

he had only time to sound the whistle and to grasp the reversing lever and hand railing, when the collision occurred; that he thinks he was running at the time about 25 miles an hour, and that after the collision occurred, seeing that the coal train engine ran from him, and that no portion of his own train was thrown off the rails, he gradually pulled up his train near the North Union Junction.

The third guard, however, of the passenger train states that he came out of his break van (on the right side) as they passed the level crossing, and he noticed that the distant signal was not full on at danger but exhibited more of the white light than of the red, so that he did not know what to make of it, but remained at his break, and commenced to apply it immediately the sharp whistle was sounded, just previous to the collision.

The gatekeeper at the level crossing states that no light was visible at the distant signal from the level crossing up to the time of the passenger train passing, although he could see that the lamp (oil) was lit; and this distant signal remained dark until after the 5h. 15m. p.m. down train from Manchester to Liverpool, due at the crossing at 6h. 12m. p.m. had passed; and then he observed that some one came and took off the signal, and it then showed a good white light.

The driver of the Wigan pilot engine (which followed the 5h. 15m. down passenger train, and which was expected by the pointsman to have arrived prior to the 5h. 5m. passenger train that ran into the coal engine,) informed me that he stopped between the distant signal and the place where the collision occurred, and he found that the distant signal was not quite on when he passed it, that he only saw a white light until he passed it, and his guard got off and pulled the wire and put the signal full on.

It is impossible entirely to reconcile these conflicting statements, but the Superintendent of the Line examined the signal on the morning following the accident, and he ascertained that if the lever handle were let go gently the signal would stand at an angle of nearly 45°, and at night show the light part red and part white. It was also found that the catch of the lever might fall into the slit in which the lever moves, and prevent it from falling completely over, so that it is possible that a man on the left side of the engine should only see a white light, and the guard on the right side of the van might see

the light partly red and partly white. This explanation relieves the Company's servants in charge of the 5h. 5m. p.m. passenger train from blame.

Sufficient care does not appear to have been exercised in selecting a man to perform the pointsman's duty at Ince Hall Colliery Siding. The man was selected by the foreman of Platelayers, and he objected to the performance of the duty; he was certainly, from neglecting to keep the main lines cleared for the passenger train, the sole cause of the accident.

There is no duty connected with railways that requires to be more carefully or accurately performed than that of pointsman. Neglect in its performance generally endangers the public safety; and this duty is in consequence usually better paid for. But in this instance a man is taken from his ordinary duty, that of platelayer, and put in a responsible position, against his own wish, and without being placed on a higher rate of pay while so employed. Fortunately for the public, the 5h. 5m. p.m. train, which was composed of six carriages and three break vans, did not run into the coal engine with a train of coal waggons behind or in front of it, or the consequences would probably have been much worse.

I think the Railway Company's management is to be blamed for having placed an incompetent man in charge at the Colliery siding points; in having allowed the siding to remain out of order, obliging a dangerous mode of working to be adopted; and in permitting the signal to remain in bad working order; and I would recommend that the attention of the Directors of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company should be called to these points, and to the desirability of erecting a fixed station signal at the Ince Hall Colliery Siding. I think it more than probable that, if one had been there, this accident would not have occurred. The lamp used at the distant signal is susceptible of considerable improvement, by retiring the lens of the white or "all right" light in a short tube, or placing a projecting shade at one side, by which means it could not be seen by the driver of a down train, until it was fully turned in the direction of the train; and the absence of any light must be considered as a danger signal.

I have, &c.,

*The Secretary to the
Board of Trade,
Whitehall.*

W. YOLLAND.
Col. Royal Engineers.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, December 29th, 1860.*

SIR,
I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you, for the consideration of 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 at Moses Gate station on the 10th instant.

I am, &c.

T. H. FARRER.

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

London,

SIR,
19th December, 1860.

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your Minute of the 13th 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 10th instant, at the Moses Gate station of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

This station is a mile and a half to the east of Bolton, and nine miles to the north-west of Manchester. About 150 yards to the west of it there is a crossing, leading from the down line, across the up line, to certain goods sidings.

On the day in question, the 11.35 a.m. coal train from Salford (near Manchester) for Bolton, arrived with 10 or 12 waggons, soon after noon, at Moses Gate; and after it had waited on the down line for five minutes, to allow the express train from Bolton to pass, the engine was turned across the up line into a siding, to fetch out five waggons which were to be taken on by it. Before the engine had got back to the down line with these waggons, a stopping passenger train, following the express, approached the station on the up line from Bolton, and was checked by the distant signal, which is situated about 300 yards to the west of the crossing leading from the down line to the sidings.

The passenger train consisted of a tank engine and five passenger carriages, including two break-carriages. It started from Bolton two or three minutes after its proper time, and reached Moses Gate about 12.18 instead of 12.15. The driver reduced his speed to 6 or 8 miles an hour when he found the distant signal from that station at danger; but he turned his

steam on again for a short distance afterwards, on receiving signals, inviting him to proceed, from the acting pointsman at the station, from the goods guard, and from the driver of the coal train,—all of whom beckoned to him to come forward to the passenger platform as soon as the engine of the coal train and its waggons were clear of the crossing.

In the meantime, the driver of the coal train, after his return to the down line from the siding, believing the signals of the acting pointsman to be intended for him, proceeded to back his engine, and the waggons which he had brought out of the siding, towards the remainder of his train, which he had previously left on the down line, to the east of the crossing. He had no doubt, when he commenced to do so, that the points which connected the crossing with the down line, and which were self-acting, would have fallen back after he passed out through them, so as to admit of his pushing his waggons back along the down line; and he trusted to the acting pointsman, from whom he believed that he had received a signal, to see that they had fallen back, as, indeed, it would have been the duty of any pointsman to do, before giving him a signal to move back towards his train.

But these points, instead of returning to the position in which they were weighted to stand, remained in that in which the engine had placed them; and the waggons, in lieu of running back along the down line, returned through the crossing-line, towards the up line, at the same time that the passenger train approached the crossing upon that line.

A slight collision ensued between the passenger engine and two of the coal waggons. The driver of the coal train, after discovering what had occurred, had brought his waggons to a stand, and had started them again in forward motion, though not in time to get them out of the way of that engine. The driver of the passenger train reversed his engine, and did what he could to reduce his speed, as soon as he perceived that the coal waggons had passed through the points in the wrong direction; and he believes that he was not travelling at a greater rate than 3 or 4 miles an hour when the collision occurred. The buffer plank of his engine was damaged; but the engine itself, and all the passenger carriages, remained on the line; and only one of the coal waggons was thrown off the rails. One of the passengers is stated to have complained of injury.

The staff of the passenger department at this station, under the control of the station-master, consists of a booking clerk, a telegraph boy, a ticket collector, a day porter, and a night porter. The day porter has charge of the main-line points and signals, but has also been employed to deliver parcels and messages in the neighbourhood; and this duty has necessitated his absence from the station for periods varying from half an hour to an hour and a half daily. He was performing this duty on the present occasion on the arrival of the coal train, and there was no person left at the station, to work the points and to attend to the signals, but the station master and the booking clerk. The latter, a lad of 17 years of age, in the receipt of a salary of 12s. 6d. per week, had asked one of the goods' porters to take charge of them; but the goods' porter had very properly declined, in consequence of its not having been his duty, and of his having had no right to interfere with them; and the booking clerk sallied forth, as he had done some half-a-dozen times before with the same train, and on twenty previous occasions in the case of other trains, to do the passenger porter's duty in these respects.

After the up express train had passed, and had turned on the distant signal by means of a treddle, he pulled the points of the down line over, and told the driver of the coal train to take his engine across the up line into the siding. He saw the driver come out again, with the waggons attached to his engine, and he then returned towards the station, to be ready to collect the tickets for the passenger train, which was by that time approaching.

After he had gone back for a short distance, he saw that the coal engine and its waggons were standing still on the main line, and he beckoned to the driver of the passenger train to come forward to the station. He did not see that both of the trains were set in motion at the same time, in obedience to the signal which he had made with his hand, but he shortly afterwards heard the crash of the collision.

This booking clerk appears to have undertaken the duty of acting pointsman, solely because there was no other person available for it, and, looking to the position in which he was placed, and to the other duties which also devolved upon him, it is clear that the blame of the collision does not rest on his shoulders, but is to be attributed to the want of a more responsible agent, for the performance of the important duties of controlling the shunting operations and signalling the trains.

The porter and pointsman has quite enough of his own work to attend to at the station, and ought not to be taken away to act as messenger and outside porter; and other provision requires to be made for the delivery of parcels and "advices" in the neighbourhood.

The goods train ought not to have been permitted to proceed with its shunting at all, as it did on this occasion, when a passenger train was due. The regulations of the Company prohibited such a course from being pursued; and the experienced servants of the Company who were with the goods train, cannot be excused from blame for having disobeyed these regulations, though they were permitted to do so by this inexperienced acting pointsman. The regular pointsman would probably have kept them waiting until the passenger train had passed, although it is true that they would not then have had time to get away much in advance of the next down passenger train, which was due to leave the station at 12.44; and this reason no doubt weighed strongly with them, as well as with the acting pointsman.

It will have been observed, that the same signal from the hand of the acting pointsman was taken to apply on this occasion both to the driver of the passenger train and to the driver of the coal train. This mistake was made in consequence of the want of a main, or station signal, from which an indication could be given to the former without the chance of its being considered by the latter to apply to him also. I recommend that this want should now be supplied, and that the present distant signals should be removed to a greater distance from the station, particularly that which is on the west of it; taking care that if it is placed out of sight of the person working it, a return signal should be added, or other suitable means should be provided, to enable him to ascertain from time to time that it is in proper order.

I am, &c.

H. W. TYLER,
Captain, R.E.

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