

**THE COMMERCIAL
CONSEQUENCES OF A
MIXED GAUGE ON OUR
RAILWAY SYSTEM EXAMINED**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649298839

The commercial consequences of a mixed gauge on our railway system examined by Samuel Sidney

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

SAMUEL SIDNEY

**THE COMMERCIAL
CONSEQUENCES OF A
MIXED GAUGE ON OUR
RAILWAY SYSTEM EXAMINED**

THE
COMMERCIAL CONSEQUENCES
OF A
MIXED GAUGE
ON
OUR RAILWAY SYSTEM
EXAMINED.



By SAMUEL SIDNEY,

AUTHOR OF THE "HISTORY AND PROSPECTS OF THE RAILWAY SYSTEM,"
&c., &c.

A Railway is nothing but an implement—a tool of commerce—the more costly the
less useful.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER AND CO., 65, CORNHILL.

1848.

INTRODUCTION.

THE following observations have been prepared as a sequel to my pamphlet, "Danger to Travellers and Injury to Shareholders threatened by a combination of the Broad and Narrow Gauges," published last year, with the view of bringing down to the latest moment all the information extant on the cost of this innovation. I do not address myself to Engineers or men of science, but to the travelling and trading public: to address our dilettanté statesmen would be useless.

Our experience, our science is useless, if the working expenses of Railways are not reduced in such a manner as to enable the Companies with profit to themselves, to reduce the charge for conveying third-class passengers, coal, ore, iron, &c.

At present, the whole tendency of Legislation runs against any reduction of Railway charges, except by enforced means, which will ruin Railway Companies.

We are proceeding with our Railways on the same prin-

ciple *as if because* the form of Sir Robert Peel's silver spade was a great improvement on the rude, long-armed tools in use in Ireland, it had been ordered that in future every labourer should either provide himself with a silver spade, or with *both* a silver and an iron one.

The Cause of Railway uniformity is the cause of the masses—of all men who cannot pay express fares.

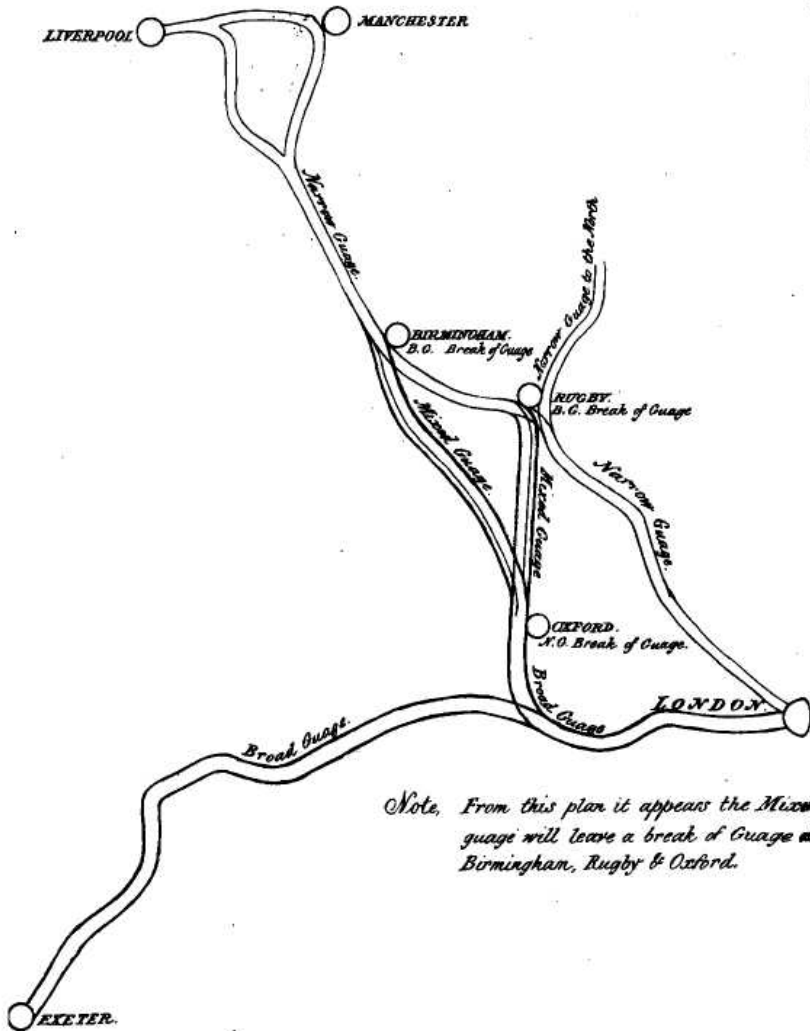
Uniformity is as possible now as when the Gauge Commissioners' Report was made, for scarcely a yard of the additional Broad Gauge or Mixed Gauge has been laid down; and for one-third of the cost of the Mixed Gauge Lines sanctioned, Uniformity might be obtained.

After three years of experience and expedients, now as then, I am firmly convinced that the only cure for Breaks of Gauge—the only conclusions of the ceaseless, costly contests in which the Rival Systems are engaged—lies in National Uniformity.

S. S.

Westminster,

June 24th, 1848.



THE
COMMERCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF A MIXED
GAUGE EXAMINED.

The Position of our Railway System.

THE Railway system of England ought to be the best and cheapest in the world. Railways, like Steam Engines, were invented and brought to perfection by English Engineers. One fault, fostered by the ignorance and timidity of our Legislators, threatens to render our Railway Communication inferior to that of every other civilized country, by sacrificing all economical improvements in favour of one luxury, and perpetually excluding from cheap conveyance the great body of the working-classes, an important amount of fuel, and other low-priced commodities.

The notion of a Mixed Gauge as a remedy for the Break of Gauge, and as a compromise between the rival Broad and Narrow Gauge interests, has been favourably received by the public, in Parliament, and by the Railway Commissioners.

Captain Simmons, the engineer of the Railway Board, has reported that the two "Gauges may be combined *in one Railway, with perfect safety to the public;*" but he adds, "by avoiding all meeting *points*, by a separation of the Gauges *in the Sidings and Stations*, by most stringent regu-

lations *preventing*, under any circumstances, *the connecting in one train of carriages of different Gauges*, the line may be, by a strict compliance with these conditions, *irrespective of expense*, either of construction or *working*, rendered practically safe."

Since this report (13th November 1847) the Railway Commissioners have reported, "That it will be expedient to extend the Broad Gauge to Birmingham by the adoption of the Mixed Gauge on the Birmingham and Oxford Railway, if the experiment which is about to be tried on the Oxford and Rugby Line proves completely successful," and they intimate that it may be found advisable to extend the peculiar advantages of the Wider Gauge to other districts by the extension of the Mixed Gauge.

I shall not pause here to show, as I could, that this Board of Railway Commissioners, which originated a desire on the part of the Legislature to diminish the expenses of constructing railways—to put an end to suicidal contests and injurious competition, and to bring about a general reduction of fares and rates ; and which represents the functions of the body by which the Gauge Act was framed as a final compromise of Gauge disputes—has in every instance betrayed its trust and sacrificed the interests of the great body of the public, especially of the labouring classes, to the luxurious haste of a few express passengers—has re-opened and encouraged Railway contests (on which 2000*l.* a day have frequently been expended by two Companies)—has displayed the ignorance and incompetence by mistakes of the most glaring nature ; for instance, a mistake of 50 miles in calculating the distance to Edinburgh ; but I shall for the present confine myself to explaining, in the plainest terms, what the Mixed Gauge is, which Mr. Brunel has