. Major-General Marshall filled the vacancy caused by the death of Count Eyre, and Mr. Arthur Mills, of Bude, succeeded Sergeant Gaselee, who resigned on account of ill health.

Early in the present year Mr. F. T. Bircham, the Company's solicitor, retired, after nearly half a century's connection with the South Western. The directors, shareholders, and employes joined in presenting him with a handsome testimonial. His firm still conducts the Company's law business, a partner in the firm being Mr. M. H. Hall, formerly law clerk to the Company, an office lately abolished.

In the executive staff, changes were occasioned in 1880 the retirement of Mr. Frederick Clarke, the secretary, and by Mr. Alfred Morgan, treasurer; the former had been in the Great Western Company's service as superintendent of the Bristol division of that railway, which position he retained until 1850, when he entered the service of the South Wales Company as superintendent at Swansea. That post he held until the line became amalgamated with the Great Western in 1863, when he accepted the position of secretary to the South Western. Mr. Clarke died in December, 1880. Mr. F. J. Macaulay succeeded Mr. Clarke as secretary, Mr. H. Taman being shortly afterward appointed assistant secretary. Mr. Morgan, the treasurer, had been associated with the South Western from the date of its incorporation, acting first as assistant secretary, then as secretary and subsequently becoming treasurer. Mr. Charles Harvey, the head of the audit office, succeeded Mr. Morgan. Mr. Elwin, chief of the estate and rates department, died in 1876; he was succeeded by Mr. A. V. Haines.

In 1874 Mr. Williams, superintendent of the line, died. He was a thorough railway man, enthusiastic and earnest, never weary in his endeavours to improve the working of the

line. The arrangements necessitated by the introduction of the electric block system were made and perfected by him, and so successful was he in his department that the general manager, in a circular issued to the staff after his death, averred that throughout his career it had never been necessary to find fault with him. The assistant superintendent of the London division, Mr. E. W. Verrinder, succeeded Mr. Williams as superintendent of the line, having for his assistant Mr. W. Gardiner. Last year a further change in the positions of Mr. Verrinder and Mr. Tyler was made. The directors being of opinion that Mr. Scott, the general manager, had more than enough to occupy his attention with general superintendence and parliamentary matters, the latter necessitating his almost constant presence in the lobbies at Westminster during the session, appointed Mr. Verrinder to relieve him of some details in the management, under the title of traffic superintendent. Mr. J. Tyler, to the regret of his many friends in the west country who testified their regard in a very substantial manner, was brought from Exeter to London as superintendent of the line. Mr. White was appointed to succeed Mr. Tyler, and the latter secured as his assistant Mr. C. Bainton, of Andover. Mr. Gardiner remained as superintendent of the London district.

In the locomotive and carriage department, shortly after Mr. W. Adams was appointed to succeed Mr. W. G. Beattie as superintendent, Mr. W. Beattie, nephew of Mr. Joseph Beattie, became assistant to Mr. Adams, but to the sorrow of those, and they were many, to whom his genial good nature had endeared him, death claimed him early in the present year. Mr. J. Donnelly of the North London Railway is his successor.

A very old and valued officer of the Company has lately retired in the person of Mr. W. H. Stratton, store-keeper, who held the post from 1858. Mr. G. R. Barrell has taken his place as acting store-keeper.

One sad accident marred the present administration in 1880, when a Hampton Court train ran into an engine at the Loco.

Junction, Nine Elms. The deplorable occurrence was caused by an error in signalling. Five passengers, an engineman and a fireman were killed. A loss was also occasioned in the following year by the wreck of the steamship "Caledonia" on the Oyster Rock, off St. Helens.



CHAPTER XIX

The Locomotive History of the South Western. — The Engineer's Department.

For about fifteen years from its opening, the locomotive history of the L. & S.W.R. presents no special features. As on all the other lines in those early days, the great difficulty was to keep pace with the rapid increase of the traffic. For some time the Locomotive Department was under the charge of the engineer of the line, Mr. Locke, who just before joining the South-Western had constructed the Grand Junction Railway, from Birmingham and Wolverhampton to Manchester and Liverpool, viâ Stafford. The engines of that line were built at Crewe, and their distinctive features were brought out by Mr. Locke upon the South Western. The Crewe engines were among the best of their time and had the great merit of comparative simplicity. Strange as it may seem, the early engines were far more complicated than the powerful ones of to-day. The engines in question had outside cylinders 12in. to 14in. in diameter, and 18in. stroke. The driving wheels were 5ft. and 5ft. 6in. in diameter, and when in steam the engines weighed 12 to 14 or 15 tons. Although the line was constructed with an unusually long incline, "single wheel" engines were at one time in considerable favour on the South Western. Many were built at various times, and in 1848 Mr. J. V. Gooch, the Locomotive Superintendent, built one with 6ft. 6in. driving wheels, then considered a very large size, and afterwards one with 7ft. wheels. But in the long run the "four-coupled" engine has been found to be best adapted to the line, and for many years it has had exclusive preference. Upon Mr. Joseph Beattie succeeding Mr. Gooch as Locomotive Superintendent, a memorable era in the history of the South Western Locomotive Department commenced. The excessive

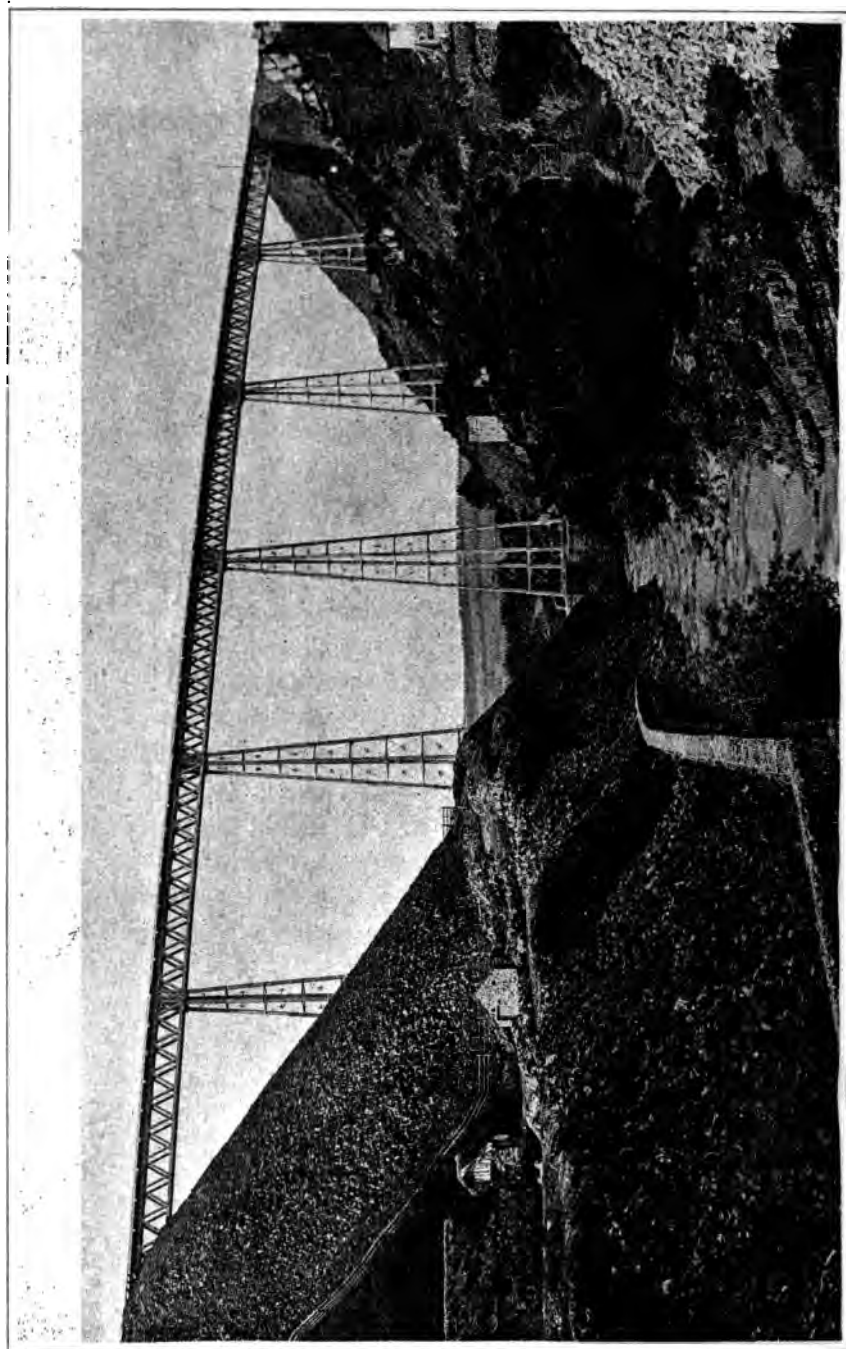
cost of coke, especially to the southern lines, far removed from the coal fields, led Mr. Beattie to devise means for burning coal, to do which his great mechanical talent found an ample field for exercise. The prevention of smoke was at that time a *sine quâ non*, and all sorts of contrivances had been tried, without much success, for burning coal without making smoke. After some experiments, a new class of passenger engines, fitted with a novel arrangement for burning coal, was brought out in 1854. In these engines the firebox was divided transversely by a "mid-feather" or water partition, for about half its height, the partition being continued in the form of an arch made of perforated fire bricks over to the back of the firebox. Each division of the firebox had its own door, grate, and damper, the doors being one over the other. The heaviest fire was kept up in the back division, nearest the tender. The product of combustion rose through the bricks and through perforations made also in the water partition, into the other division of the firebox, where, passing over a smaller fire maintained on the front grate, they entered the boiler. Instead of the ordinary brass tubes extending straight through the boiler, the boilers of these engines contained a large cylindrical chamber fitted with four rings of perforated fire bricks. A short space was left at the front end of the chamber, whence a large number of very small brass tubes led into the smoke box in the usual manner. This arrangement was found very successful, both in preventing smoke and in obtaining the full value of the coal burnt. The bricks attained an extraordinary degree of heat, which not only completely consumed the smoke but frequently enabled the engines to run considerable distances without fresh firing. A modified form of combustion chamber was introduced in a class of 7ft. coupled express engines, which came out in 1859, and for several years all Mr. Beattie's engines were thus fitted. It was found ultimately, however, that the combustion chambers required very frequent repairs, and they were also expensive in first cost. Coal having by degrees become cheaper and cheaper, in consequence of increased output and great

competition for its carriage, it no longer paid to use these boilers, and they were gradually removed. The peculiar arrangement of the firebox, however, was retained down to the last class of engines introduced by Mr. William Beattie in 1877. In addition to the foregoing, Mr. Joseph Beattie patented a feed-water heating apparatus of considerable ingenuity. A somewhat odd-looking upright cylindrical vessel was fixed upon the smoke box just in front of the funnel. In this vessel the cold water thrown up by one of the pumps was met by a portion of the exhaust steam, and in condensing the steam became heated. The water then passed through a "surcharging chamber" in the smoke box, through which chamber pipes, heated by the exhaust steam, passed and re-passed. The water was then sent into the boiler by the other pump. For several reasons this plan was afterwards superseded by the equally efficient and much simpler one of conducting a portion of the exhaust steam directly to the tender by a pipe on each side of the engine.

Mr. Beattie's patent tire fastening has come into very extensive use, especially for engine and tender wheels, and has been one of the most successful inventions of the kind. A projecting flange is turned upon the outside of the rim of the wheel, and fits into a continuous groove in the tire, whilst additional security is given by bolts screwed through the rim into the tire, between each, or every alternate spoke.

On the death of Mr. Beattie in 1871, he was succeeded by his son, Mr. William G. Beattie. His engines bear a great resemblance to those of his father, and with the exception of two or three classes are of much the same dimensions and power. In 1877, however, a new departure was taken. Twenty express engines of great power were ordered from Messrs. Sharp, Stewart, & Co., of Manchester. They are fitted with the firebox before described, minus only the fire brick portion of the partition; they have also a powerful steam brake and a bogie. The coupled wheels are 6ft 6in. in diameter, the cylinders are 18½in. in diameter, with 26in. of

stroke. With these engines that admirable contrivance for obtaining great length and consequent steadiness, the bogie, first made its appearance on South Western express trains. Passing round curves is also greatly facilitated by its use, and since then every new class of passenger engine has been provided with a bogie, it not being so necessary for goods engines. On the resignation of Mr. William Beattie in 1878, Mr. W. Adams, from the Great Eastern Railway, and formerly of the Midland, became locomotive superintendent. His engines are a great advance upon previous South Western practice, and are fully able to cope with the heaviest traffic, very rarely requiring the assistance of a pilot engine. The old South Western tradition of outside cylinders for the passenger engines is still adhered to, but beyond this there is little resemblance to the Beattie types. Being enabled to do so by the introduction of steel rails, which will bear much greater weight without undue wear than iron ones, Mr. Adams has greatly increased the weight of his engines, thereby obtaining greater tractive force. Engines for every class of work have already been turned out and in a few years time the characteristic old South Western engines with their gleaming, bright copper domes, will have disappeared in favour of machines better adapted to the wants of the day. Most of the new passenger engines have been built by Messrs. Beyer, Peacock & Co., of Manchester, a firm who constructed many for the Company in former times. A number of very powerful goods engines have been made by Messrs. Neilson & Co., of Glasgow, whilst a splendid class of 7ft. coupled express engines is now being built by Messrs. Stephenson, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, successors of the immortal "Father of Railways." The new engines are all fitted with a "cab" or housing for the men, a benefit they greatly appreciate. The early drivers enjoyed no such luxury; with scarcely an atom of protection from the weather, they had to rattle along through snow, rain and storm, and when one of the not very visible signals was found at "danger" it was



INK PHOTO, SPRAGUE & CO, LONDON.

MELDON VIADUCT.
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY G. ANGEL. F. AETER

necessary to frantically whistle for the wretched guard, perhaps frozen tight to the roof of the last coach, to put on his brake. If the engine slipped on ascending an incline, the fireman had to go out upon the framing, and with considerable risk to his life, scatter sand upon the rails by hand. Now it is all changed, under his comfortable "cab" the driver has handles which apply sand to the engine and tender, a powerful steam brake for the engine, whilst a touch of another handle brings the automatic vacuum brake instantly to bear throughout the train.

In the carriage and waggon department equal progress has been made. The new coaches will bear comparison with those of any company in this country, and being fitted with one of the best forms of automatic vacuum brake, the safety of the trains is as far as possible insured. In this brake the vacuum is maintained in a cylinder under each vehicle by a steam jet on the engine. When required for use, air is admitted to the cylinders, thus destroying the vacuum and applying the brake. It follows that if a train breaks in two, thus severing the hose pipes, or if any other accident which destroys the vacuum takes place, the brake goes on and gives notice of something being wrong. Some most luxurious long double-bogie coaches have also been built, with first and second class compartments only. These are principally used for the Bournemouth and West of England services and are exceedingly comfortable travelling. A large number of coaches are lighted with gas on Pintsch's system. The Company's rolling stock at the present time comprises about 450 engines, some 2,500 vehicles of all sorts for passenger traffic, and nearly 7000 for goods, to say nothing of the engine and waggon stock devoted solely to the use of the engineer's department.

The scenery throughout the South Western system is particularly noted for its variety and beauty, but although the line encounters some physical difficulties it presents few of those gigantic bridges and great efforts of design which delight the engineer more than they profit the shareholder; the only

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work perhaps a tourist would go far out of his way to see being the Meldon Viaduct near Okehampton, on the Plymouth line. Nevertheless the line has not been everywhere an easy one to construct. The earthworks on the original line were by many considered sufficiently heavy to make the prospect of a dividend very small indeed, gradually rising one in 250 on the average. From Bishopstoke to Litchfield Tunnel, about 17 miles the line runs for the greater part of that distance through heavy chalk cuttings, with four or five short tunnels. Nearly the whole of the rest of the line from Litchfield Tunnel, which by the way is nearly 400 feet above the Waterloo and Southampton Stations, to London, is embankment, though without any works of special difficulty. The Honiton Tunnel is the longest on the South Western system, but it is only 1350 yards in length.

The line at its first opening was laid with stone block sleepers, but a few years' experience was sufficient to cause them to be replaced by wooden ones. These were at first laid five feet apart, soon to be reduced to four feet, but this still proving to be too much, the sleepers have been for many years laid at the usual distance of three feet apart, measured from centre to centre. The cast iron sleeper of M. De Bergue was tried with some success about thirty years ago upon a short portion of line, but ultimately it was found unsuitable for heavy traffic. It consisted of a cast iron plate, 20in. long by 14in. wide and $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick. Steel rails are being gradually laid down all over the system, together with heavier chairs to meet the increased weight of the engines. After using nothing but hand signals till 1840, a peculiar system of fixed signals was brought into use, a few specimens of which may still be seen in out of the way places. A circular metal disc with a crescent shaped portion cut out of it, was affixed to a rod pivoted by the side of a short post. The disc had another motion, produced by an endless cord passing round its grooved edge. It could therefore be presented edgeways or otherwise to the line, being pivoted at its centre to the rod bearing it. The

solid half of the disc turned towards either road, indicated that that line was blocked, the open side of course had the opposite signification. The solid part was put upwards when both lines were blocked, whilst the disc presented edgeways meant both lines clear. The system of train signalling, for many years the somewhat dangerous one of preserving only intervals of time between trains, which although supposed to represent intervals of space as well, did so only up to a certain point, has now given place to the invaluable block system. The South Western authorities were almost the first to recognize the merits of electric train signalling and in the South Kensington Museum there may be seen an ancient "Train recorder." A large dial, like a clock face, with the names of the principal stations on it instead of figures, has a hand or pointer, which was directed by electricity from each station as the train left, to the name of the station on the dial. The apparatus being fixed at the terminus it could be seen at a glance where the train was. The whole of the line, single as well as double, is now worked on the block system; and on many of the single lines the staff and ticket system is employed as an additional security. The interlocking of points and signals, whereby being mechanically connected together they cannot be at variance with each other, is also extensively used and forms a means of security not less valuable than the block system itself.

CHAPTER XX.

George Stephenson's Prophecy.—Railway burdens and their effect upon the employés.—The Directors' equitable policy.—The South Western of to-day.

“Now lads I venture to tell you that I think you will live to see the day when railways will supersede almost all other methods of conveyance in this country—when mail coaches will go by railway, and railways will become the great highways for the king and all his subjects. The time is coming when it will be cheaper for a working man to travel on a railway than to walk on foot. I know there are great and almost insurmountable difficulties to be encountered, but what I have said will come to pass as sure as you now hear me.” So said George Stephenson in a brief but characteristic after dinner speech at Stockton fifty-six years ago. Great and almost insurmountable difficulties have indeed been overcome by the locomotive, sooner even than the “Father of Railways” anticipated. Prejudice, the greatest of all influences, has been broken through, sordid interest fell before it, science opened her treasure house on its behalf and to-day the locomotive is king of the civilized world. The whole face of England's fair landscape has been changed since Stephenson's first attempt; a network of steel and iron, links town and country, hill and dale, forest and lake; along the iron way factories and workshops thrive and multiply, and cities stand where a barren land lay before. The locomotive shows its impress too upon the habits and health of the people; the merchant who in times gone by lived over his warehouse now takes train to a country villa; the artisan has left the squalor of a town rookery for his cottage in the health-giving air of the suburbs, while meat and fruit and vegetables fresh

from the shires and the ports, are daily poured in for the teeming thousands of our cities and towns. The iron horse is never weary, by day and by night the work goes on—enriching the poor, producing enjoyment for the rich and giving employment to hundreds of thousands, till by the side of its civilizing influence the greatest efforts of statesmen and philanthropists appear puny and vain.

Such are the features of the railway age, yet how few, comparatively speaking, appear to recognize the incalculable benefits of the English railway system. The average Englishman stays at home to grumble and goes abroad to brag. He walks down a crowded street and finds himself delayed at every step; he travels by railway on a busy day but will excuse no delay, although the circumstances under which he progresses are very similar. Before the British juryman a Railway Company appears prejudiced, and many an unjust claim has been paid, many a case of fraud overlooked because such Companies are placed beyond the pale of the law meted out to ordinary tradesmen and citizens. Take cases of compensation for personal injury, where, it may be, through the momentary forgetfulness of an employé, a Company is mulcted in some hundreds or thousands of pounds. The most notable instance on record arose in 1877, when a doctor was injured near Nine Elms. The accident was caused by a signalman, who saw a fellow official being crushed to death before his eyes. Animated by the common impulses of humanity he rushed from his box, forgetting to place at danger, a signal he had lowered for the engine which had run over his comrade. The consequence was that a following train from Reading ran into the engine and one or two persons were injured. An action for compensation was brought against the Company and a jury awarded the doctor £7000. This amount the plaintiff considered insufficient and upon obtaining a new trial he received a verdict for £16,000. It is evident that such an award could not have been given against a tradesman or a private firm, because it would simply have

meant complete ruination. A Railway Company being made up of a large number of shareholders appears to be the reason such verdicts are returned, and hundreds suffer in consequence. In 1870 a select Parliamentary Committee was appointed to inquire into the question of compensation for personal injury, and they came to the conclusion that a change in the law was necessary, recommending the establishment of a tribunal without juries and limiting the amount to be awarded to each class of passenger. But nothing was done, and in common with the passenger duty, which was imposed upon the first opening of railways as an equivalent to a tax then in force upon all conveyances by road, the burden remains. The present Government scheme for the reduction of the passenger duty, promises, as far as the South Western is concerned, to afford relief in one direction and impose as great a tax in another. Jurymen who are so lavish in their awards, and legislators who cheerfully acquiesce in the imposition of greater burdens, doubtless entertain a vague notion that economy will be forced upon the Companies by their actions, but they cannot surely comprehend how extensive and thorough the application of economic principles must perforce become. Heavy losses to a Railway Company may not only mean a reduced dividend and consequently a curtailment in many shareholders' establishments, a large proportion of whom are widows and minors; the hard working servants, with whom, perhaps, jurymen and legislators commiserate for their dangerous and ill-requited labours, often feel the loss sooner than the shareholders. Coal and iron will not fall in price to order, and the only items of expenditure open to reduction are the salaries and wages of the staff. There may not, indeed, be any actual reduction in wages, but a with-holding of those periodical increases which men work for, and look forward to, makes a period of economy felt none the less severely. Again, how is enterprise crippled, how are projects for development of trade retarded and travelling facilities curtailed under the depressing influence of heavy losses! A

prosperous and well managed railway lends life and vitality to the whole district through which it runs, but a line barely paying its way fails to give that help to industry and commerce a country deserves at its hands. Should England unhappily have to pass through one of those severe depressions which have during the present century darkened the commercial horizon, the outlook for the 300,000 railway employés of the United Kingdom would be very dark, so heavy is the load of taxation and other liabilities that has been heaped upon the great factors of national prosperity.

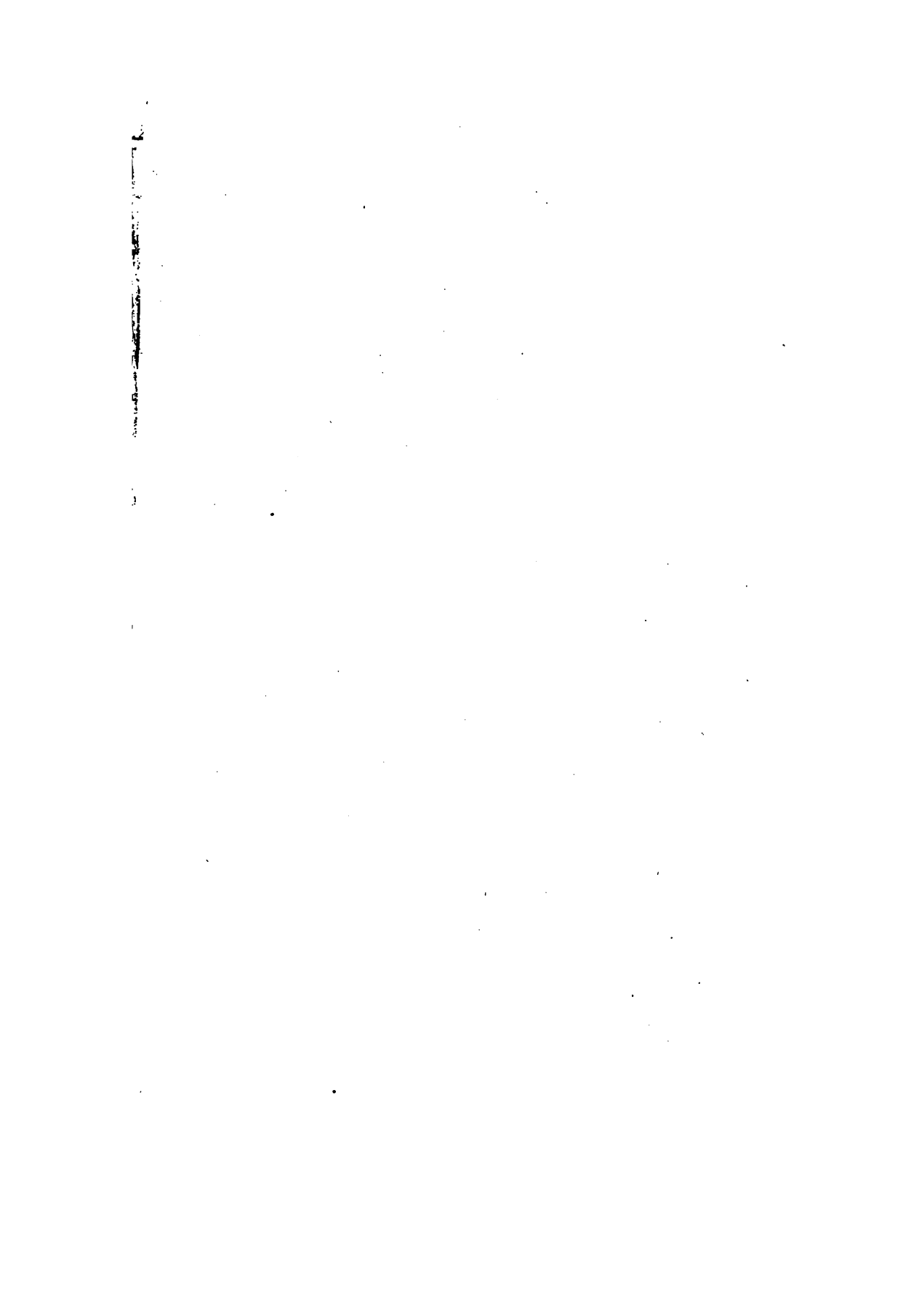
The directors of a Railway Company have three distinct interests to study: first, the shareholders who deserve a fair return for their capital: secondly, the public who expect ample accommodation; and thirdly, the employés who require a fair remuneration for their wearisome services. Any undue advantage accorded to either of these interests tells in a degree against one or both of the others. It has been, not unfrequently, observed that those Companies who give great advantages to the public and who are most popular with the travelling community are among the least liberal to their servants. The South Western directors have hitherto endeavoured to hold the balance fairly between these diverse interests. The Company is not on a footing with the northern lines in having an enormous and highly remunerative goods traffic, and consequently cannot afford to spend thousands lightly in experiments, but the Company have never been backward in adopting those appliances for public safety and comfort which have been of proved utility. The South Western was among the first to entertain and extend the electric block system; the interlocking of points and signals they have upheld and utilized to the fullest extent; the use of continuous vacuum brakes they have adopted and are fitting up as quickly as possible; the electric light is in use at Waterloo station, and in the shunting yard at Nine Elms goods depôt. Vast improvements also have lately been made in the appointments of the various classes of passenger

carriages. Another step, for which the poor especially owe the Company a debt of gratitude, remains to be stated—the Company has encouraged to the full the issue of excursion tickets at low fares to all parts of its system; and it is the only southern Company which conveys third class passengers at a penny per mile by all trains.

With the employes the Company remains on good terms, having more than once clearly demonstrated that when the line prospers the servants are not forgotten. A conspicuous case occurred only last year, when after a very successful season, increases of salaries were given involving an addition of upwards of £4,000 per annum to the Company's expenditure. Great assistance is also given to the various societies and benevolent funds connected with the service, which include a Friendly Society, a Superannuation Fund, a Widows' and Orphans' Fund, a Savings Bank paying 4 per cent. interest, guaranteed by the Company, and a Pension Fund, the latter a scheme perfected by Mr. F. J. Macaulay, the secretary, to provide a competency for the Company's servants in their old age. This policy, added to the judicious direction of the general manager, who has never been known to refuse a fair hearing to anyone having a grievance, contributes much toward the existing good feeling.

The South Western system now comprises about 800 miles of line in use, which, added to the Somerset and Dorset railway, and those branches under construction, make a total of a thousand miles of line under the Company's control. The authorized capital of the Company exceeds £28,000,000, of which £27,929,000 have been created or sanctioned.

The metropolitan terminus in the Waterloo road is the largest passenger station in London, and contains longer platforms than any other London terminus. Its principal signal box, called the "A Box," having not less than 173 levers, is said to be the largest in the world. The number of passengers despatched from this station exceeds three millions annually. This does not include season ticket holders, of whom 8,000





INK PHOTO, SPAGNOL & CO, LONDON

"A" SIGNAL BOX, WATERLOO STATION.

use the station. After passing the large goods and locomotive departments at Nine Elms the traveller from Waterloo soon reaches Clapham Junction, in and out of which station upwards of 1,100 trains pass daily. From thence the valley of the Thames, with Windsor and Reading, may be quickly reached, or the passenger may journey to the breezy hills of Surrey at Epsom and Leatherhead, while on the other hand the main line will take him to Portsmouth or the Isle of Wight, to Southampton, the New Forest, Bournemouth or Weymouth. By express trains the fair city of Exeter is arrived at in four hours; from thence North Devon to Ilfracombe, and south to Plymouth and Devonport are within easy hail.

The number of passengers carried annually by the Company exceeds 33 millions, and in the same period the tonnage of goods traffic ranges from three to four millions, whilst of parcels three millions are conveyed each year. Included in these figures are classes of traffic having by no means an unimportant bearing upon the food supply of the metropolis. Thus during the past year 5,000,000 gallons of milk and 12,000 tons of fresh meat were conveyed to London. Enormous quantities of butter, eggs and vegetables are also landed at Southampton by South Western steamers, and despatched to the Great City, not less than 20,000 tons of new potatoes having been carried by this route within a period of three weeks early in the spring of the present year. The total annual revenue of the Company from all sources exceeds £3,800,000.

The South Western line of to-day thus wears a very different aspect from the picture drawn by Col. Henderson to a sceptical audience at Southampton half a century ago. The gallant Colonel's crude ideas of two wheezy engines making three trips daily, have become enlarged since then. The South Western has increased and prospered side by side with the country it has fertilized and enriched, and given fair play there is no reason to doubt but that it will throw its branches still further afield and continue to prosper to the

benefit alike of its shareholders, the district it serves and the 13,000 servants it employs.



The following have been the Dividends declared upon the ordinary stock of the London and South Western Railway Company.

RATE PER CENT. PER ANNUM.

	Half-year ending June.	Half-year ending Dec.
1839	3	3
1840	4	6
1841	6	6
1842	6	6½
1843	6	7
1844	6½	8
1845	7½	8½
1846	7½	8½
1847	7½	8
1848	6	5
1849	3½	3½
1850	3	4
1851	3½	5½
1852	3½	4
1853	3½	5
1854	4½	5
1855	4½	5½
1856	5½	6½
1857	4½	5½
1858	4½	5½
1859	4½	5½
1860	4½	5½
1861	4	5½
1862	4	6
1863	4½	5½
1864	4½	5½
1865	4½	5½
1866	4	4½
1867	3½	5½
1868	4	5½
1869	4	5½
1870	4	5½
1871	4½	6½
1872	4½	6½
1873	4½	6½
1874	4½	6½
1875	4½	6½
1876	4½	6½
1877	4½	6½
1878	4½	6½
1879	4½	6½
1880	4½	7½
1881	4½	7
1882	4½	7
1883	4½	

