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Eastern Counties.
Collision at Two-mile-bottom.

train, that I much fear the ratio of increase in the number of collisions of the few last years must be suffered to continue before companies will be impressed with the necessity of stepping out of the old routine, and adopting a principle which promises success. I annex an abstract from a return which has just been completed in this office, showing the number of collisions that have occurred in each of the years from 1850 to 1854 inclusive:—

In 1850 there were	43	collisions.
1851	- 39	"
1852	- 48	"
1853	- 61	"
1854	- 60	"

And it must be remembered that, besides these, numerous collisions have occurred which have never been reported to their Lordships; being unattended with personal injury to the public, or only injuring the servants of the Company.

I have only one more observation to make relative to the collision at Two-mile-bottom, and that is with regard to the position the guard occupied in the train, which was in a break carriage in the *middle* of the train, instead of *last* in the train, which is obviously the most proper position for a guard, more especially in a night train.

I am, &c.

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

GEORGE WYNNE,
Major Royal Engineers.

*Eastern Counties Railway, Secretary's Office,
Bishopsgate Station, February 1, 1855.*

SIR,

I AM in receipt of your letter of the 30th ultimo, with copy of Major Wynne's report, which I will submit to the Board.

I am, &c.

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

J. B. OWEN,
Secretary.

EAST LANCASHIRE RAILWAY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, January 4, 1855.*

East Lancashire.

Accident to a passenger train at the Molineux Viaduct.

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 which they have received from their inspecting officer upon the accident which occurred on the East Lancashire Railway upon the 14th ult., from a passenger train being thrown off the line at the Molineux Viaduct, in consequence of the tender having come in contact with the roof of a goods waggon.

My Lords direct me to call the attention of the Directors to the inspecting officer's remarks on the practice of running engines with the tender in front, and to point out that, although it is possible that the present accident may not be attributable to this cause, yet that it has, on previous occasions, been the cause of accidents. And my Lords trust, therefore, that the Directors will take steps to prevent this practice being continued.

I have, &c.

DOUGLAS GALTON,
Captain Royal Engineers.

*The Secretary of the
East Lancashire Railway Company.*

SIR,

Manchester, December 20, 1854.

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your letter of the 16th 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 the accident that occurred, on the 14th instant, on the East Lancashire Railway between Bury and Manchester.

There is a viaduct about half a mile to the north of the Clifton Junction, the point where the Lancashire and Yorkshire line to Liverpool from Manchester meets

the East Lancashire line from Manchester to Bury, called the Molineux Viaduct. As the 7.40 p.m. passenger train from Bury to Manchester was passing this viaduct on the 14th instant, the engine was suddenly thrown off the line, and, after proceeding a short distance, the train was brought to a stand with the engine across the road, and the tender overhanging the viaduct, the parapet of which was destroyed, on both sides of the line. When it was attempted to remove the engine and tender on the following morning, at 3.0 a.m., the tender fell down into the water below, a distance of some 90 feet, and it was still lying there when I visited the spot, a striking proof of the narrow escape which had been experienced by the passengers of the train. The driver was a good deal shaken, and the fireman unfortunately fractured his collar-bone.

East Lancashire.
 Accident to a
 passenger train at
 the Molineux
 Viaduct.

The night is described as having been dark, and very boisterous, and it is evident that no precaution of the driver could have prevented the accident, which was afterwards found to have been caused by the roof of a goods waggon, that was lying across the rails. The roof was composed of soft wood, attached to oak ribs, and the wheels cut through the former, but only partially through the latter, which were evidently the obstacles by which the engine was thrown off the line.

The goods train from Patricroft to Ramsbottom, consisting of 17 waggons, left Patricroft at 7.25 p.m. on the 18th instant; and the guard states, that, having examined every waggon before starting, he found them to be all right. He left some of his waggons at Bury, and, on his return journey, he was stopped, about a mile from Bury, by the guard of the passenger train, who told him that an accident had happened to the passenger train, in consequence of the top of a van having been on the road. He then returned with the engine of his own train, to get assistance, and, on examining the waggons which he had left at Bury, he discovered that the top of one of them was missing.

The roof was a tolerably flat one, and belonged to a salt waggon, the property of Messrs. Kay and Blackwell, salt merchants, of Winsford, Cheshire. It is not easy to conceive how the roof could have been blown off the waggon, even on so boisterous a night, unless upon the supposition of its having been very inefficiently secured—a supposition which appearances certainly tended to confirm; and, in fact, it seemed to have been working loose for some time previously. The waggon was received on the East Lancashire Railway from the London and North Western Railway at Patricroft, and was a stout looking waggon. It would probably have required a more critical examination than could have been expected from the guard of the train, to have discovered the liability of its roof to fall off.

This accident appears, then, so far, to have been caused by circumstances over which the Company could have no control; but there is one fact to which it is right to allude, as having rendered the engine more liable to leave the line, and the accident more likely, probably, to be attended with dangerous consequences, and that was, that the engine was travelling tender foremost when it ran over the roof of the van. I trust that the company will, therefore, taking warning by the narrow escape which this passenger train had, of running over the side of so high a viaduct, make such arrangements as will prevent the necessity of their engines running tender foremost for the future, particularly when attached to passenger trains.

It may be right also to refer to a circumstance which no doubt tended to prevent the accident from being more disastrous in its consequences, and, perhaps, even saved the train from running over the side of the viaduct. Out of the six carriages which composed the passenger train, three were fitted with Newall's break, an apparatus which is applied more quickly and with greater facility than the ordinary break, and which may be applied simultaneously, by one guard, to any number of carriages to which it may be affixed; as soon, therefore, as the guard found that the engine had left the line, he was enabled at once to put on the breaks of the three carriages, and thus materially to check the progress of the train. I am happy to learn that the Company find this break to answer, and that they intend to affix it to all of their passenger carriages.

I have, &c.

H. W. TYLER,

Captain Royal Engineers.

The Secretary of the
 Railway Department, Board of Trade.