

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Board of Trade (Railway Department),
8, Richmond Terrace, Whitehall, London, S.W.

January 31st, 1896.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the Order of the 2nd inst., the result of my enquiry into the causes of the collision which occurred on the 27th ultimo at Bacup Station, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

In this case, when the 6.55 p.m. down passenger train from Manchester to Bacup was entering the latter station, at 8.10 p.m., it came slightly into collision with an engine and van which were standing foul of the facing points leading from the down to the up platform line. The Manchester train had been signalled to run into the up platform, and the engine and van had just come out of the down platform without any permission to do so.

Four passengers are reported to have complained of being shaken.

The Manchester train consisted of an eight-wheeled tank-engine (with six coupled and two trailing, radial, wheels), and eight vehicles; the whole fitted with the automatic vacuum-brake. No wheels, either of this train or of the engine and van, were knocked off the rails.

A list of the damage to engines and carriages is given in an Appendix.

Description.

Bacup is a terminal station with an island platform 165 yards in length between the up and down main lines, both lines being signalled and used for arrival and departure, and there are sidings on both sides of the station.

The signal cabin is 66 yards outside the outer end of the platform, and opposite to the facing points of the cross-over road from the down to the up line.

A short tunnel terminates about 350 yards outside the station, and there are curves to the left of 22, 31 and $11\frac{3}{4}$ chains radius between the tunnel and the point of collision, the line rising on gradients of 1 in 73 and 1 in 85 up to within 50 yards of the cabin, where it is nearly on the level.

There are up starting-signals at the end of the platform, and an advance-signal close to the mouth of the tunnel, whilst the home-signal for down trains is between the cabin and the tunnel.

The following distances may be noted from the mouth of the tunnel, viz. :—

To the down home-signal	-	-	-	-	-	142 yards.
„ signal cabin	-	-	-	-	-	284 „
„ point of collision	-	-	-	-	-	314 „
„ outer end of the platform	-	-	-	-	-	350 „

Rule No. 266 of the “ Rules, Regulations, and Bye-laws of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company ” bears upon this case, viz. :—

“ No engine must enter upon or cross the main line without the permission of the person in charge of the points and signals, nor then until the driver has satisfied himself that the proper signals have been exhibited.”

Evidence.

J. H. Stephenson states: I have been in the Company's service 21 years, and signalman at Bacup for 15 years. On the 27th December I came on duty at 2 p.m. to work until 10 p.m. A passenger train from Rochdale arrived at Bacup at 6.20 p.m., and ran into the station on the up-platform line; after the passengers had got out, the engine (No. 7) put the train into the sidings on the up side of the railway, and subsequently brought the carriages out again and placed them on the down platform line to form the 7.25 p.m. to Rochdale, and after that train left, No. 7 engine made up another train. These operations would be completed about 7.45 p.m. The 6.55 train *ex* Manchester was given to me “ On line ” at 8.9, and it arrived at 8.10; both my home and distant-signals were off for the train. Before taking off those signals I had noticed engine No. 7 standing at the water-column, and just as I saw the Manchester train

approaching I also noticed the engine moving forward; the former would then be close to the home-signal, and it was too late for me to stop it by putting that signal at danger. I went to the window and shouted as loudly as I could to the driver of engine No. 7, and I think I was heard; the engine stopped and I could hear the wheels slipping; if they had not slipped I believe the engine could have got out of the way in time. I called to the driver of the engine in preference to trying to stop the train, because I thought I was much less likely to gain the attention of the driver of the train. There was very little time in which to do anything.

Samuel Clegg states: I have been 25 years in the Company's service, 14 years as driver. On the 27th December I came on duty at 1.40 p.m. to work until 12 midnight. My engine, No. 276, is an eight-

wheeled tank engine with six coupled-wheels and trailing radial wheels, fitted with the automatic vacuum-brake and hand-brake. On the above date I left Manchester at 6.55 to run to Bacup. There were eight vehicles on the train. On approaching Bacup, I found all signals "off" for me. The engine was running chimney in front, and I was on the left-hand side of the engine. I shut off steam just before arriving at the home-signal, and opposite to the signal-cabin I slackened speed a little with the vacuum-brake. Just then I heard someone shouting and I saw the engine No. 7 standing foul of the line I was on, close to the end of the platform; I applied the brake with full force at once. The left-hand front buffer of my engine struck the right-hand trailing-buffer of the light engine. Neither engine left the rails and I was not hurt in any way.

Samuel Rayner states: I have been eight years in the Company's service, and fireman 2½ years. On the 27th December, I was firing for driver Clegg, and my hours of labour were the same as his. Running from Manchester to Bacup, I was on the right-hand side of the engine. Approaching Bacup, I was looking out ahead and standing at the brake, and when near the signal-cabin I heard the signalman shouting; I was looking back to find out what he was saying, when I was thrown down on to the floor and I hurt my foot, getting it fast between the rails. I had seen nothing whatever of engine No. 7.

James Stott states: I have been 28 years in the Company's service, 13 years as driver. On the 27th December I came on duty at 3.20 p.m., to work until about 11.30 p.m. My engine, No. 7, is a four-wheel coupled tank-engine with trailing bogie, fitted with automatic vacuum and hand-brakes. I arrived at Bacup from Rochdale at 6.19. After the passengers had got out, we backed the train outside the station and drew it into the middle road, on the up side of the station; after standing there about 50 minutes, we ran round our train and took it out again to form the 7.25 train for Rochdale, which leaves from the down platform. After the 7.25 left, we fetched another train in to the same platform to leave at 8.22, and we should have taken that train. We hooked off and went down to the water-column at about 8 p.m. I had a "big end" to oil, and I did this from the framing of the engine whilst the fireman was taking in water; I then got off the engine to oil the right leading bogie-axle; the engine was standing with bunker in front. When my mate had done taking in water, he shouted to me "Are you right." I said, "Yes, I am right," thinking he wanted to know if I was clear of the engine. He gave the engine steam and she went ahead at once, leaving me standing just at the foot of the ramp; I shouted out to him, and at the same time I heard the signalman and the night watchman calling out. The collision occurred at once. Whilst we were taking in water, shunter Heys told us we should have to fetch the incoming Manchester train off its engine and that it had left Stacksteads station.

John Herbert Jackson states: I have been nine years in the Company's service, five years as fireman.

On the 27th December I came on duty at 10 a.m., in consequence of a breakdown, and I acted as guard of the tool van until 1.20 p.m. At 3.20 p.m. I came on duty again to work until between 11.30 and 12 midnight. We only work the 3.20 p.m. turn one day in six weeks. I had not been on duty the day previously. After we pulled up at the water-column the driver got down, and I took in water. I had finished my work and got on to the foot-plate, when the driver shouted out either "Come on" or "Go on." I said "Are you ready, mate?" or "Are you right?" and when he answered "Yes, right," I gave the engine steam. I at once heard several people shouting out, and I saw the lights of the train coming. I applied the vacuum-brake and reversed the engine. The wheels were slipping when the train struck my engine. I do not think my brakes were quite off. I had a van behind the engine, and after the collision the engine went back four or five engine-lengths. Before we went to the water-column shunter Heys told me we were to go into the up platform line, and fetch out three carriages which were standing there before the arrival of the Manchester train, but when walking back past us, whilst we were standing at the column, he called out to say the train had left Stacksteads, and he gave us some orders which I understood to be different from those previously given. At the water-column the engine was standing just underneath the starting-signals, and I did not look up at them before moving forward. I had forgotten about the Manchester train, and I thought we were to go either into the up platform line or sidings. We had not much time to spare, as we were due to leave in a few minutes.

Robert Heys states: I have been four years in the Company's service, and about one year as porter-pointsman. On the 27th December I came on duty at 12 noon to work until 11.30 p.m. During the evening I was in charge of shunting operations. The train due from Manchester at 6.58 arrived very late, and brought with it three vehicles outside its train which were left on the up platform line, as the engine had no time to spare for shunting operations. After I had made up the 8.22 train, fireman Jackson asked me what his engine was to do next; at this time the 8.5 train, which was at the up platform, had not left. I told him that after the latter train had gone away he was to fetch the three carriages out of the up platform. As soon as the 8.5 drew out, I saw engine No. 7 going out to the water-column, and I went to the signal-cabin to tell the man there what I wanted to do. I saw that the home-signal was off for the Manchester train, so I went back to the platform, and I shouted to the driver and fireman of engine No. 7 to tell them the train had left Stacksteads and that they could not get the empty carriages away, but that they must take the whole train out when it arrived. The fireman answered, and I thought he was aware of what he had to do. I did not trouble about the driver, as I had given the original instructions to the fireman. I then went along the platform and put a red light on the three carriages; just as I had done this I saw engine No. 7 moving, and I shouted out. I could do nothing more.

Conclusion.

From the evidence it appears that the main facts of this case are as follows:—

A passenger train arrived at Bacup, from Rochdale, at 6.20 p.m., running into the station on the up platform line. It was then put into one of the siding roads on the same side of the line, and after standing there some time it was taken across the line to the down platform, where its engine (No. 7) was uncoupled; and, with a fresh engine, the train left for Rochdale at 7.25. When the train had gone, engine No. 7 placed other vehicles at the down platform to make up a train due to leave at 8.22, after which it went to the water-column at the outer end of the platform.

About this time a train from Manchester arrived at the up platform, and it remained there until 8.5, when it started on the return journey. It had brought three vehicles

outside its train which were left at the platform, and porter Heys, who was in charge of the shunting operations that evening, was anxious to get them out of the way before the arrival of another train, leaving Manchester at 6.55 and due at Bacup at 8.12. Heys told the fireman of engine No. 7 (J. H. Jackson), before it proceeded to the water-column, that his engine was to fetch the three carriages out of the up platform; and, immediately the 8.5 train left, Heys went to the signal-cabin to arrange for the necessary points being set, &c. He then found that the 6.55 down train had already been accepted by the signalman, and that it had left Stacksteads (the next station); it was therefore impossible to move the three vehicles, so he returned to the platform to place a red tail light on them. As he passed engine No. 7, at the water-column, he called out to explain the change of plans, and to let the men with the engine know of the approach of the Manchester train.

Up to this point the facts are not in dispute in any way, but there is conflicting evidence as to what followed.

Driver Stott was on the ground oiling one of the bogie-axles, and he says his fireman (Jackson) called out to him "Are you right?" to which he replied "Yes, I am right," thinking that the latter only wanted to know if he was clear of the engine. Jackson says driver Stott called out to him to "come on," or "go on," before he asked the question "Are you right"; on getting the reply from his driver, he at once gave the engine steam, and drew forward in order to go across to the up side of the line. Stott remained on the ground, and he seems to have realised immediately the mistake which had been made; he and others shouted to fireman Jackson, who also saw the Manchester train approaching, and then did what he could to pull up, without being able to avoid the collision which ensued.

Jackson admits that he had not looked to see if the platform signal, close to which the engine was standing at the water-column, had been lowered for him, and that he had momentarily forgotten all about the Manchester train. His only excuse for his extraordinary proceeding is the vague authority which he says he thought he had received from his driver.

Jackson gave his evidence clearly and well, and I understand he bears a good character, so that I prefer to think his memory is at fault as regards the few words which passed between him and the driver, rather than that he is stating what he knows to be untrue. It is to be regretted that driver Stott did not take more trouble to find out what Jackson meant by asking him "Are you right," before he replied to the question, for there is no apparent reason for the enquiry unless some movement of the engine was contemplated. It is, however, inconceivable to me that Stott can have made use of the words "come on" or "go on" as alleged, which would imply that he, like Jackson, had forgotten what he had only just been told by porter Heys of the Manchester train.

No blame attaches to the men in charge of that train, who appear to have been keeping a good look out and to have had their train thoroughly under control. Nor is there any reason to suppose the signalman could have done anything more than he did to prevent the collision, as the train was quite close to, if not already past, the home-signal when he saw engine No. 7 moving out from the platform.

I have, &c.,

The Assistant Secretary,
Railway Department, Board of Trade.

G. W. ADDISON,
Lieut.-Col., R.E.

APPENDIX.

DAMAGE TO ROLLING STOCK.

Lancashire and Yorkshire van No. 50.—Shackle bent; body moved; door light broken.
Third-class, No. 492.—Buffer-rods bent.
Third-class, No. 1695.—Buffer-rods bent.
Composite, No. 212.—Middle bar bent; shackle-nut broken.
Third-class, No. 1540.—Middle bar bent.

Composite, No. 286.—Buffer-rods bent.
Composite, No. 232.—Buffer-rods bent.

DAMAGE TO ENGINES.

Engine, No. 276.—Buffer-plank broken; framing and splashers torn away.
Engine, No. 7.—Tank end knocked in; buffer-plank broken.

Printed copies of the above Report were sent to the Company on the 17th February 1896.
