

THE ORLEANS AND TOURS RAIL ROAD.

The following is an account of the opening of the Railway from Paris to Orleans and Tours, which is to be extended to the sea ports of Bordeaux and Nantes. To the Parisians who are rarely induced to quit the precincts of their favorite City, the facilities thus afforded to visit, familiarly, the remoter parts of France, and for the rural population to frequent the Metropolis, must be most attractive to both, and the effect of so sudden a change in their social habits cannot fail to have a powerful influence in their political relations with other Countries, and which, it may be hoped, will be of a pacific character.

[From the Journal des Debats.]

PARIS, Oct. 29, 1845, 6 o'clock P. M.

To the Editor—SIR: I have just passed over, in less time than it took, ten years since, to go to Versailles and return, the space of a hundred and twenty two leagues, and in this immense distance which is gone over in a breath, without repose and without fatigue, we have passed through entirely new roads, we have crossed ancient cities formerly buried in the shades of their valleys, or lost on the summits of their mountains, and now these cities, suddenly renewed, are restored to that immense circulation which surrounds France on every side. Permit me to recount to you, while I am still dazzled with these miracles, the impressions of this day which is about to add a new chapter to the imposing adventures of steam.

In three hours the road to Orleans is passed over; you were on the flagging before Notre Dame at Paris, you are standing on those of Notre Dame at Orleans, and immediately the vast space opens before you which is to serve as the landing place of the road from Bordeaux. This station has been boldly laid out in a vast meadow filled with vineyards, and the road has placed itself quite at ease there since it is the State which gives it this magnificent track. You know in fact that the Bordeaux road is the first which has obeyed the law of 1842, which entrusts to the State the construction of Railways, to the State, that is to say, the most skillful, and magnificent of architects. It makes haste slowly like a sovereign master who knows how to foresee, who wishes to foresee everything. It traces with a firm hand its plan in space, choosing the most beautiful spots, throwing with a well exercised hand the most solid foundations, and far from avoiding, seeking on the contrary occasions to mingle in what they have most solemn, the miracles of art with the miracles of industry. It is father of a family who has two thousand millions of silver for his use, who builds, in the first place for the present, but especially for the future. These remarks are necessary in order to explain to you the monumental aspect of the road from Orleans to Tours.

This road, which is the important part of the line which is to go on to Bordeaux, was finished day before yesterday, not so entirely completed as to be able to admit it at once to the solemn honors of an authentic inauguration, when princes, statesmen, magistrates, captains, the poets and artists of France are called to take possession in the name of their common country, when the princes of the Church come to bless this new production of man's hands with the peace of God, and the consent of all. No, this honor will not be granted to the new work before two months, to this day the work is completed without being finished, it can be admired as a whole, but it cannot yet be looked at in detail. This modest inauguration was therefore a small entertainment given by Mr. Mackenzie to some of the men, who with their advice, their money, their labor, their encouragement, their personal influence, have aided him to accomplish in so short a time an enterprise which is to be counted among the works without number of this skillful engineer.

Mr. Mackenzie, one of the engineers of the road from Paris to Bordeaux, is with good right celebrated all over Europe. Still young, he has already built two hundred and fifty seven English miles of railway, without including the little lines necessary to the accomplishment of the works. His name is attached with ours, to vast and gigantic efforts, the road from Paris to Rouen, and soon the road from Rouen to Havre. He is a man who holds command in the most simple manner over an army of laborers. While he pushes forward to the ocean on one side, and on the other to the Garonne, he is engaged in constructing, here and there across Europe, thirty three railways. And if you knew how simple and easy is the command of this man—how modest is his triumph, and how he communicates his joy to the lowest of his workmen, who are treated by him like his associates, marching with an equal step to the triumph of a new world. This one brings his sweat—another his money, still another his genius! A vast contract of all the people, who put in common and in good faith all their powers in order to arrive at the division of this legitimate profit of kingdoms aggrandized by so many efforts. *Communitate fit amicia*—community gives birth to friendship, said Pythagoras. Be ye one to accomplish great things, said Saint Paul. And yet that other work of the Book, have peace, and all the rest shall be given to you.

Thus England and France are no longer fighting men with pacific arms, with money, but on the contrary, they go in concert over this country of France, which is reserved for such a

fair future! And is it not a singular thing, that this man, who does not know a word of French, commands a thousand French laborers, who do not understand a word he says, by a gesture, a glance, and who are to day elevating for him as for a conqueror, triumphal arches!

At eight o'clock in the morning, the few guests invited to this festival, entered the new carriages. They made it apparent, by their zeal, their ardor, their sincere wishes for every thing useful and grand, that they are not manifesting for the first time their devotion to great and useful ideas; The Duke de Mouchy, Baron Richemont, M. de la Penoniere, General Schneider, M. Newmaner, and several others. The train was conducted by Mr. Harrison, who had under his command a powerful engine, which is recently from the manufactory of M. Hick.

At first we proceeded slowly; the plain is so vast and so beautiful! beside, it was necessary to become accustomed by degrees to this new spectacle. Modest in his triumph, Mr. Mackenzie causes you to remark that the hand of the French Government makes itself felt in every step over this vast plain. The bridges—the causeway—difficult passages well passed over—the vast expensive materials—three viaducts, placed for eternity over 12 arches of 17 metres height—it is the French Government which has done all that. The Chamber of Deputies, also it was, which caused the open cars to be discontinued, that the poor traveller, the workman going to his labor, the soldier returning to the army, the sister of charity seeking the sick, the mother going to embrace her child, that all these need not suffer the inclemency of the seasons. It is a public benefit which will bear its fruits.

Mr. Mackenzie is as proud of these covered wagons which he has made so convenient, as he is of his beautiful locomotives, and of that admirable carriage destined for the king of the French. The carriage is however a miracle. Imagine an immense chest carried on six wheels: in that His Majesty will find a dressing room, a little parlour to write in, and a large parlour lighted by three windows, the Royal Crown surmounting all this magnificence! This is the *chef d'œuvre* of M. Guittingue, a *chef d'œuvre* which will appear well when placed beside the third class carriages protected against the wind, the rain, and the sun.

By degrees we acquired a velocity of ten leagues in an hour. At first we passed the field of Guine; this may be called the Clos Vougeot of this region. To give you some idea of its inhabitants yet so little advanced, let me describe to you their astonishment when they were addressed respecting the price of lands of which the new road dispossessed them. Great was the astonishment of the old men of Guine. "By my faith," said they, "Madame Pompadour took from our fathers the land to make the road which leads to her castle; Madame Pompadour has now come to pay us." Madame Pompadour—and the jury of expropriation of 1843!

The chateau of Madame Pompadour, so filled with the elegancies of the past century, belongs at present to the Prince of Chimay: it is the Chateau de Menars gallantly placed in the middle of his park. The Prince de Chimay has made a Prytaneum of this beautiful place, a school of arts and trades. Thus these most beautiful domains, the smiling abodes of elegancies and fetes, Chimay, Petit Bourge, the summer palace of Madame de Montespan, and the summer palace of Madame de Pompadour, have to-day become the asylum of children, who are learning to hold the spade, the plane, the hammer, those grand utensils which are changing the face of the earth. On the bridge of Menars, which is of fine proportions, the young people of the Prytaneum saluted the train with their acclamations, their shouts, their tri-coloured flag. The train passes, and far in the distance those who have a piercing sight, or, what is of almost as much value, those minds which are fond of looking back, salute, in their solemn repose, those old ruins where a part of the history of olden times was enacted. Below there, for example, on the other side of the Loire, does not something say to you—"There is Chambord?" Do you not recognize by those advancing turrets the Chateau of Chaumont, one of those ruins so skillfully preserved, which bear witness at the same time to respect for the past and respect for the future? These fields, these plains, this verdure, here is all that remains of Chanteloup;—Chanteloup! whence came that *bel esprit* of so much grace and savour, that Walpole of France, the Duke de Choiseul, who suffered disgrace as if to teach, from this distance of time, to the great Lords of the Court of Versailles the road of the opposition, a perilous road which led them all to the abyss. Into this abyss fell one of the first, who sold at auction the superb house of the Duke de Choiseul.

At this moment every one was silent. We looked—we admired. The Loire displayed in the distance those deceitful waters, the despair of sailors, and the pride of the landscape. We have already reached the Chateau of Blaisois—we are at Blois. Here we are before the celebrated chateau where that great Duke of Guise was basely murdered, the turbulent hero of an age of agitation and of civil war. There King Louis XIII was born. That projecting tower which still preserves a certain air of mystery, is the tower whence came Catherine de Medicis, accompanied by her astrologer, to consult the constellations of the heavens. There is something imposing in this city of the old history, so long hidden in its lands, and defended by this river, and which suddenly seems to us to be at the very gates of Paris,