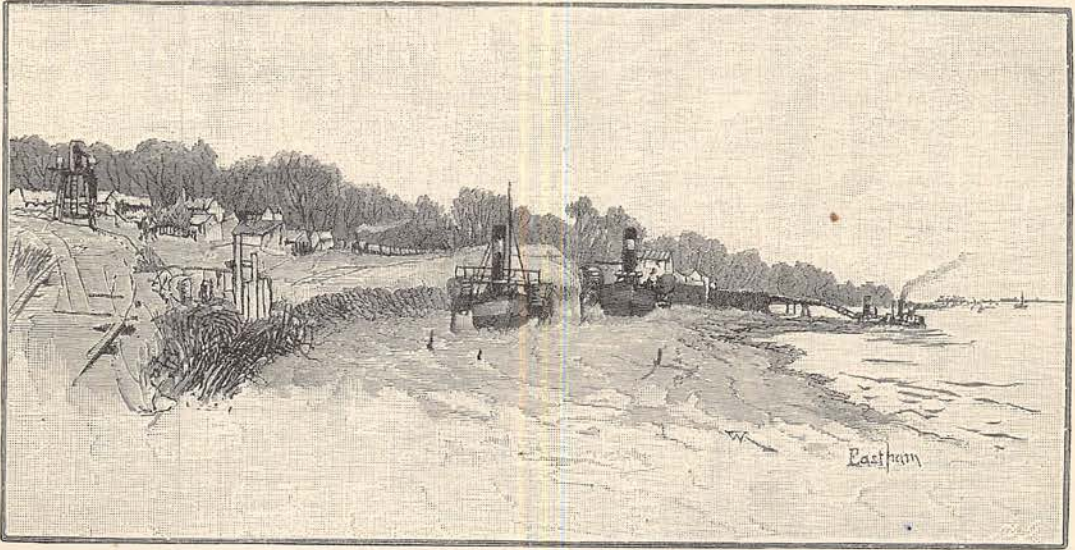


THE MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL.



EASTHAM—WHERE THE CANAL JOINS THE MERSEY.



THE story of the Manchester Ship Canal has its romantic as well as its practical side. Its length is short compared with that of some canals; it has not locks like those which distinguish some of the Continental waterways; but in the extent and variety of the engineering works embraced, in the arduous nature of the effort to obtain the necessary powers, in the enthusiastic nature of the reception the scheme met with in its inception, and in the extent of the work in progress, are features which give it claim to rank amongst the leading works of the age.

The idea of a navigable waterway to Manchester is not a new one; and schemes were brought forward scores of years ago, which railways caused the abandonment of; but for ten years the idea has taken increasing hold of the citizens of Cottonopolis; and on the 27th of June, 1882, Mr. Daniel Adamson broached the plan to an assemblage at his own house at Didsbury, at which eleven mayors of municipalities were present. A provisional committee (of which Mr. Adamson was appointed the first chairman) was formed, plans were approved, and a Bill was presented for Parliamentary sanction, and the House of Commons sanctioned the measure, whilst the House of Lords decided that "it is not expedient to proceed with this Bill in the present session of Parliament." The long and costly Parliamentary proceedings which succeeded form an epoch in private Bill legislation

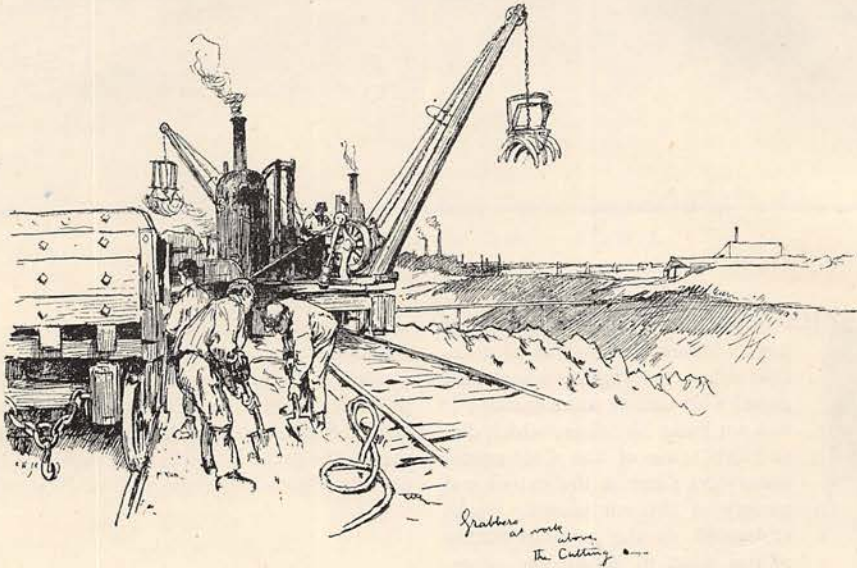
which needs no reference now. In the end the Act was obtained; and then came the monetary difficulty. Failing to find a response amongst the financiers, the promoters appealed to the people of Lancashire, and obtained subscribers sufficient to enable them to commence the great project; and now it is being pressed on with vigour. On the 11th of November, 1887, the



first sod was cut at Eastham (where the canal joins the estuary of the river Mersey) by the chairman of the Company—Lord Egerton. The estimated cost of

the first scheme was £6,304,186; the objects were thus indicated in the official "Description of the Project now before Parliament":—primarily, "to afford a cheap means for the transit of merchandise of all kinds to and from places beyond the seas, and the manufacturing towns and coalfields of Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire, and adjacent industrial districts." But the cost of the scheme has been varied, and the inclusion of the old "Bridgewater Navigation" has considerably altered the original intentions of the promoters. In August, 1887, the Canal Company paid a cheque for £1,710,000, for which it received the rights and property of the Bridgewater Navigation, and also those of the Mersey and Irwell Navigation, which form part of the plan of

The steam navy claims more than a ton of coals daily, and costs about £2,000; so that a statement recently made by Lord Egerton, that there were in February of the present year "eighteen steam navvies" at work on the various sections of the canal, will indicate the manner of the work, and the vigour with which it is progressing. At that time 3,000 workmen were employed on the canal, and the number has been increased since; and the sight on the route of the canal is a busy one, especially at Eastham and near Runcorn. The "navvy" is seen cutting upwards in the cuttings; locomotives are supplying it and other workers with empty waggons, and removing laden ones; and human navvies are picking, digging, "cornering," wheeling, stacking piles of sleepers, and

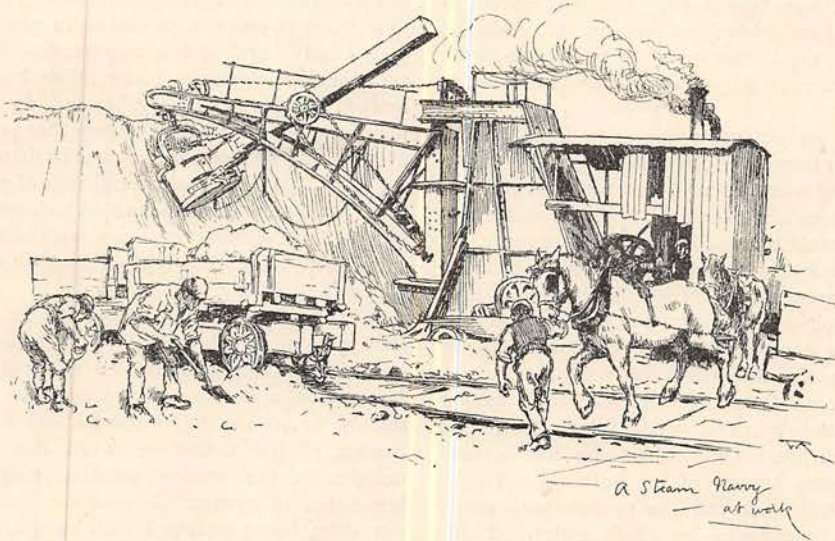


the Canal Company as it was sanctioned ultimately by Parliament.

The Ship Canal commences at Eastham, on the south bank of the Mersey estuary, and it follows the course of the bank for above a dozen miles, and thence in a course nearly direct for the city of Manchester. Its total length is a little over thirty-five miles, divided into sections, on nearly all of which a commencement of the work has been made; and the locomotive, the "steam navy," the steam excavator, steam cranes, portable engines, pumping engines, and other contractors' plant are at work. The work to be done is immense; the cuttings alone involve the removal of 44,428,575 cubic yards of earthwork—a seventh part of which is rock. At Eastham a number of "steam navvies" are at work, "scooping" out material from a solid "face" of earth as easily as a grocer draws out a taste of cheese. These huge land-dredging buckets, as they might be described, will attack the marl or clay to be removed; and so rapid is their scoop, so vast their hold of the "face," that in some instances one has been found to pull off and place in waggons for removal 1,000 tons of marl in a day's work.

tending the many machines at work. The operations are changing the appearance of marshy flats and pastoral land near the Mersey; villages of huts have sprung up, sheds for locomotives bulk out in the landscape, huge cuttings are being made, and vast spaces are being filled with the earth thence drawn; whilst a vigorous life spreads itself along the line the canal is to take, and overflows in its eager jollity into the towns near; so that abodes of chemicals, of salt, and of boatmen have added thereto the bustling life of the navy.

It is a wonderful work: the contract price is to be £5,750,000; it is to be completed within four years from the date of commencement: it removes canals of olden date, such as that from Runcorn to Latchford; it alters the course of railways to some extent; it carries roads above its own course, and places water-supplies under it; it fills the beds of rivers and water-courses; needs vast locks and sluices, hydraulic machinery, many swing bridges (the steel-work in the girders for the bridges is estimated to be more than 3,300 tons in weight), and lifts, to lower and raise barges and boats to and from the canals. And whilst



the capitalists of the greater cities looked coldly upon the project when it was placed before them, the people of Lancashire, and especially the small companies, looked on it with such favour that there are now 39,710 distinct holdings of shares—many being those of stores, companies, &c. Up to the end of 1887 there had been allotted £7,383,020 worth of shares, and nearly a third of that sum had been paid up, a very considerable portion of which had been expended on the purchase of the Bridgewater and subsidiary navigations, on land, and on works.

What this great project will do for Lancashire and Cheshire, when completed, remains to be seen. The

hopes of the promoters are that it will increase its trades and manufactures, and carry more cheaply products of present and of future industries. It is a bold venture, brought out by those who "love the land" and its commerce, and believe that water carriage is essential for the development of its resources, and to meet a growing international competition. They have faced the stern and long contest to obtain powers, and at last won; they are giving their capital to it; and they look beyond the picturesque present of the undertaking in construction to the future of completion, with satisfaction at what has been done, and hope for that future.

MATRIMONIAL MAXIMS BY A MARRIED MAN.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY ABOUT TO BE MARRIED.



YOUR happiness and misery in this world depend as much on the expectations of things we have been accustomed to indulge in as on the nature of the things themselves. If you expect apples to grow from gooseberry bushes, you are extremely unreasonable; and,

when disappointed in the produce, you will have to blame your own unschooled imagination, not the nature of the plant or the virtue of the soil. So with regard to marriage. People in not a few cases, I fear, are disappointed in the results of this great act of social life, simply because they had formed unreasonable expectations. What are your expectations of the married life? If you expect to find in it a paradise of delight and a field of clover you are sure to be disappointed. Expect from it only a more

sacred sphere of moral sympathy, and the best school of moral training, and it is not in the power even of a bad husband to deprive you altogether of the rich spiritual blessing of the bond.

(II.)—It is not in the power of the most sagacious young lady to discern the character of the future husband in that of the present lover. In the case of a lover a thousand motives conspire to give to every attitude and action the amiable character of a desire to please another. In the husband the old instinct revives by which all men in common circumstances are apt to be ruled, the desire to please self. Look, therefore, for a certain change more or less in the character of your present admirer. If he is a good man, you may reasonably look for a matrimonial affection more deep, more steady, and more habitual than the love of courtship; but a diminution in the thousand and one little attentions and devoted services which now delight and flatter you so much, must, in