

the points open for the sidings. This is objectionable, but it is said that it is absolutely necessary at this busy station, as he could not spare the time to hold open any single pair of points for tedious shunting operations.

A loop suspended to a cross bar is therefore provided for every switch handle, to catch it, and hold it open for a siding when required.

On the 13th January a passenger train due from Fleetwood at 11 A.M. was entering the station from the tunnel, when it ran through the facing-points into the coal siding, instead of keeping its course along the main line. Its speed was not great, and not much damage was done. The pointsman had been some months at his post, and is said to have been well acquainted with his duty; but by the evidence given it would appear that he had passed a "lorry" into the coal siding a quarter of an hour before, and that he had not afterwards unlooped the handle of the switch. He has since been discharged for his fault.

Measures are in progress for attaching indicators to the facing points. There are cotters for keeping the points closed, if desired, when set for the main line; but the amount of traffic I am told would render it inconvenient to lock them, and if the pointsman worked the points properly from his box there would be little advantage in keeping them locked.

It is very important that a pointsman with critical duties to perform should have an elevated box, with good command of his work. The pointsman here has not that advantage, and I would strongly urge the expediency of improvement in this respect. It is impossible for him, situated as he is, to exercise the control which he should have over the trains on the portions of main line and sidings under his charge.

I have, &c.

Captain Galton, R.E.
&c., &c.

GEORGE ROSS,
Captain, R.E.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway,
Secretary's Office, Manchester,
March 3, 1859.

SIR,

I beg to inform you that I have submitted to the directors of this company your communication of 26th ult., handing copy of Captain Ross's report as to the accident at Bolton on 13th January last. I am to state that their Lordships' recommendations shall receive from the directors every consideration.

I am, &c.,

The Secretary,
Railway Department,
Board of Trade.

W. S. LAWN,
Secretary.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, March 3, 1859.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you the enclosed copy of the report made by Captain Ross, R.E., of his inquiry into the circumstances attending the accident which occurred on the 1st ultimo at Dixonfold, on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

My Lords direct me to call the attention of the directors to the remarks of the inspecting officer upon the circumstance of the doors of the carriages on the reverse side of the train not having been locked.

I am, &c.

The Secretary to the DOUGLAS GALTON,
Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company. Captain, R.E.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, Feb. 26, 1859.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, that, in compliance with your instructions, I have inquired into the circumstances attending an accident which occurred at Dixonfold, upon the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, on the 1st instant.

The 8.15 A.M. up passenger train from Southport to Manchester consisted of an engine, tender, two first-class carriages, two second-class carriages, and a break van.

It was approaching Dixonfold station when the driver felt something "brush under the ashpit" of his engine. He then felt a "bit of a check," and seeing that the guard's van was not right he pulled up within 400 or 500 yards.

On stopping it was found that all beneath the frame work of the guard's van was a wreck; the axles and break gear were completely gone. The guard's van had not, however, become uncoupled from the train, and the guard who was in it was little hurt.

It was then discovered that the engine had lost the balance weight of the reversing lever from beneath the engine.

The axles of the van belong to a lot of 800 axles which had been received from the Lowmoor Company

seven years ago. Not a single axle of this lot had ever proved defective.

The balance weight weighed nearly one cwt., with a length of about 14 inches; the lever arm to which it was attached had a section of 3" x 1/4". It came away with the balance weight, the fracture having occurred at the weakest point, where the arm was welded on to its axle.

The balance weight was found lying in the roadway just in front of one of the broken axles of the break van. Besides the driver, who had felt the brush under his ashpit, several passengers in two of the carriages had experienced a bump or blow under the carriages.

The axles of the carriages are 15 or 16 inches above the roadway.

Some deep grooves in the roadway showed evident signs of a heavy body having bounded along it between the rails; and there seems no reason to doubt that the balance weight, after its first drop from the engine, had struck the bottoms of the carriages, and formed these grooves in the ballast. It then came into direct collision with the axles of the guard's van. One of them at once dropped, and near it the balance weight. The other axle may have been entangled in the break gear, for, 140 yards beyond the first axle, it had evidently come into violent collision, end on, with a sleeper, which was completely pierced through, and just beyond this the second axle was lying, with the break gear and three wheels scattered about it.

The balance weight had been supplied with the engine in 1849, and the mileage run by the engine had been upwards of 250,000 miles. The loss of a balance weight is said to be very unusual; but it is not improbable that the arm in this instance may have been gradually failing, and that some slight jolt in the roadway dislodged it. The rails where the accident happened are not fished, and some of the joints are somewhat wide.

The accident would have been attended with no more serious consequences than the destruction of the break-van but for a lamentable occurrence which followed. A gentleman in one of the second-class carriages had, it is said, been looking out of the window of the carriage while the train was being pulled up, and in so doing he had lost his hat. The train had not stopped when he opened the reverse door of

the carriage, and stepped out on to the down train line, at a moment when a down passenger train was within a few yards of him. The driver of the down train was already doing his best to stop his train. He could do nothing further, and the unfortunate gentleman was killed instantaneously.

The regulations of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company require the guard to satisfy himself that the doors on the reverse side of a train are locked, and they should be locked, under the directions of the station master, before a train leaves a terminal station. The guard does *not* appear to have satisfied himself on this point, and it cannot be traced that in this instance the doors were locked before the train left Southport.

I have, &c.

The Secretary,
Railway Department,
Board of Trade.

GEORGE ROSS,
Captain, R.E.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway,
Secretary's Office, Manchester,
March 17, 1859.

SIR,

REFERRING to your communication of the 3d instant, handing copy of Captain Ross's report as to the accident at Dixonfold on 1st ultimo, I beg to inform you that the directors of this company have drawn the special attention of their passenger traffic superintendents to the regulation requiring the doors on the off-side of carriages to be kept locked.

I am, &c.

The Secretary,
Railway Department,
Board of Trade.

W. S. LAWN,
Secretary.

NORTH LONDON RAILWAY.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, Jan. 26, 1859.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you the enclosed copy of the report made by Lieut.-Col. Yolland, R.E., of his inquiry into the circumstances attending the accident which occurred on the 1st instant near the Camden-road station of the North London Railway.

My Lords trust that the directors will take steps without delay to prevent the possibility of cattle straying on the line.

I am, &c.

The Secretary to the
North London
Railway Company.

DOUGLAS GALTON,
Captain R.E.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, Jan. 18, 1859.

SIR,

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your letter of the 8th instant, 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 an accident that occurred, on the 1st instant near the Camden-road station of the North London Railway, to the 5 p.m. down passenger train. No person was injured.

Intermediate between Camden and Caledonian-road stations there is a cattle siding, at Maiden-lane, lying south of the railway; the length of the landing alongside of which the cattle-trucks are placed to be unloaded is 321 yards; it is little more than 4 feet above the ground, and the siding is fenced off from the down line by a wooden fence about 4 ft. 4 in. in height, with a gate at the western end to close that end of the siding from the main lines. At the eastern end there has been a gate, but there is none at present. This cattle siding is covered by a semaphore station signal placed close to the east side of Maiden-lane under-bridge, which is immediately at the east end of the landing, and by distant signals worked from the same spot by levers placed at the opposite side of the railway. It appears that the liability of the railway company as regards the cattle ceases as soon as the cattle trucks are placed safely alongside of the landing, and the company's servants abstain from having anything to do with the unloading of the cattle, in order to avoid any liability, and the unloading is left entirely in the hands of the drovers in charge, to whom the trucks are delivered at Maiden-lane.

When a cattle train arrives from Camden station (London and North Western Railway), one of the

porters in charge of the landing proceeds to the signals, and places them at danger, in order to cover the operation of shunting the train from the up line to the cattle siding, and for the engine to come out again from the siding after the loaded trucks have been placed alongside the landing.

Sometimes it happens that the bills of lading of some of the trucks are not forthcoming, but the drovers generally know the cattle consigned to them, and they constantly proceed to unload the trucks when no servant of the company is present, and when the precaution has not been taken by any servant of the company to close even the single gate at the west end of the landing.

Three porters are regularly allotted to the cattle-siding, two on duty during the day and one at night. Wednesdays and Saturdays are the busiest days and nights, and then additional assistance is sent when asked for.

It is stated that cattle when let out of the trucks are frequently in a very wild state; that they will sometimes jump down from the landing into the siding, and then it is a very difficult matter to get them up again and one instance is remembered of a bullock jumping over the gate at the west end of the siding.

Such is the mode of working the cattle traffic at Maiden Lane; and the particular circumstances respecting the accident are as follows:

A single cattle truck, containing only one bullock in it, left Hampstead-road station for Maiden-lane after the 5 h. 5 m. up passenger train had left on Saturday the 1st instant. A notice board had been put on this passenger train to show the porters at the cattle siding that a cattle train would follow it, and the cattle train left about 5.17. It would take about three minutes to reach Maiden-lane bridge, where the points and signals are situated. A porter from the cattle siding turned on the signals to cover the shunting of the truck into the siding, and held open the points for the train to enter; and he remained at the signals until the engine had come out from the siding, and was safely on its way towards Bow, following the 5.5 and preceding the 5.20 p.m. down train.

The porter then went to the lodge where they have their meals, which is 190 yards from the signals, and when about to have his tea he heard a conversation between two drovers in the yard, to the effect that a bullock was on the line; he then went to call the foreman porter, and told him, but at this time he says the accident had already occurred. It took place about 5.36 p.m.

The 5 p.m. down passenger train, consisting of a tank-engine and seven carriages, was on its way between the Caledonian-road station and Camden-