

insurance companies. In fact, positions of trust and honour fell to him as the natural result of ability and integrity; but for the last year or two of his life, he was unable to take an active part in his affairs, as his health and strength were failing. The *Glasgow Herald* of the 15th of June, 1889, says:—

“Sir James was quite noted in Edinburgh as a Chairman of meetings. Naturally a man of few words, when anything had to be done, his speeches were marked with a directness and brevity seldom to be met with. He was opposed to needless speech-making on the part of others, and always endeavoured to bring matters to a point as speedily as possible. Though this aspect of his character made him appear rather ‘short’ and ‘gruff,’ it was only a sign of the sterling purposeful mind. In private he showed his genial kindly disposition, while his work remains to testify, not only to his business capacity, but to his love of his fellow-men.”

The *Scotsman* of the same date, says:—

“He was a man of indomitable energy and firm purpose. Outwardly of a brusque demeanour, and inwardly possessed of a swift mental way of arriving at the heart of things, he was impatient of public palaver, and his laconic methods of conducting council and railway meetings occasionally staggered the advocates of liberty of speech. The white rose of his crest was a fitting symbol of a life of sterling integrity, and his motto ‘*In officio impavidus*,’ a very pithy way of expressing his conduct in public life.”

Sir James Falshaw was elected an Associate of the Institution on the 23rd of May, 1854.

JAMES GRIERSON was born at Edinburgh on the 10th of October, 1827. His father, who was early engaged on engineering and building operations, subsequently removed to Birkenhead, as a member of the engineering staff of the Chester and Birkenhead Railway. At this place young Grierson finished his schooling, and in 1843 he entered the office of Messrs. Dickson and Yarrow, the Chief Engineers of the line, upon the construction of which his father was employed. His career here was nearly nipped in the bud, for after a short time he was, apparently without rhyme or reason, sent home. His father, greatly distressed, wrote to Mr. Dickson, inquiring if the dismissal were due to “any dishonesty or untruthfulness.” The reply was to the effect that it was “neither for dishonesty nor for untruthfulness, but for sheer wilful waste.” It eventually turned out that young Grierson had taken a whole clean sheet of paper whereon to write the name of a caller.

He was reinstated, but the incident was a lesson in economy which he never forgot.

About this time he narrowly escaped a fatal accident. A locomotive being at rest over an engine-pit, he and another boy got into the pit "to examine the works," when the driver not knowing they were there, discharged the steam, which so scalded Mr. Grierson's companion that it ultimately caused his death.

On the completion and opening of the Birkenhead Railway, towards the end of 1847, Grierson went into the Traffic Department, and afterwards into the Accountant's Office, when he availed himself of the opportunity thus afforded of making himself thoroughly master of the administrative details of the several departments. The determination to make his way upward was even then alive within him; but it was accompanied with the resolve that he should do so by honest work, waiting for his reward when its worth should make itself fully recognised. In all he did he was never superficial. Whatever he had to do he did thoroughly—leaving no loose ends or imperfect conclusions, and guided always by an intelligent interest, which sought for a principle in everything, and looked ahead for further developments, where existing arrangements were imperfect.

He read every scrap of literature bearing upon railways which he could lay his hands upon, and even procured files of the *Times* in order to wade through its articles and notices upon railway enterprise.

He was only twenty-three when he was placed in a position of great responsibility. The Shrewsbury and Birmingham, and Shrewsbury and Chester Railways had both been opened for traffic, and the respective Boards of Directors soon became impressed by the difficulties inseparable from diverse and distinct management. They therefore determined to work their two lines as one, by means of a "Joint Through Traffic Committee." The then two leading Directors, Mr. Robert Roy, for the Shrewsbury and Chester, and Mr. George Knox, for the Shrewsbury and Birmingham, offered the appointment of secretary and manager to this Joint Committee to Mr. Grierson, of whose fine abilities they had been satisfied by close observation during preceding years. They had no cause to regret their selection, for young though he was, he very soon proved himself equal to his position, and rendered the two companies zealous and very valuable assistance, not only in increasing the traffic, but also in the struggle which soon afterwards took place between the London and North Western and Great Western Railway Companies, for the possession of these railways, and also

of the Chester and Birkenhead line. At this time Mr. Grierson greatly advanced his influence by gaining the confidence of his directors, and the estimation and good will of the traders. As his directors were strongly in favour of the Great Western alliance, considering it the best policy for the success of their railways, Mr. Grierson put his heart and soul into the parliamentary struggles, which ended in making them part of the Great Western system, and worked most earnestly for their amalgamation until it was accomplished. Even at this early period of his career, he gave more than promise of the reputation which he subsequently acquired as a witness before parliamentary committees.

At the time when this amalgamation was sanctioned the financial circumstances of the Great Western Company were not good, neither was its immediate prospects very bright. Mr. Grierson's name was a stranger to the proprietors, and had not yet become familiar to the outside railway world. Probably, therefore, with a view to giving confidence to the shareholders, the directors, instead of giving him the position he had so well earned, determined to appoint, first, Captain Codrington, and afterwards Mr. W. L. Newcombe, men of established reputation in the railway world, to look after their interests in their new territory, assigning to Mr. Grierson a subordinate place under them. At this he, no doubt, felt sore for the time. It was a check, the first and last to his honourable ambition, and he could not but be sensible of some disappointment that it should have been thought necessary, after his strenuous and successful exertions in effecting an alliance, the fruits of which no one was better fitted than himself to develop. The decision was the more painful, as the entire confidence shown him by his former directors justified the expectation that this task would be placed in his hands. At first he was almost disposed to regard his appointment to a subordinate position as a "vote of want of confidence." But although the acceptance of another appointment, as general manager to one of the leading railways, was pressed upon him, with nearly ten times the salary he was then receiving, he was not slow in deciding to refuse it. In this resolution he was strengthened by the advice of a friend older than himself, and he determined to "bide his time," continuing his position with, and loyalty to, those railways which had given him his first start in life, and being also satisfied that in time he could show that he was not unworthy of the entire confidence of his new masters. It is, however, scarcely necessary to say, that both Captain Codrington and Mr. Newcombe, as was to be expected from their well-known kindly and gentlemanlike feeling, studiously

endeavoured to make Mr. Grierson's position with them as agreeable as possible, and a lasting friendship and regard for each other was the result.

On Mr. Newcombe's appointment as General Goods Manager in 1856 over the whole of the Great Western system, and consequent removal to Paddington, Mr. Grierson was again put in charge of his old district, extended to Birmingham, with South Staffordshire added, and with offices at Wolverhampton. In the following year Mr. Newcombe returned to the Midland Railway, and Mr. Grierson succeeded him as the Great Western General Goods Manager, and went to Paddington, where he soon became a potential instrument in developing the resources of the vast district under his superintendence. Mr. Grierson was then only twenty-nine years old, but he had by this time made himself so thoroughly master of the company's business, that his claim to the appointment did not admit of question. His value was so thoroughly appreciated that, on the retirement in 1863 of Mr. Charles A. Saunders from the office of secretary and general superintendent, Mr. Grierson was appointed to succeed him with the title of General Manager.

And here, perhaps, a circumstance may be mentioned as illustrating the perfect unselfishness of his disposition. The late well-known Mr. A. C. Sheriff had been General Manager of the West Midland Railways for many years, and up to their becoming part of the Great Western system, and from his age and longer experience he might have been considered to be the best entitled to the position created on Mr. Saunders's retirement. Before seeking it for himself, Mr. Grierson took care to ascertain from Mr. Sheriff what his wishes were in the matter, telling him at the same time that, if he were a candidate, he should at once decline the appointment, if it were offered to him; but would be very greatly pleased to work under Mr. Sheriff as second in command. It was not until Mr. Sheriff assured him he did not wish the appointment, that he considered Mr. Grierson to be the proper man for it, and that he should have his active support if required, that he accepted the promotion.

That Mr. Sheriff judged rightly, no one could doubt who had watched the career of Mr. Grierson from the time of his appointment as General Goods Manager. Apart from his masterly powers of organization and administration, he had during these years, when the Great Western Company was engaged in important parliamentary conflicts for the protection and development of its system, rendered invaluable service to the company as a witness by his wide and accurate knowledge of details, by the soundness of

his views on the general policy of the company as affecting both the public and itself, and by the clearness and force with which these views were expressed.

During this period also, the protracted negotiations with the West Midland and South Wales Railway Companies, which ended in their absorption into the Great Western system, were entirely conducted by him, with the cordial concurrence of Mr. Saunders and the sanction of the board. Again, the agreements with the London and North Western and the Midland Railway Companies, in consideration of which these companies withdrew their opposition to the amalgamation of the Great Western company with the South Wales railway companies, and which has ever since guided and controlled the relations between those companies and the Great Western, were not only negotiated by Mr. Grierson, but to a great extent reduced by his own hand to the form in which they now stand. The value of these agreements to all the three companies can scarcely be overstated, if only for the reason that they defined the conditions on which competition between them was to be carried on, and put an end to the ruinous cutting down of rates, by means of which railway companies used in those days to abstract traffic from each other. These agreements set the example of the establishment of joint committees of the companies, by which all questions, in which the Great Western and the North Western in the one case, and the Great Western and the Midland in the other, have a joint interest, are discussed and determined, and differences adjusted.

From the hour of his appointment as General Manager, the whole of Mr. Grierson's energies were directed to removing existing impediments to the prosperity of the Great Western system, and to the steady development of its resources. Numerous improvements were from time to time introduced in the working of the line, which eventually told by raising the company from financial embarrassment to its present commanding position. Perhaps the greatest of these improvements was the conversion from the broad- to the narrow-gauge, except from Paddington to Bristol and the south-west of England, where the broad-gauge still continues, but with the narrow-gauge also. In this way the isolation of the Great Western, which had materially retarded its progress, was remedied, and it was brought into communication with all the narrow-gauge railways of the kingdom. The rolling-stock, both of engines, carriages, and wagons, was greatly improved and largely increased, and for comfort and appearance will now compare creditably with that of any other railway in the kingdom. Marked improvements were made in all the stations, most of them having

been entirely rebuilt; sidings at the goods stations, for the better accommodation of the goods traffic, and along the line were largely extended and remodelled, so as to prevent passenger and fast goods trains from being blocked by slower trains, thus ensuring more punctuality, and therefore greater safety, to the travelling public. Under his guidance the line became better equipped for the comfort and convenience of passengers, and was noted for the courtesy and attention of its servants, from guards and station-masters down to porters. Not less important were the judicious amalgamations with existing lines promoted under his advice, notably the Bristol and Exeter in 1876, and shortly afterwards the South Devon and Cornwall Railways; and the construction from time to time of new lines as the emergencies of trade and manufacture demanded. To his far-seeing counsel also is in a great measure due the construction of the Severn Tunnel—nearly 8,000 yards in length, with long and difficult approaches to it. The effect of this measure, in greatly reducing the distance from London and Bristol into South Wales, and from Liverpool and Manchester to Bristol over any existing route, has surpassed even Mr. Grierson's anticipation. It has become a source of great revenue to the company, without diminishing dividends, although a work of gigantic cost. When Mr. Grierson became General Manager, the Great Western system was 1,056 miles only. At his death, it was 2,455 miles. When he entered on that office, its ordinary stock stood in the market at 66. At the time of his death it was 135. What more convincing proof can be desired of the abilities and energy of the man, on whose shoulders the administration of the business arrangements of this vast undertaking practically rested?

In the power of organization, in which not a few of his brother general managers excel, Mr. Grierson was a master. His eye was upon every part of the system for which he was responsible, and he made it his duty to know that all the details of the great machine were carried out in accordance with his general plan. This habit he carried perhaps to a fault—not in so far as the efficient working of the machine was concerned, but in taxing his vital energies so severely, that he inevitably accelerated the day when it could no longer be guided by his powerful hand. It has been truly said of him, that "he possessed and always retained the most absolute mastery of the details of all the departments into which the working of a line of railway is necessarily divided. He was as familiar with the traffic on the smallest branch as with the prospects of some great scheme of extension; and he

knew how many days a sick porter had been off duty. No departmental manager could instruct him, no subordinate could impose upon him." "The one fault for which 'those who worked under him' blamed him, was the carelessness of his own health, which was by his devotion to duty a carelessness to which, there is too much reason to fear, his life was sacrificed. His holidays were few, and of brief duration; and he was far from well when he left England, in the autumn of 1887, to take part in a congress of railway officers, which was held at Milan." Tempted by his proximity to the City of the Doges, he extended his journey as far as Venice. The time was ill-chosen for a visit to Venice, even by a man in vigorous health; but to one in a state of exhaustion from excess of work the malaria of its canals in the hot season was fraught with danger. Hurrying back to England, he arrived in London early on the 30th of September, and spent the remainder of the day in disposing of questions which had arisen in his absence. He was no sooner at home than he developed an illness, the symptoms of which pointed to his blood having become affected with poisonous germs. Still he gave his thoughts to the work of his office, struggling on hopefully to the last. But on the 7th of October he succumbed, to the grief of the numberless friends who loved him as few friends are loved, and to the all but irreparable loss of the great undertaking to which his life had been devoted.

How deeply that loss was felt by the Directors, who for years had reason to know how much the smooth working and the prosperity of the Great Western system was due to their General Manager, was well expressed in their next half-yearly report (January, 1888) to their shareholders.

"By the lamented death of Mr. Grierson, the late General Manager, which occurred in October last, the Company has sustained a most serious loss.

"Closely identified with Great Western interests at an earlier date, Mr. Grierson entered the service of the Company in 1854, and was appointed General Manager, on the absorption of the West Midland lines, in October, 1863.

"Possessed of much force of character, combined with sound judgment and untiring energy, Mr. Grierson was specially qualified to cope with the difficulties consequent upon the large extensions of the Company's system, which were made during his tenure of office; and the Directors cannot express too strongly their sense of his constant devotion to the service, of the ability with which his multifarious duties were discharged, and of the aid which he rendered to them at all times in the organisation and management of the line, contributing in no small degree to the placing of the Company in its present satisfactory position.

"His assistance and counsel were of no less value in the deliberations with other Companies upon matters of common interest to railway proprietors, and the spontaneous and general expression of regret and sympathy which followed his death, testified not only to the appreciation of Mr. Grierson's personal worth,

but also to the high regard in which he was held alike by the railway world and by the various public Departments with whom his position brought him in contact."

Mr. Grierson was buried on the 12th of October, 1887, in Barnes Cemetery, a spot he had almost selected for himself because of the great retirement of its position. The great throng of mourners that assembled on the occasion amply testified how wide was the recognition of his worth in all the relations of life. He died much beloved, and without an enemy, a proof that the saying is unsound, which affirms, that a man who makes no enemies is not a man to inspire respect or love.

Mr. Grierson was elected an Associate of the Institution on the 5th of December, 1855.

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JOSEPH HANCOX was born at Tipton, Staffordshire, on the 25th of March, 1827. After a local education, he studied surveying with his brother, John Hancox, engineer of the Birmingham Canal Company, and passed a short time at the Horseley Iron works. Thence, in 1845, he went to the Trent Valley Railway as assistant to Mr. John Jones, agent for the contractors, Messrs. Brassey, Mackenzie and Stephenson. He was employed in similar positions in 1847 on the works of the North Staffordshire Railway, also under Mr. Jones, the agent for Mr. Brassey, and, in 1850, on the Birkenhead, Lancashire and Cheshire Junction Railway under Mr. George Goodfellow, agent for Mr. Brassey. From thence in 1853 he went to Piedmont, where he, in conjunction with the late Mr. Thomas Woodhouse, carried out the contract taken by Mr. Brassey for the construction of the Turin and Novara Railway, and in 1856 he took charge of the works of the Netherton Tunnel, under the late Mr. George Meakin, contractor. Mr. Hancox was then engaged for a considerable period in going over and estimating for Mr. Brassey several lines of railway, notably the Lukmanier, crossing the Alps, the Moldavian Railway, and the Colombo and Kandy, Ceylon; also the Swansea Docks, Spithead Forts, Portsmouth Harbour defences and other works. In 1859 he went to Rio de Janeiro to carry out the contract made by the Rio de Janeiro City Improvements Company with Messrs. Brassey and Ogilvie for the drainage of that city, which contract was completed.

At the expiration of that time, he was engaged estimating various works, amongst others the Berlin and Stralsund Railway.