

San Ellen

TRAINS annual



Edited by **CECIL J. ALLEN**

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FOREWORD

For the fifth successive year, TRAINS ANNUAL makes its bow to the railway enthusiast and to all who have railway interests at heart. The reception of its predecessors leaves us in no doubt that this annual production is welcomed in the railway world, and that it is finding a secure place in the affections and on the bookshelves of those for whom its contents are specially designed.

Whatever be the merits or demerits of nationalisation, there is little doubt that in one respect at least it tends to reduce the interest of what is done on the railways of Britain. For as standardisation bit by bit makes its influence more widely felt, so variety is bound to give way in the end to a more or less monotonous uniformity. But fortunately we have many years to go before all the characteristic features of the past disappear from view.

Moreover, there is always the fascination of recalling the past, especially of the years before 1923, when there were still in existence all the famous individual railways of the past, before they became swallowed up in the four main line railway groups. In the hands of such accomplished *raconteurs* as C. Hamilton Ellis and David L. Smith, we are given some vivid reminders of past London & South Western and Glasgow & South Western days; the Editor describes his early railway days on the one-time Great Eastern, and Dr. W. A. Tuplin writes in most interesting fashion of a famous locomotive engineer, John J. Robinson, and the locomotives of his ever-popular railway, the Great Central.

Those with memories of wartime travel will be delighted to be recalled to the London-Thurso journey of the "Jellicoes" by Roger E. G. Read, and those who went further afield will be equally pleased to be reminded by F. A. S. Brown of the unique journey from the plains of India up to Darjeeling. For a European contrast the Editor describes the most remarkable railway switchback in the Alps, which forms the route of the so-called "Glacier Express;" and this comparison is of particular interest in that the highest altitudes on both lines tie almost exactly—7,407 ft. on the Indian line at Ghum, and 7,409 ft. on the Swiss line on the Bernina Pass.

To come to modern times, G. Freeman Allen's conducted tour round Toton gives an excellent survey of one of the most modern examples of a mechanised marshalling yard, and, also in the freight realm, "Quicksilver" reveals something of the wonders of present-day freight operation in the United States, with trains of over one hundred bogie wagons, and more than ten thousand tons in weight, on which it is nothing unusual for the enginemen on the footplate to be more than a mile away from the train crew in the caboose. By comparison, the quaintness of some of the railway byways in Southern and Western England, described by H. C. Casserley, makes a refreshing contrast to such massive modernity.

CECIL J. ALLEN