

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,
 SIR, *Whitehall, November 19th, 1861.*

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you, to be laid before the Directors of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, the enclosed copy of the report made by Colonel Yolland, R.E., the officer appointed by my Lords to inquire into the circumstances connected with the accident which occurred on the 8th instant to a passenger train at the Bury Station of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

My Lords would be glad to be informed of the decision which the Directors may come to with respect to Colonel Yolland's recommendation, as to the removal of the facing points where the accident happened.

*The Secretary of the
 Lancashire and Yorkshire
 Railway Company.*

I am, &c.,
 JAMES BOOTH.

SIR, *Welshpool, 14th November, 1861.*

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, in obedience to your minute of the 9th instant, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances which attended the accident that occurred on the 8th instant, at the Lancashire and Yorkshire Station at Bury, when six passengers were injured, two of them seriously.

At this station at Bury there is a loop siding 465 yards in length, which leaves the down main line by a pair of facing points situate about 100 yards east of the eastern end of the down platform, and which joins the down line again further west, by a pair of falling or back points. This loop siding, I understand, was originally constructed for down goods trains to pass through the station yard without passing along the main line, but it has long been disused for any such purpose, and is now only considered as an ordinary siding, and the facing points are directed to be fastened by means of a catch dropping down over a staple, and secured by a padlock; and the catch when so fastened prevents the points from being opened for the admission of a train into the siding. These points are not placed in the exclusive charge of any particular man at the station, and as they are directed to be kept locked, no one is appointed to hold them; but all the company's servants, at times, unlock these points to allow of trains or waggons entering or leaving the loop siding, and they are expected to fasten and lock them up again, when the service has been performed. They are cleaned and oiled by an assistant to the head porter.

The line at this place curves slightly to the right when looking westwards, and the loop siding goes off to the left, commencing at the facing points.

It appears that about 12.38 p.m. on the 8th instant, as the 12.15 p.m. down train from Rochdale to Liverpool, (which consisted of an engine and tender and three carriages, the two last continuously coupled together with Newell's patent breaks), was in the act of pulling up for the purpose of stopping at the down platform, and therefore not travelling more than four or five miles an hour, that the engine passed safely through the facing points along the main line, but the three carriages took the wrong road leading into the loop siding; the engine driver felt a slight jerk after the engine had passed through the points, and on looking back he saw a pair of wheels come from under the leading carriage—a third class—as it was passing a crossing, and shortly afterwards this carriage came in contact with a waggon which was standing on a carriage siding intermediate between the down main line and the loop siding, and had its side knocked in, and the coupling with the tender was snapped. This third class carriage was off the rails altogether, the four wheels having been torn

from under the framing and body, and it lay nearly on its side against the goods waggon, about 80 yards from the facing points. The whole of the persons who were injured were in this carriage, the next carriage was not off the rails of the loop siding, and the last carriage had its trailing wheels only off the same line of rails, and the three carriages still remained coupled together.

An examination was made of the facing points after the accident, and it was apparent that the tongue of the left point rail, 12 feet long, had been recently struck heavy blows both on the outside and inside—the tongue of the right point rail, 13 ft. 6 in. long, had also been struck—and considerable play was found in the heel chair of the left point rail, so that when a train passed over the facing points the tongue would not remain quite close to the rail, even when the catch was on and the lock in the staple, as the lever handle had a good deal of play.

Two of the company's servants stated that they looked at the spot immediately after the accident occurred, and observed that the catch was not on nor the lock in the staple, and that they observed the pointsman, who had last opened these points for the pilot engine to enter and leave the loop siding, put the catch on and also the lock in the staple—but the pointsman denies having put the catch on, although he admits finding the lock not in the staple, and put it on immediately after the accident occurred.

It also appears that this pilot engine with some waggons was admitted into this loop siding more than half an hour before the accident occurred, and the pilot engine came out immediately, and the pointsman says that he then put the catch on, and also put on the lock. The pilot engine at once passed safely over the facing points along the down main line; and about 11 minutes before the accident happened a heavy down goods train also passed safely over the facing points, proceeding westwards. The lock, it is admitted, was useless as a lock, no key being used, as the tumbler could be shaken one way or the other. The connecting rod between the two point rails was also too long, and on the Monday following it was discovered that the inside wooden treenail at the chair of the right point rail was broken, and the ganger of the platelayers put in new treenails in one joint chair, and four intermediate chairs, but he does not admit that more than one of these treenails was broken.

The station-master informed me that he had complained of the state of these facing points to one of the inspectors of permanent way on the 6th September, and the left point rail, which is now in, was shortly afterwards put in to replace a damaged one, but that there was play in the heel chair even when the last point rail was put in. This play has now been done away with by inserting a piece of iron in the chair.

Taking the whole of the circumstances into consideration, I think it is clear that the accident was occasioned by neglect on the part of the pointsman, in having failed to put the catch on the staple, and the lock in the staple after the pilot engine came out of the loop siding; coupled with the neglect of the platelayers in having allowed the facing points to be out of repair. I have no doubt that the engine or tender of the 12.15 p.m. down passenger train knocked the heel of the left point rail to the left, as it passed over the heel of the points, and thus threw the tongue of the left point rail, no longer confined by the catch and lock pressing against the lever handle of the points over to the right, and allowed the flange of the wheels of the carriages to travel on the loop siding or wrong road; and as the two roads diverged from each other the engine dragged the framing and body of the leading third class carriage from over the wheels, one of which came in contact with the crossing, 27 yards from the facing points, and broke a piece off; the flange of the wheel was indented.

To prevent a recurrence of a similar accident, I would recommend that the facing points be removed from the main line, as they are no longer required at this loop siding, which should communicate with the other sidings by means of a through road; and when locked facing points are kept on a main line care should be taken to have them properly locked, and without any play whatever at the tongue or the heel of the point rails.

*The Secretary to the
Board of Trade,
&c. &c.*

I am, &c.
W. YOLLAND,
Col. R.E.

*Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway,
Secretary's Office,
Manchester, 22nd November, 1861.*

SIR,
I HAVE submitted to the Directors of this company Colonel Yolland's report on the accident at Bury, on the 8th instant, enclosed in your communication of the 19th instant, and am instructed to inform you that the recommendations therein contained have had the best attention of the Directors, and that they have already ordered them to be carried out.

*The Secretary to the
Board of Trade,
Railway Department.*

I am, &c.,
W. S. LAWN,
Secretary.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, 6th January, 1862.*

SIR,

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you, to be laid before the Directors of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, the enclosed copy of the Report made by Capt. Tyler, R.E., the officer appointed by my Lords to inquire into the circumstances which attended the collision that occurred on the 22d November last between a London and North-Western Passenger Train and a Lancashire and Yorkshire ballast train at the Elland Station on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

*The Secretary of the
Lancashire and Yorkshire
Railway Company.*

I have, &c.
JAMES BOOTH.

[*Similar letter to the Secretary of the London and North Western Railway Company.*]

SIR,

Derby, 2 January 1862.

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 12th ultimo, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances which attended the collision that occurred on the 22d November at the Elland Station of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

This station is $31\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Manchester, and about half way between Halifax and Huddersfield, being rather more than seven miles by railway from each of those places. To the west of it, and about 1,300 yards from it, the Halifax branch joins the main line at the North Dean Junction. The London and North-Western Company have running powers over this portion of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, and 10 of their trains travel daily under those powers between Halifax and Huddersfield in each direction. Eight of these are passenger, and two are goods trains. One of the former, which left Halifax for Huddersfield at 3.30 p.m. on the 22nd November, came into collision with a ballast train which was standing on the main line 132 yards to the east of the Elland station-signal.

The Elland station is dangerously situated for trains approaching it from the directions of Manchester and Halifax, whilst the goods traffic transacted at it is considerable, and the quantity of traffic of different descriptions that passes it is very great. It is provided with a "spectacle" signal close to the booking office, which is used as a station-signal, and with a distant-signal, worked by a wire, 726 yards from it towards the west. The distant-signal cannot be seen from the station, but is obscured from view by a tunnel 418 yards long and 250 yards west of the station, which is frequently filled with steam and

smoke after the passage through it of engines and trains. Neither of these signals are well seen by an approaching driver. The distant-signal, which is first sighted on a curve, is partly hidden by telegraph-posts, and has for its back-ground the abutment of a masonry bridge 18 yards behind it. The station-signal is frequently not visible until after a driver has proceeded some distance out of the tunnel, and got clear of the steam and smoke issuing from it. The gradient between the North Dean Junction and the Elland station is 1 in 300 falling towards the latter, and the line is level from the Elland station-signal to the point of collision.

The London and North-Western train, consisting of a tank-engine, travelling coal-box first, and two carriages, of which one was provided with a break, left Halifax punctually at 3.30. on the afternoon in question. The driver slackened speed to take up a pilotman, as usual, at the north-end of a portion of single line commencing at a mile from the North Dean Junction, and almost stopped his train to allow the pilotman to get off his engine again at that junction. He then started off at his customary speed for Elland and Huddersfield, and finding (according to his own statement) the distant-signal from Elland at "all right," he passed it with his steam on at 20 miles an hour.

He shut his steam off before emerging from the tunnel, preparatory to passing the Elland Station; and as soon as he was clear of the steam and smoke at the tunnel-mouth, he observed that the station-signal was at "danger." He then saw further that there was a ballast train on the main line in front of him, and that a porter was running towards him, and waving his hand as a signal to him to pull up. He whistled for the guards break, and did his best then to stop his train, but he came into collision with the tender of the ballast engine at a speed which he estimates himself at 10 or 12, and which the driver of the ballast train considers to have been 25 miles an hour.

The latter is no doubt an exaggeration, as the damage done was not so great as to warrant the belief that the speed was greater than from 10 to 15 miles per hour. The buffers of the passenger engine were fractured, but the buffer-plank was unbroken. The framing of the tender of the ballast engine was broken, the tank was unseated, the feed-pipe was damaged, and the foot-plate was knocked up; and one of the ballast waggons was knocked off the rails and destroyed. Two of the passengers in the London and North-Western train unfortunately suffered injury.

The ballast train consisted of an engine and tender, ten waggons partly loaded, and a break-van. It was employed in picking up refuse ballast, and had taken up three fourths of its load on the up line, on which it had been previously standing. It was prevented from waiting for the remainder by the approach of