

These four events are sufficient to mark the year 1851 as a memorable year for Canada.

For, then began that systematic movement of the public mind which never halted but marched right on, overcoming all obstacles, till the union of the provinces and the development of a railway system commensurate with the vastness of the country and the necessities of the times had become accomplished facts.

Then began that movement which has resulted in the Dominion of Canada possessing, 1st, the Grand Trunk Railway system by the amalgamation of twenty-four lines (3,158 miles); 2nd, the Canadian Government railway system (1,352 miles); 3rd, the Canadian Pacific Railway system, in which are consolidated twenty-one railways (6,127 miles); 4th, seventy other railways, having separate organizations, with a mileage of 5,131 miles.

THE BATTLE OF THE GAUGES.

341. The battle of the gauges sprung out of the bill relating to the Grand Trunk. It raged furiously for a time. Engineers were examined. Railway men were brought from the United States to give evidence. The diversities of opinion were very numerous and as great as they were varied. The example of the United States was not conducive to a settlement of the vexed question, for in that country at that time various gauges were in use. In New York, New England and the Western States, north of the Ohio River, the gauge was 4 ft. 8½ inches. In some parts of the Middle States it was 4 ft. 10 inches, and in the Southern States it was generally 5 feet. In Maine there were gauges of 4 ft. 8½ inches, and 5 ft. 6 inches. The gauge of the New York and Erie Railway was 6 feet. Finally, after a long investigation, the gauge of 5 ft. 6 inches was adopted as the one best adapted for the promotion of Canadian interests.

The gauges of the Grand Trunk, the Toronto & Guelph, and the Toronto & Goderich railways were fixed at 5 ft. 6 inches.

Commercial, as distinct from the political, considerations which were urged in favour of the 4 ft. 8½ inch gauge gradually gained increasing importance, and now there is but one passenger railway in the older provinces—that of Prince Edward Island, in which the gauge is other than the English standard. The Prince Edward Island railway which is 210 miles long is on the 3 ft. 6 inch gauge. There is another railway with a gauge of 5 ft. 6 inches, the Carillon & Grenville Railway, 13 miles long. The Alberta Coal Railway, Lethbridge, and the international boundary line (65 miles) has a gauge of 3 feet. In all there are 290 miles out of 15,627 miles with gauges other than the standard.

GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY.

342. The original Act of incorporation of the Grand Trunk proposed only a railway from Toronto to Montreal, 333 miles, with a capital of £3,000,000, the Government guarantee being given to the extent of about £2,500 per mile, to be paid in the proportion of \$160,000 as each £100,000 was expended upon the line. There were at the time in existence charters providing for railways from Montreal to the boundary line towards Portland, 130 miles, of which about one-third was constructed; from Quebec to Rich-