

GREAT NORTHERN AND LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE JOINT
RAILWAY.

Board of Trade, (Railway Department,)
1, Whitehall, London, S.W.,
May 7th, 1884.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in compliance with the instructions contained in the Order of the 25th ultimo, the result of my inquiry into the causes of a collision which occurred on the 10th ultimo, at the Joint Great Northern and Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway station at Bradford.

In this case, the Great Northern engine, No. 661, which had run into No. 5 arrival line with a train from Wakefield at 6.29 p.m., 23 minutes late, was uncoupled from the train, and, after pushing it out on the down line, was allowed to run back into No. 2 departure line, in order to be attached to the passenger train due to leave Bradford for Wakefield at 6.40 p.m., which train—consisting of one third-class break-carriage, one first-class and one third-class carriages, and break-van—was loaded, and standing at the platform ready to start.

The driver failed to stop his engine by means of his vacuum-break, and came slightly into collision with the front of the train at 6.43 p.m.

Two passengers complained of injury. The only damage to the train was the breaking of two dome-lights and one carriage window.

Description.

The station at Bradford is a terminal one at the end of a double line, with six platform lines inside the station, all signalled both for arrival and departure, although it is usual for trains to arrive and depart only on the proper sides.

The signal-cabin A, the point from which the engine started back, is about 150 yards outside the end of the platform, and about 250 yards from the point of collision on No. 5 platform line.

The double lines commence to fan out into the platform lines about half way between the cabin A and the platform end.

The gradient is a falling one of 1 in 50 to near the end of the platform, and is then level inside the station.

The engine was a side tank-engine with trailing bogie, and leading and driving wheels coupled, and it was running with the chimney towards Bradford. It was fitted with a simple vacuum-break, which worked blocks on the four coupled wheels, and with an indicator to show whether or not the break was in working order.

Evidence.

James Hartley Foulds, driver, states: I have been in the service about 22 years, 18 as driver. On April 10th I came in with No. 192 down passenger train due in at 6.3, and arrived at 6.29, 26 minutes late, due to waiting for down express. I was due out at 6.40 to Wakefield again. I arrived in No. 5. I sat down for two or three minutes to get something to eat and a drop of tea. I then took the feeder, and went round to put some oil in the cylinders. During this time the shunter came and uncoupled the engine off. When I was coming from the leading end the shunter called me out to push the train back. I pushed my train back, and left it at cabin A. The shunter told me to be as quick back as I could, and go into No. 2 and on to my train to take it out. I started the engine from the cabin A, and as I was getting near the train I tried to stop with the vacuum-break, but found that it would not act, and I came into collision with the train while I was still running at about four miles per hour. I had started back from about 150 yards off. As soon as I found the vacuum would not act I reversed my engine, and told my mate to put the tender-break on. After the collision I found that the reason that the vacuum-break would not act was because the pipes had not been coupled up. It is the shunter's duty to couple the pipes, and I have not been in the habit of testing my vacuum-break before backing on to my train. I remained on my engine, and was not hurt. My engine did not leave the rails, and was not damaged. I started back pretty sharp, and tried my vacuum two or three times before

I found that it was not in order. I was about 20 yards from the train when I reversed my engine. I had not time to apply back-steam. I had shut steam off as soon as I had started back.

William Harris, fireman, states: I have been in the service 10 years, and six as fireman. On April 10th I was firing for Foulds. I have heard his evidence read over, and agree with him. I had not time to get my tender-break on before we ran into the train.

Thomas Weatherhead states: I have been in the service nearly 22 years, and about 16 years as guard. On April 10th I was guard of the 6.40 p.m. from Bradford to Westgate, Wakefield. My train was made up as follows:—second-class carriage break, first-class, third-class, and a break-van. It was standing in No. 2 line ready to go out at 6.40. The train was middling full of passengers. It was standing ready to start, but the engine was not attached. The engine came back between 6.42 and 6.44, and came into collision, the only damage being three dome-lights and one door-light broken. It drove the buffers up, but did not drive the train back, as there was another engine behind. Two passengers complained of being hurt. I did not see the driver apply his vacuum, as I was at the other end of the train.

Walter Clayton, shunter, states: I have been in the service of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company a

little over two years. I have been shunter at Bradford since March 6th. On April 10th I was on duty on the other end of the platform when the train due in at 6.3 arrived on No. 5 line. It was my duty to uncouple the engine and signal the driver out, and my usual custom is to fasten up the engine vacuum pipes first, and after fastening up the engine couplings to turn round to the coaches, and after fastening up

the pipes and screw couplings to hang on the side chains. I uncoupled the vacuum pipes and unscrewed the coupling, but forgot to fasten up the engine vacuum pipes. I did not notice the pipes to be hanging down. I fastened up the carriage vacuum pipes. I had received proper instructions from the station-master as to what my duties were, and was told to be careful in coupling up these pipes.

Conclusion.

This slight collision was due to an act of forgetfulness on the part of shunter Walter Clayton, who omitted, when detaching the engine from the incoming train, to fasten up the vacuum-break pipes on the engine, so that this break was useless when the driver applied it in order to stop his engine, when bringing it back to be attached to the front of the outgoing train.

According to the rules for working the vacuum-break, drivers "must test the break before starting at each station where the engine is changed, and again at each station where any vehicle is attached to or detached from the train," but the driver states that it has not been usual to test the break in cases like the one in question, when starting a light-engine back on to its train.

I think it would be well to make the rule quite clear upon this point, and to insist upon drivers testing their breaks on all occasions when they are likely to have to make use of them.

I have no doubt but that the fact of the time having passed for the 6.40 train to start, owing to the arriving train having been late, made the driver set back faster than he would have done under ordinary circumstances; but I think that he ought not to have been running at such a speed as to be unable to stop his engine by the use of his hand-break only, if necessary.

This collision would probably not have occurred if the driver had looked at the indicator supplied to show whether or not the break is in working order; but it could not possibly have occurred if the break had been an automatic one, for in this case the driver would have been unable to start his engine at all unless the break had been in proper running order.

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

I have, &c.,
F. A. MARINDIN,
Major.

Printed copies of the above report were sent to the Company on the 31st May.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.

Board of Trade, (Railway Department,)
7th July 1884.

SIR,

IN compliance with the instructions contained in the Order of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances which attended the accident that occurred on the 22nd ultimo, at Twyford station, on the Great Western Railway.

The three coaches at the tail of the 10.20 a.m. train from Paddington to Henley, were pushed off the rails, as the train was being shunted back from the down main to the up main line, at the east end of Twyford station.

No persons were injured, but the three vehicles at the tail of the train and the permanent way were damaged.

The Henley branch runs to a dock platform at the north side of the up line platform at Twyford, and the connection of the branch with the main line is made by falling points on the up main line, and by a cross-over road to the down main line, so as to avoid facing-points on the down main line.

On the day in question the 10.20 a.m. train consisted of an engine and tender, a break-van with the assistant guard, 14 passenger coaches, a second break-van in which the guard in charge was travelling, and six more passenger coaches behind the second guard's van. Four of the last coaches were left at Slough. The train left Paddington 15 minutes late, and arrived at Twyford 31 minutes late. When the station work was done it was intended to shunt it back on to the up line, so that it might proceed from thence to Henley.

The station-master and signalman both assert that the points of the cross-over road were set right before the train was moved back, but I think they must be mistaken, as I believe it to be impossible that the accident could have occurred, if the points had been in the right position.