

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN AND LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAYS.

*Board of Trade
(Railway Department),*

SIR,

Whitehall, 22nd November 1870.

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in obedience to your minute of the 11th instant, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances which attended a collision that occurred on the 7th instant at Huddersfield, the joint station of the London and North-western and Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Companies, between two passenger trains. Two passengers are returned as having been injured, one having had his head cut, and the other being slightly bruised.

Huddersfield is a one-sided station. The passenger platform is situated south of the railway, and the station remains in nearly the same state as when I made an inquiry into a collision that occurred there in July 1866, and reported that "additional accommodation is very much required there, and the one-sided station should be done away with." The stone platform has been lengthened at each end, but no material change has been made in the lines of rails. Three signalmen are employed to regulate the traffic, one, No. 2, at the centre of the station controls the other two, and disposes of the traffic as it arrives or departs. The signalman at the eastern or Leeds end of the station yard, has a signal box about 160 yards from No. 2 signalman's box, and he is provided with the means of calling No. 2 signalman's attention by means of a gong; but the gong is not used when there is a fog, but is replaced by a platelayer stationed between No. 1 and No. 2, who is provided with fog signals, and should do as he is directed by No. 2 signalman. No. 3 signalman, at the western or Manchester side of the station, is placed close to the east mouth of a tunnel and about 150 yards from No. 2 signalman's box. He has no means of communicating with No. 2 except by flag and lamp and by calling out and whistling.

On the morning of the 7th instant, the 7h. 50m. a.m. up express train from Leeds to Manchester, left Leeds and arrived at Dewsbury one minute late: it slackened speed in passing through Mirfield; and was stopped by the up distant signal (outside Huddersfield station), which was on at "danger" against this train. The driver states, that it was very foggy, that he never saw it worse, so that he could see the length of his engine, but not much more; he found a fog-man outside No. 1 signalman's box signalling to him, and he asked if the signal at No. 1 box was off, and was told by the fog-man that he did not know, but that he was to go up steadily to it, and on doing so, he found that it was on at "danger" against him; that he stopped about half a minute under the signal, whistled for it to be taken off, and then the signal was lowered, and he proceeded towards the station at very slow speed; that on arriving at the end of the arcade, a man there (the platelayer stationed between 1 and 2 signalmen) told him to hold on, as there was a train in the station, and he had only just time to reverse the engine before his engine struck the engine of a down train, which was standing alongside of the

passenger platform. He thinks he was running about three or four miles an hour when the collision took place. The buffer plank of his engine and the buffers and buffer plank of the down train engine were broken. No damage was done to the carriages of the two trains.

The train which was run into was the 7h. a.m. down train from Manchester to Leeds, which the signalman at No. 2 box had signalled into the station; but this signalman had not been informed by the platelayer, as he should have been, that any up train was waiting to enter the station, and it appears that this platelayer had taken upon himself to allow the up station signal to be lowered for the express train to enter the station without asking permission from No. 2 signalman. If he had even made known to No. 2 signalman that the up train was entering the station, the collision could still have been avoided, as it could have been kept on the up line and not permitted to reach the platform line.

The platelayer admits that he forgot to ask No. 2 signalman what he should do with the up express train, and the collision resulted from his forgetfulness.

The arrangements for dealing with the traffic are by no means good. The points and signals are not collected together in signal boxes, and properly interlocked, and I am only surprised that more frequent accidents to trains and passengers do not occur at this station, from its faulty construction, and the large amount of traffic passing through it. I understand that the propriety of revising the signal arrangements is now under consideration, but I do not hear that any project exists for doing away with it as a one-sided station.

I must further recall to your recollection that in February last I was called upon to inspect the state of the station, on a representation from the Borough Council of the town of Huddersfield, and made a full report on the subject, dated the 28th of that month; and as it appears by the notices, that the Midland Railway Company intend to apply to Parliament in the next session for powers to use this station, I beg to annex a paragraph from that report, which bears on the subject:

"If Midland trains obtain admission to Huddersfield without any alteration of the station, the present position of affairs will be made worse; and it appears to be desirable that before running powers are granted by Parliament to another railway company to make use of other companies' lines, and an existing station such as the Huddersfield station for a terminal station for the Midland Railway Company, some examination should be made as to the capacity of the station to accommodate the existing and expected traffic, or some clause in the public interest should be inserted in such Acts as will afford a remedy to the dangers and inconvenience complained of by the Borough Council of Huddersfield."

I have, &c.

W. YOLLAND,
Colonel.

*The Secretary
(Railway Department),
Board of Trade.*

Printed copies of this report were sent to the London and North-western, and Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Companies on the 6th December.

LONDON AND SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

*1, Whitehall, S.W.,
21st November 1870.*

SIR,

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 27th ultimo, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances attending a collision which occurred at Bishopstoke junction station on the London and South-western

Railway on the 25th ultimo between a cattle train and some waggons.

The driver of the train was killed on the spot, the fireman died shortly afterwards from injuries received, and the head guard was knocked about and severely shaken.

At Bishopstoke station the main line from London to Southampton is joined by the branch lines from