

**OBSERVATIONS ON HORSE
RAILWAYS, ADDRESSED TO THE
RIGHT HON. MILNER GIBSON,
M.P., PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD
OF TRADE, LONDON, PP. 3-54**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649316885

Observations on Horse Railways, Addressed to the Right Hon. Milner Gibson, M.P., President of the board of trade, London, pp. 3-54 by George Francis Train

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

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

**OBSERVATIONS ON HORSE
RAILWAYS, ADDRESSED TO THE
RIGHT HON. MILNER GIBSON,
M.P., PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD
OF TRADE, LONDON, PP. 3-54**



AMERICAN PASSENGER CAR.

OBSERVATIONS
ON
HORSE RAILWAYS,

BY
GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN,

ADDRESSED TO THE
RIGHT HON. MILNER GIBSON, M.P.,
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE
LONDON.

TRANSPORTATION LIBRARY

LONDON:
SAMPSON LOW, SON & CO., 47, LUDGATE HILL.
LIVERPOOL:
ADAM HOLDEN, 48, CHURCH STREET.

1860.

Transportation

Library

TF
830
.T77

Lord John Manners said, he did not take the same view as Sir Benjamin Hall did, that it was the duty of that office to interfere in any way with the paving of the streets of London.

Mr. Hawes would take the liberty of asking his lordship which department of the Government he considered such a subject referred to?

Lord John Manners: As Chief Commissioner of Public Works, he thought his was not the office. The more proper department, this being a commercial matter, he thought would be the Board of Trade.—*Vide Observer, March 14, 1868.* Deputation from the Metropolitan Parishes to Lord John Manners.

28-361
transport.

OBSERVATIONS ON HORSE RAILWAYS,

BY GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE MILNER GIBSON, M.P.

THE age of Omnibuses in crowded cities has passed. The age of Horse Railways has commenced.

AMERICA has introduced the new invention of relieving crowded streets, by giving additional facilities for travel; and, as Europe must sooner or later, adopt a similar system, I make bold to address you, as President of the Board of Trade, a few comments connected therewith.

WHILE on a recent visit to the United States, I was surprised to find the progress made in what the Americans term *Horse Railways*, the English *tramways*, and the French *chemin de fer Americain*. In the cities of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, St. Louis, and Cincinnati, the railway cars were displacing omnibuses in all the large streets. Like all practical labour-saving inventions, the people first oppose then advocate them. They have already become a public utility; and Americans would miss their railway-car as much as the English would their penny-postage system. The horse railway is a fixed fact. It has had a fair trial, and has met with striking success.

The Horse Railway is creating, and will continue to create, the same revolution in large cities that the telegraph on the land, and the electric cable under the ocean has done in commerce.

As the locomotive supersedes the stage-coach on the shore, and the steam-boat displaces the sailing vessel on the sea, so will Horse Railways make omnibuses give way to the force of progress.

The railway from Liverpool to Manchester, in your recollection, astonished the world. Now there are seventy thousand miles! Brunel's genius progressed from the Great Western of 2,000 tons to the Great Eastern of 20,000 tons in twenty years! Now a thousand steam-boats connect the mother land with her colonial children, as the arteries carry life from the heart.

England, first in iron railing the country with steam, is last in iron railing the city with horse-power. But the enterprise that stimulated the Thames Tunnel, the Tubular Bridge, the Crystal Palace, and Great Eastern, will not long submit to the miserable steam-packets from England to France, ferry-boats from Liverpool to Birkenhead, or to omnibuses blockading the leading city thorough-farcs. The latter enterprises, I am confident, on the improved system, would prove as great financial successes as the former have financial failures.

This paragraph, from the *Times*, shows that Ireland is wide awake on the subject, while England sleeps:—

IRISH TRAMWAYS.—As there is now no doubt but that the bill of Sir Robert Ferguson will become law in the course of the ensuing session of Parliament, a prospectus has been issued of the City of Dublin and Suburbs Tramway Company, under the Limited Liabilities Act. A very flourishing account is embodied in the preliminary notice of the success of tramways in New York, chiefly founded on the statistics supplied by the correspondent of the *Times*, in New York. It is proposed that the capital of the Dublin Company should be £100,000, in £10 shares, to be paid as wanted; to run five lines of four miles each through the suburbs, centering in the business part of the city, and connecting the railways and quays.

The Irish journals are fully alive to the importance of Sir Robert Ferguson's bill. Will England and Scotland allow Ireland to take the lead, or rather will not Parliament pass a general bill for the kingdom?

The advantages of Horse Railways over Omnibuses are so well set forth, by Alexander Easton, C.E., of Philadelphia, in "*A Practical Treatise on Street or Horse-power Railways*" that the following Extract will be of interest:—

Popular prejudice is the great enemy with which the advocates of innovation have had to combat, and strange as it may appear, it is nevertheless practically true, that the more useful the measure advocated, the greater has been the amount of opposition brought to bear against it, even by parties who have subsequently been benefited by the very measures they sought to defeat.

A glance at the early history of turnpike roads will clearly show the difficulties encountered by their projectors; but which, when overcome, became the favored improvement of the age, and legislative halls sounded with angry debate for their protection, so soon as railroads were proposed, denouncing them as a nuisance, and their corporators as visionary speculators. So it was with the introduction of canals, steam-boats, and even gas, the arguments against which, brought forward by the opposition having, in each instance, exhibited the grossest ignorance of science, and of the practical effect of the proposed improvements, all of which is applicable at the present day, and has been experienced by those who proposed the introduction of street railways.

The interest which operated against turnpike roads was that of the mulcteer; the interest which operated against railroads was that of stage coach and wagon proprietors, and in the case of street railways the opposition is from omnibus companies and antiquated stage communities, whose palpable interest it is to defeat a measure, which invades their imagined rights, by the substitution of a means of communications so manifestly useful and necessary, as to completely destroy the system to which they are so faithfully wedded. They use the means employed in their interests to influence, and lead on opposition, until having obtained certain provisos in the charter for their especial benefit; the time has arrived to fraternize with the enemy—when they at once become strong advocates for street railways; and unfortunately, without the influence to quench the flame of prejudice which they have ignited.

* * * * *

That increased facilities for commerce and transportation cause greater influx of traffic and travel to the principal streets of large cities, is indisputably recognized, and where the consequent inconvenience of narrow thoroughfares cannot be corrected, it must be modified by economizing time and space.

Time is economized by regularity of transit; the cars being quickly stopped by the application of the brake, the most refractory horses are immediately arrested; while the whole operation becomes so mechanical, that the horses, when accustomed to the signals of the bell, stop or start without any action on the part of the driver, by which means a time table can be effectively used, and business men are not subjected to delays incident to the old—and we trust soon to say obsolete—*omnibus system*.

Space is economized, because omnibuses, (the most numerous and dangerous portion of the travel,) surging from side to side of the streets, are abolished, while the work heretofore inadequately performed by three of those vehicles, is easily accomplished by one car, in half the time, notwithstanding it is concentrated and confined to one channel.

By the convenience afforded the public by the cars, the sidewalks are relieved from pedestrians, and the centre of the street from vehicles; a seat can be taken and vacated without trouble or danger to the occupants of the car, whether invalid or infirm, and the rails present such an even and smooth surface for the wheels of ordinary vehicles, that the drivers avail themselves of their continued use. It is a most difficult matter to dispel from the ignorant or prejudiced mind, the idea, that the railways will be constantly occupied by continuous trains of cars, which beyond a doubt would block up the street, obstruct the travel, and be a most confirmed nuisance, ruinous to the locality; whereas in reality the rails themselves form no obstruction, but rather invite vehicles on the track; the passage of the little car is momentary, as it moves quietly along the street; and the nuisance occasioned by the rattling of omnibuses over the rough stones is abolished, leaving the streets nearly as noiseless as when covered with snow; the advantages of the smooth rail, are thus neither few nor unimportant. Any one, familiar with the laws of momentum, can readily understand the effect of the constant jar to buildings, occasioned by the passage of omnibuses, and particularly in the thronged thoroughfares, where buildings are most elevated.

If, however, the solidity of construction should prevent injurious results, there are many minor disturbances—if not so dangerous, almost as annoying—which cannot be prevented, such as the constant vibration of pier-glasses,