

Appendix No. 26.

ACCIDENTS.

Lancashire and
Yorkshire and
East Lancashire
Railways.

lying upon the line. It is needless to dwell upon the dangers to which such lax supervision exposes the public, or to point out the fatal consequences which would most probably ensue were such bulky packages left upon the line in a tunnel.

Capt. Galton, R.E.,
&c. &c.

I have, &c.

R. M. LAFFAN,
Capt. Royal Engineers.

SIR,

Bury, Lancashire, September 2, 1852.

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 31st ult., having reference to the recent collision at Bootle Lane station, which shall be submitted to the Directors of this Company at their next meeting.

Capt. Simmons, R.E.,
&c. &c.

I have, &c.

JAMES SMITHELLS,
Secretary.

SIR,

Manchester, September 2, 1852.

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of Captain Galton's communication of the 31st ult., enclosing copy report from Captain Laffan of his investigation into the circumstances of the late accident at the Bootle Lane station.

I will submit the same to the Directors of this Company at their next meeting.

Capt. Simmons, R.E.,
&c. &c.

I have, &c.

JNO. DUNSTAN jun.
Secretary.

SIR,

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, November 5, 1852.*

WITH reference to your report of a collision at the Bootle joint station on the 26th July between a luggage and a passenger train, I am directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to request that you will state the precise number of passengers who were injured by the accident in question.

This information is requested, in order to the completion of the usual returns prepared in this department for presentation to Parliament.

*The Superintendent of the
Liverpool and Bootle Joint Railway Station.*

I have, &c.

J. L. A. SIMMONS,
Capt. Royal Engineers.

SIR,

Liverpool, November 16, 1852.

REFERRING to my communication of the 8th instant, I beg to state, as the result of my inquiries, that twenty-five persons have been returned by the medical officer of the Lancashire and Yorkshire and East Lancashire Railway Companies as having been more or less injured by the collision at the Bootle station on the 26th July last. None of the Companies servants were injured, as far as I am aware.

Capt. Simmons, R.E.,
&c. &c.

I have, &c.

THOMAS JONES,
Joint Superintendent.

Appendix No. 27.

Lancashire and
Yorkshire Railway.

APPENDIX No. 27.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

SIR,

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, November 13, 1852.*

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you, for the information of the Directors of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, a copy of the report their Lordships have received from the officer appointed by them to inquire into the circumstances which attended the collision that occurred near the Bolton station upon the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway on the evening of the 23d August last.

My Lords direct me to request that you will call the especial attention of the Directors to the observations in the report upon the following points:—

1st. The insufficient accommodation for the traffic at the Bolton station.

2d. The improper encouragement of excursion traffic without due provision for its conduct.

3d. The great want of punctuality in the trains, caused in a great measure by the absence of proper arrangement for the excursion traffic, and particularly at the Liverpool station.

4th. The flagrant breach of the regulations framed by the Company for the guidance of their servants and for the safe conduct of the traffic, trains being permitted to pass the

Lostock junction at a less interval than the five minutes prescribed in the regulations as the time within which trains are not to follow each other. It appears that seven trains were allowed by the junction signalman to pass within a quarter of an hour.

5th. The insufficiency of the instructions sent to the signalman at the Bullfield siding, as to which their Lordships concur with the opinion expressed in the report that the unfortunate man might reasonably consider that they did not apply to his station.

6th. The overloading of the engines.

7th. The insufficiency of break power attached to the train, and especially that there was no break at the tail of the train, a precaution which upon a line with the gradients of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway appears more particularly requisite for the safety of passengers.

8th. The variety in the construction of the carriages and the inequality in the height of their buffers.

9th. The insufficiency of the establishment of the Company for conducting a traffic of the extent to which it had been brought by the encouragement given by the Company to excursionists.

10th. The absence of timepieces on the railway by which the servants of the Company may regulate their proceedings.

My Lords direct me to inform you that it is with much regret that they now have to call the attention of the Directors to a condition of things upon their railway which, from the report of the Company's manager and of the officer appointed by their Lordships to inquire into the accident, displays a degree of disregard to the safety of passengers and of the servants of the Company which, after the repeated warnings the Directors have received and the accidents that have already happened on their lines, appears to their Lordships most reprehensible.

My Lords direct me to request that you will call to the attention of the Directors the letter from their Lordships of the 6th August, in which was forwarded a report of one of their officers upon a fatal accident that occurred at Burnley, and in which, after pointing out the insufficiency of the arrangements and establishment for conducting the excursion traffic at that station, and the apparent want of supervision and discipline among the servants of the Company, their Lordships expressed their trust that the Company would take the warning which they had received from that painful occurrence, and that they would take measures to ensure a greater degree of vigilance, and not allow excursion trains to proceed upon their journeys without having carefully ascertained that all arrangements have been made wherever necessary to ensure their safety.

I am also to observe that in the report forwarded with that letter the Company's attention was particularly called to the inequality in the height of the buffers of their carriages.

My Lords desire me also to observe that in a letter dated the 15th March last, having reference to an accident that occurred at the Bury station, their Lordships had occasion to point out to the Directors the very great responsibility which must attach to them if any accident should again occur upon their Railway from a deficiency of the working staff of the Company.

The attention of the Company has also been repeatedly called to the necessity of a due provision of break power, and especially at the end of the trains, upon their railway. This defect was particularly called to the attention of the Directors in the report before the collision that occurred at the Bootle station on the 26th July, and to which the serious attention of the Company was called by a letter from this department on the 31st August.

My Lords direct me also to express their regret that the Directors should have continued to run excursion trains, as appears to have been the case from the applications that were made to their Lordships for their approval of these trains, after the Directors had received the report of their own superintendent upon this accident recommending the discontinuance of this description of traffic.

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

I have, &c.
J. L. A. SIMMONS,
Capt. Royal Engineers.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, November 3, 1852.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report to you, for the information of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances attending an accident which occurred near the Bolton station, upon the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway at 9.30 P.M., on the evening of Monday the 23d August last.

The direction and management of the Company's business at the Bolton station is attended with considerable difficulty, and the public is at present subjected to a needless amount of risk from the insufficient accommodation provided at that station for the enormous traffic which its peculiar position with respect to the rest of the Lancashire and Yorkshire system causes to pass through it. The Bolton station bears the same relation to the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway which the narrow neck of an hourglass bears to the expanding space above and below.

The lines from Preston and the north-west, and from Liverpool and the south-west, on the one side, meet at the Lostock Junction, 2½ miles from Bolton; and the lines from

S

Appendix No. 27.

ACCIDENTS.

Lancashire and
Yorkshire Railway.

Appendix No. 27. Manchester on the south, from Bury and the Yorkshire districts on the eastward, and from Blackburn on the north, meet on the other side close to the entrance of the station; and the amount of work consequent upon so great an interchange of traffic, from the frequent breaking up and remarshalling of trains, and the shifting and exchanging, sorting and classifying the passengers and goods, demands an extent of accommodation far greater than the Bolton station at present affords.

ACCIDENTS.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

To instance one defect: the whole of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company's traffic from Preston and the north-west, and from Liverpool and the south-west to Manchester and to the Yorkshire districts, is conducted through the Bolton station upon a single line of rails, very badly provided with platform accommodation, and the consequence is that the frequent delays which occur to some of those trains retard and impede the traffic from the northern and western districts. The extent to which this inconvenience is felt may be estimated from the circumstance that on the Monday when this accident occurred 108 trains passed through the Bolton station, and that on the Saturday previous the number had been 134.

The platforms at the Bolton station are far too short for the present traffic; the longest will only afford communication to a train of 16 carriages, while many of the trains consist of upwards of thirty carriages. Unreasonable delays therefore sometimes arise in sorting and classifying the passengers, particularly in excursion trains—a description of traffic that has lately increased to an unprecedented extent. It will be seen from the circumstances described in this report that the insufficient accommodation at the Bolton station was one of the principal causes of the collision.

The manner in which the collision took place was as follows:

The afternoon parliamentary train from Liverpool had started half an hour late from that station, and had been swelled by the accession of return excursion passengers to such an extent that the load proved too great to be moved, even by two engines, at the requisite speed, and the train was too long to be accommodated at any of the stations, and continuing therefore to lose time on the road, and at each station, it had reached the Lostock Junction one hour and twenty minutes late, and had been detained there for twenty minutes longer, while the tickets, of which there were about 1,200, were being collected. At length the train reached Bolton at 5 minutes past nine, one hour and fifty minutes behind time, and was there detained for forty minutes while the passengers were being sorted.

These repeated delays retarded and interrupted the whole of the traffic from the northern and western districts; for while the train was stopping at the Lostock Junction to enable the staff to collect the tickets, two goods trains and an excursion train from Liverpool came up and stopped upon the line behind it, and a goods train and two excursion trains from Fleetwood and Blackpool came up upon the Preston line, and the whole seven trains were detained at the junction till the parliamentary train could move on.

The parliamentary train moved on about five minutes to nine, and the other six immediately followed with intervals of about a train's length between them; the seven trains passed the junction within less than a quarter of an hour. The Company's regulations direct that no two trains shall ever be allowed to follow one another through the junction at a less interval than five minutes, but the Company's officers had neglected to provide any means of measuring such intervals, and the rule was therefore disregarded. When the parliamentary train stopped at Bolton the other six drew up immediately behind it; and the last of the six, a goods train from Liverpool, extended back to a place called Bullfield 1,200 yards from the station. It had stood there a few minutes only when the ordinary 7.30 passenger train from Liverpool, then three quarters of an hour late, came up behind it, and ran into the luggage van which stood behind the waggons. This train, in its turn, was followed closely by a heavy excursion train returning from Fleetwood; but, fortunately, the driver of the latter succeeded in stopping it when his engine had reached within twenty yards of the last carriage, and was thus enabled to avoid a second collision. At that moment there stood in an uninterrupted line, reaching back upwards of a mile from the Bolton station, eleven engines and tenders, ten luggage vans, sixty-one goods waggons, and 156 carriages holding between 5,000 and 6,000 passengers; an accumulation of traffic perhaps unprecedented in railway history.

The afternoon parliamentary train from Liverpool is timed to leave that station at 5.40 P.M. It generally consists of from twelve to fourteen carriages, which are usually well filled; on the Mondays especially so; from the circumstance that on that day this cheap train affords great convenience to two classes of the population. Many of the country people from the surrounding districts make it a practice to go up from the several road-side stations on the Monday morning with baskets of fruit and vegetables for the Liverpool market, and they return in the afternoon by the parliamentary train with their baskets full of provisions and other goods; and, on the other hand, numbers of artizans and workmen, who have been spending the Sunday and Monday in the country, are in the habit of waiting for the parliamentary train at the several road-side stations to return by it to their homes in the manufacturing towns. Owing to these causes, therefore, there is, even on ordinary occasions, a considerable amount of work to be done at every station on the arrival of the parliamentary train on Monday afternoon; and it was an injudicious arrangement to select that train for the conveyance of excursion passengers in numbers which could not be foreseen.

The arrangements which the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company make with respect to their regular and their excursion traffic, and the manner in which they allow the one to mingle with and derange the other, are somewhat peculiar, and perhaps this may be a convenient place to describe them.

As a general rule, the Company issue single journey tickets only for their regular trains. The use of return tickets is restricted to a few first-class stations, and there they are only issued to certain places, and are generally confined to the first and second class. The Company appears to have no wish to increase their regular traffic by granting the accommodation which the system of return tickets affords.

But in seeking, on the other hand, to develop the irregular or excursion traffic, the Company give a very great latitude of choice as to the times and the trains appointed for the return journey; allowing the holders of excursion tickets, not only to return by the same or any other excursion train within fourteen days, but giving them also the option of returning within the same period by certain of the regular trains; and the consequence of this latter arrangement greatly deranges the regular traffic by rendering it impossible for the staff at any station to tell beforehand what extent of accommodation may be required in such trains to provide for the excursion in addition to the regular passengers.

When the parliamentary train drew up at the Liverpool station on the afternoon of the 23d of August it consisted of the greatest number of carriages usually required, namely, fourteen carriages and a luggage van; and these having been filled, for the most part, by the usual parliamentary passengers, the train was about to start at its appointed time; when suddenly a great number of excursion passengers presented themselves, and demanded to be conveyed by it.

The Company's superintendent at Liverpool, on seeing this fresh accession of traffic, ordered the engine of the parliamentary train to be detached, and directed the driver to fetch up three more carriages; and as increasing numbers of excursion passengers continued to arrive while this was being done, the engine was again sent away and fetched up seven others. Meantime, however, increasing crowds of excursion passengers continued to arrive, and the engine had to make a third and a fourth trip, bringing up ten more carriages and a luggage van; and at length the train was got away, half an hour behind time, with two engines and tenders, two luggage vans, and thirty-four carriages, mostly of the third class, completely filled. Instead of allowing this vast number of excursion passengers to enter the station, and take their places in the train long after the time appointed for starting had elapsed, the superintendent should have started the train at its appointed time, and closed the Lancashire and Yorkshire side of the station for that purpose exactly at 5.40 P.M.

The train stopped at every intermediate station, and, as may be supposed, great delays occurred at each. The carriages extended far beyond the platforms, and great difficulty was experienced in getting out the passengers who wished to alight. Many of the regular passengers were old and infirm people, encumbered with baskets, and some of the excursion passengers, who had been to the Isle of Man, from whence they had brought back a supply of spirits, were boisterous and unruly. Great delays occurred also in seeking through the crowded carriages of the long train for vacant places for the passengers who were to be taken up. Lastly, in ascending the Westhoughton Bank the engines could scarcely move the heavy load, and owing to the combination of difficulties the train reached the Lostock junction an hour and twenty minutes behind its appointed time.

After having been uncoupled and re-marshalled at Bolton, the Manchester division of the carriages left that station two hours and thirty minutes late; having, by its delay caused such a derangement of the traffic, that eight other trains had been brought to a stand, and one collision had taken place, and another been very narrowly avoided.

The regular 7.30 passenger train from Liverpool had started ten minutes late, and being a heavy train, had reached Westhoughton, four miles and a half from Bolton, about forty minutes behind time. There a delay of ten minutes took place, to collect the tickets, there being but one guard to the train, and the number of tickets to be collected being unusually great, from the circumstance that half the carriages were filled with excursion passengers. At length the train went on, and passed the Lostock junction about a quarter of an hour after the last of the seven preceding trains. As it passed the junction a long excursion train came up on the Fleetwood line, and checking speed to allow the Liverpool train to pass, followed it through the junction and kept it within sight.

As these two trains passed the Lostock Junction the drivers perceived that the junction signals showed a green light, which implied "caution," as there was a train ahead that had passed between five and ten minutes. The last of the preceding trains had then passed the junction nearly a quarter of an hour, but still the signalman at the junction showed a green light, considering that "caution" might be requisite from the great accumulation of traffic in front.

At the place where the last of the trains that were then detained outside the Bolton station stood there is a coal siding which is frequently used in the daytime; it is called the Bullfield siding; and to protect the traffic while coal trains are shunting at that point, auxiliary signals are erected at some distance on either side, and are worked by wires from levers fixed near the switches. A pointsman is stationed in the daytime at this place, whose duty it is to work the points of the siding, and when so working them to give notice of the obstruction to all approaching trains by turning on the auxiliary signals on either side. This pointsman's duties commenced at half past six every morning, and on ordi-

Appendix No. 27.

ACCIDENTS.

Lancashire and
Yorkshire Railway.

Appendix No. 27.

ACCIDENTS.

Lancashire and
Yorkshire Railway.

nary occasions ended at 8 P.M., and as at that hour two of the regular trains, a passenger train from Liverpool and a passenger train from Preston, were still to arrive, it might naturally be inferred that he was not placed at that siding to interfere with the passenger traffic, but simply to signal any obstruction arising from the working of his own points, a duty that ended at 8 P.M.

In common, however, with all the servants of the Company, the pointsman at the Bullfield siding had received a printed advice note stating that certain excursion trains would run on certain days; and a note at the foot of the printed paper directed the Company's staff, as follows:—

“Keep your signals lighted, and be prepared for these and all future special trains till they have passed home, and keep a good look out for any extra trains, engines, &c. of which you may not receive advice. See that all the servants at and near your station understand the notices issued from time to time. Enter this and all future advice notes in your book, and after the trips are over return it to this office, entering the times the trains left, arrived, or passed your station, and writing across the face of it the date when you received it, and that it is duly entered.”

A copy of this notice had been sent to the pointsman, and the Company's officers are of opinion that the direction to keep the signal lighted till the last of the excursion trains had passed applied to the signals at the Bullfield siding, and that the pointsman should therefore have remained at his post till all the excursion trains had gone past him, and as the man had extinguished his lamps and gone home at 8.45 P.M., and as one excursion train, the last, had not yet passed at the time when the collision took place, they attribute to the man's neglect of duty the whole blame of the collision. Immediately after the collision the clerk in charge of the Bolton station asked the pointsman whether his lamps had been lit; and the pointsman replied, that they had not been, as he had extinguished them, as usual, before going home. The clerk in charge asked him whether he had not received a copy of the printed advice note, and the man replied that he had, that there was one then pinned up in his cabin, but that he did not understand from it that he was to remain on duty till that hour of night. The clerk in charge told him that he should find it so in the morning; and on hearing this it appears the man went home, told his wife they meant to put the whole blame upon him, and went and committed suicide.

On reading the advice note, however, it appears to me that it was specially addressed to the station masters, and to the station masters only, and that it referred to the signals that were to be shown, and the entries that were to be made at the stations where books were kept and a sufficient staff was supposed to be present to carry the advice into effect. It does not appear to me that the simple delivery of such a paper to the pointsman at the Bullfield coal siding, unaccompanied by any verbal direction or explanation, made it certain that he was to consider himself charged with any additional duty after the ordinary hours of his attendance had elapsed. I should infer from the terms of the notice that if it were considered necessary for the safety of the traffic that the Bullfield signals should be used after 8 P.M., not for the ordinary purpose of signalling the working of the siding, but as an additional protection to the extra traffic, it was the duty of the station master at Bolton to have given definite instructions to that effect; and as no such directions had been given, I do not see how the pointsman can be considered to have neglected his duty in not remaining at his post after his ordinary duties were over. The man remained at his post till 8.45 P.M., three quarters of an hour later than his usual time; and though his then going home showed either great indifference to the safety of the traffic or an unfortunate want of judgment—and though his absence at so critical a time proved one of the immediate causes of the collision—I do not see that, by the strict letter of the Company's regulations, he was required to act otherwise.

The effect, however, of the absence of signals at Bullfield was disastrous to the Liverpool train. As the driver approached the siding he checked his speed, and looked to the auxiliary signal to see whether it gave any warning of danger, and seeing none he went on, and had come up to within about 130 yards of the signal post when, suddenly, on rounding the curve, he perceived the tail lights of the goods train which stood in front. Every effort was then made to stop, but it was too late. The distance at which the tail lights could be seen round the curve was only 320 yards, and the Liverpool train was moving on a descending gradient, and was a heavy train, and there was but one guard's break. The engine was still moving, though very slightly, when it met the break van of the goods train in front. The shock was very slight. Had there been a second guard's break it would in all probability have been entirely avoided.

The goods train sustained no damage, and even the tail lamps of the break van, which received the blow, were uninjured, and the driver and fireman, who remained on the Liverpool engine, scarcely felt the concussion. Had all the carriages of the passenger train been of uniform construction it is probable that no damage whatever would have been done; but the rolling stock of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company includes carriages of various patterns and modes of construction, some being their own originally, and others taken over from the various lines with which they have at different times amalgamated, or which they have purchased or leased, or which they work by contract, and there is consequently but little uniformity in the stock, and the buffers, standing in many instances at different heights from the rails, do not always meet and thus become sources of danger rather than means of safety. A marked instance of this occurred in the present case. The buffers of the third carriage in the train stood far lower than those of the second, and on

the collision taking place, they were forced under them, and tilted up the second carriage upon end, by which the second carriage and the adjoining compartments of the first and third were broken and damaged, and fifteen persons who rode in them were seriously injured, nine of them being hurt so severely that it was found necessary at once to remove them to the neighbouring cottages.

The circumstance of there having been but one guard's break attached to the 7.30 passenger train from Liverpool was one of the immediate causes of the present collision. From the extent to which the driver and fireman and the single guard were enabled to check the speed of the train, it is evident that had a second guard's break been applied the disaster might have been entirely avoided. The train consisted of an engine and tender, fourteen passenger carriages, and a guard's van, which stood in front, next to the tender. There was no break behind; and in addition, therefore, to the danger arising from the increased difficulty of stopping the train, there was a constant risk of some serious accident had any of the carriages become detached while in motion. This latter risk is clearly pointed out in the Company's printed regulations, and they give directions for avoiding it, which in practice, when no break is attached behind a train, it is impossible to carry out.

The Company's printed rules direct that "If any part of a train is detached while in motion great care must be taken not to stop the train in front, before the detached part is stopped; and it is the duty of the guard of such detached part to apply his break, to prevent a collision with the carriages in front in the event of their stopping."

This rule evidently implies that there shall be a guard provided with an efficient break at the tail of every train; and it gives instruction how a danger, which not unfrequently arises, is to be met. But such rules only embarrass the Company's servants when the means of complying with them are not provided. For how is the driver to comply with the direction not to stop his train till the detached carriages have stopped, when possibly those carriages, unchecked by a break, may be following him down an incline, upon which they would never stop of themselves? In such a contingency the driver, unable to comply with impracticable rules, might be reduced to the dilemma, either of running on regardless of all signals and taking the chance of a collision in front, or of stopping to incur the certain disaster of being run into by his own carriages which were following behind.

On reviewing all the circumstances of this accident so many causes are seen to have combined to produce the catastrophe, and in the course of the inquiry so many instances came to light in which the practice of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company might be amended with profit to themselves and with a great increase of safety to the public, that it is extremely difficult to arrange and classify so many detached yet combining influences.

Among the immediate causes which led to the collision, and caused its consequences to be so serious to the passengers may be ranked:

- 1st. The defective arrangements and want of proper accommodation at the Bolton station.
- 2d. The injudicious arrangements, by which the uncertain and irregular excursion traffic was allowed to interfere with, overload, and derange the regular trains.
- 3d. The blameable practice of running passenger trains without any guard's break behind.
- 4th. The want of uniformity in the height of the buffers of the carriages composing the passenger trains.
- 5th. And last though certainly not the least important, it is my opinion that at the time of the accident the whole of the working staff of the Company were overworked. The Company had sought by a great extension of the excursion traffic to increase the receipts of the line, and had made no adequate provision to meet the increased demand for accommodation, and the consequence was that the whole of the working stock and of the working staff were taxed to execute an amount of work which could not be continued for any time without an accident.

As one instance among many illustrating the insufficiency of the working staff which came to my notice, I may here relate a circumstance which occurred in the course of the present inquiry. I had asked for the books kept at the Bolton station, in which were noted down the arrivals and departures of all trains, the number of carriages, waggons, &c. composing them, the number attached or detached, and the causes of detention if any took place. On examining the entries in this book, I found them in the majority of instances, at variance with information derived from other sources, and I asked for an explanation of the discrepancy from the clerk in charge. His explanation was to the following effect:

It appears that there are two men appointed at the Bolton station to keep the books I speak of, and that they come on duty, one at 6.30 and the other at 7.15 in the morning, and remain on duty till half past eight at night. One of them, however, is always engaged in the passengers luggage depôt, receiving and booking or delivering the luggage, and of course, therefore, can know nothing about the trains. The other has to receive all the parcels from the guards of every train, and to take them to the parcel office; to take all the outward parcels from the parcel office and deliver them to the several guards; to receive all fish, of which there are sometimes from two to three tons; to see that the parcels of fish are all right, and to load them on the Company's fish cart, and despatch them to their several addresses in the town, and to report the parcels and addresses to the parcel clerk. In

Appendix No. 27.

ACCIDENTS.

Lancashire and
Yorkshire Railway.

addition to these duties, these men have to sort all the passenger tickets, excursion and regular, collected at Bolton and Lostock Junction, at Horwich and Darcylever, from the Yorkshire line, at Bromley Cross from the Blackburn line, and at Moses Gate from the Manchester and Bolton line; and in addition to these multifarious duties they are expected to make accurate entries in the arrival and departure books of every circumstance relating to the trains, of which upwards of a hundred pass through the station every day. It is needless to add that I found that the entries were not to be depended upon.

In addition to the circumstances which I have classed together as the immediate causes of this accident many other faulty arrangements in the management of the traffic came to my notice in the course of the present inquiry; and as some of these faulty arrangements materially affect the safety of the public upon the Lancashire and Yorkshire lines I think it necessary to describe them.

It appears to me that the arrangements made by the Company for organizing and conducting the excursion traffic were such as must necessarily expose the public to considerable danger. I have already alluded to the mischievous effects produced by allowing the excursion passengers to overload and derange the regular trains. I beg now to point out some other dangers attending the manner in which the excursion traffic is arranged. The Lancashire and Yorkshire Company have two classes of excursion trains. The first and most dangerous is that which they intrust to the management of agents, who undertake, at their own cost, to advertise cheap excursion trips in various towns, and in some places to issue tickets the number of which is only limited by the demand. In return for this service the Company allow the agents 10 per cent. upon the gross receipts. The tickets are all of the third-class, and the fare is a single third-class fare for the out and home journey, giving the holders the option of returning, as before described, by any excursion and by certain of the regular trains within fourteen days. Certain hours are appointed for the starting of these trains, and the Company provide engine power and carriages; but as the number of passengers can never be foreseen, the provision of carriages is sometimes far too great, sometimes altogether insufficient, and frequently from five to ten carriages are added, and the engine is encumbered with a greater load than it can move with sufficient speed to ensure its being able to keep clear of the regular traffic. The train then starts with general instructions to the driver to make his way as best he can to his destination, to keep a good look out ahead, and to avoid to the best of his ability any interference with the regular trains. No time is fixed for passing any station nor is there any time fixed for the arrival of the train at its journey's end. Every thing is left to the discretion and judgment of the drivers, and fortunately for the public the drivers are generally very intelligent men. On the return journey the same rule holds. A certain hour is named for starting, but after that nothing is fixed; the drivers being simply told to make their way back as best they may. It would be superfluous to point out how so lax a system must endanger, not only the excursion but the regular traffic.

The next class of excursion trains on the Lancashire and Yorkshire lines consists of extra trains, started at the request of individuals for the conveyance of a definite number of persons from one place to another and back the same day. This class of excursion trains is not so dangerous as the last, inasmuch as the Company's servants can always tell with certainty the amount of accommodation which will be required, and can thus always ensure the engine power being proportioned to the load, and inasmuch also as the passengers all returning the same day have not the option of overcrowding and overloading the regular trains; but in every other respect they are as injudiciously conducted; no times being fixed for the arrival either at their destination or at intermediate stations, and every thing being left to the skill and watchfulness of the drivers and the efficiency of the signals along the line.

The extent to which the excursion traffic has lately grown upon the Lancashire and Yorkshire lines has been so great that the material resources of the Company have been strained to a degree which, were it continued for any length of time, must necessarily be attended with danger. Carriages of every description discarded from the regular traffic are pressed into the service to make up the excursion trains, and the working staff at the stations, already reduced to a point of doubtful efficiency, is still further weakened by the necessity of sending out the best porters to act as guards.

The next point which peculiarly requires amendment in the arrangements of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company is the want of any means of enabling the drivers and guards to know the exact hour; for when such means are not provided it is impossible to ensure any regularity in the conduct of the traffic. At present there are no clocks visible from the line at most of the stations, and the Company neither provide watches for their servants nor require that they should purchase them themselves. The inconvenience and the risk arising from this circumstance is severely felt by the best of the Company's servants, and I cannot too strongly impress upon the Company the necessity of amending it.

To give one instance of the inconvenience and the dangers arising from the present state of things, I may adduce what occurred on the day of the accident at the Lostock Junction, one of the most important points on the line.

At the Lostock Junction there was no clock, and the pointsman had no watch, and it was therefore clearly useless to publish rules for the working of that junction, directing that no train should follow another at a less interval than five minutes, and that a caution signal should be shown for five minutes more. The pointsman had no means of estimating

the intervals of time; and among all the servants of the Company present with the seven trains that were detained at the junction on the 23d August I could only find one who had a watch with him, or who could give me even a moderately accurate estimate of the time. One of the Company's servants, a guard, was wrong in his reckoning to the extent of an hour.

I would recommend to the Company to revise the whole system of their excursion trains; to run those trains to a regular time bill; to put an end to the arrangement which allows the excursion passengers to derange the movements of the regular traffic; and to restrict the extension of the excursion traffic to such an amount as they can conduct without overstraining the capabilities of their working stock, or the energies of their staff.

I beg also to recommend that the immediate attention of the Directors be called to the want of adequate accommodation at Bolton, and to the necessity of enlarging that station to meet the wants of the growing traffic.

The dangers arising from the practice of running passenger trains with no guard's break behind has been so clearly pointed out in this and in a previous report which I made upon an accident which occurred some time back to a Lancashire and Yorkshire train near Liverpool, and those dangers are so clearly foreseen in the Company's printed rules, that I trust the practice will forthwith be discontinued.

I shall conclude this report by again stating my conviction that it will be impossible to conduct the business of the Company with order and punctuality unless adequate means are provided to enable the Company's servants to know the exact time.

I have, &c.

James Booth, Esq.,
&c. &c.

R. M. LAFFAN,
Capt. Royal Engineers.

P.S.—I beg to annex to this report a copy of a special report upon the same accident addressed by the general manager of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway to the Board of Directors, from which it will be seen that the general manager feels very strongly the dangers arising from the manner in which the excursion traffic has been extended.

ACCIDENT AT BULLFIELD.

Special Report to the General Board of Directors of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

GENTLEMEN,

August 25, 1852.

ON the evening of Monday the 23d instant the regular passenger train leaving Liverpool at 7.30 P.M. for Manchester left fifteen minutes late, owing to the crowded state of both sides of the station from the great influx of regular passengers as well as excursionists, both of this Company and the East Lancashire; the excursion trains having preceded it, (the 7.30 train), which latter train consisted of a luggage van and fifteen carriages, losing one quarter of an hour on the road between Liverpool and Lostock junction, owing to the weight and gradients on the Wigan and Westhoughton banks; on arriving at Lostock junction they were turned on to the Bolton and Preston line, with a caution signal, indicating that a train had passed within ten minutes, and they approached Bullfield cautiously, accordingly, but seeing no signal at that post they proceeded on at a moderate pace round the curves, on opening which, the tail lights of a goods train were seen, and the engine immediately reversed and the break put on, but before the train could be brought up they ran into the luggage train, and by the concussion and weight of the train seven carriages were more or less injured, and several of the passengers that were in the train, one boy of eleven years of age very seriously, to all of whom every possible assistance was and is continued to be rendered. This accident arose from the man in charge of the signal at Bullfield (where he had special instructions to attend until the trains were all in) having put his light out and neglected to display his signal, and the guard of the luggage train that was standing on the main line not having time from the stoppage of his train to proceed back with a red light.* The point and signal man, after the dispersion of the trains, was found locked up in his cabin, having committed suicide by hanging himself. The goods train was the Liverpool, Halifax, and Bradford one, and was stopped in the Bolton station by excursion trains and preceding goods trains. The subject of these excursion trains has assumed such an aspect as to render it quite impossible to preserve anything like order or regularity at the stations when they return; indeed their numbers are such as to overpower any number of porters, inspectors, or police that could be made available; and this year, with much less inducements offered by us to travel than on previous occasions, they have as well as the regular passengers presented themselves in numbers, taxing to the utmost the working stock of the Company as well as the powers of their servants, and on Monday last, especially, the quantity of goods moving on nearly all parts of the line rendered these difficulties still more apparent, and as may be supposed, from there being in the Bolton station at the time of the accident not less than 250 carriages and waggons, composing different trains of goods and passengers, with two other passenger trains and a goods train to arrive. We propose, with the sanction of the Board or Traffic Committee, to limit very much or altogether to discontinue the cheap excursion trains for the rest of the season, or curtail them as much as the limits of those that have engaged carriages will permit, as not only are we running imminent risk by having to employ in many instances "green

* This was the purport of his evidence on oath before the magistrates.

Appendix No. 27. hands" unacquainted with their duty, as many of the best of our own men are laid up from diarrhoea.

ACCIDENTS.

Lancashire and
Yorkshire Railway.

Lamentable as this and the accident at Burnley have been, unfortunately these occurrences are not confined to this line, nor are the irregularities or want of punctuality growing out of them, for almost every line with which we are in connexion the same cause of overloaded passenger and excursion trains is producing the same effect as to want of punctuality.

The staff in the passenger department at Bolton consists of—

1 clerk.
1 assistant.
1 boy.
1 station master.
1 inspector.
1 van driver.
1 policeman.
10 pointsmen.
11 porters
1 errand boy.

29

and in the goods department 24 porters, who are in cases of emergency at the disposal of the station master in the passenger department, and for which they receive extra pay, if employed out of their regular hours.

I have &c.

JNO. M. LAWS.

*Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, Secretary's Office,
Manchester, December 21, 1852.*

SIR,

ON the subject of your letter of the 13th ult., enclosing copy of a report from Captain Laffan, R.E., of his investigation of the circumstances connected with the accident which occurred near Bolton on the 23d August last, I have been desired by the Directors of this Company to forward, for the information of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, the accompanying copy of a report in reply from the general manager, Captain Laws, R.N.

I am, &c.

Captain Simmons, R.E.,
&c. &c.

JNO. DUNSTAN jun.,
Secretary.

COLLISION at the Bolton Station on the 23d August last.

GENTLEMEN,

Manchester, November 25, 1825.

IN reference to Captain Laffan's remarks hereon, and of the capabilities and difficulties of the Bolton station, there is no doubt that difficulties exist, and with regard to the length of the platform, being capable of only accommodating sixteen carriages, that applies to two sides of the station, in addition to which there is a centre platform which accommodates a train on each side, as does part of the eastern platform, and these two (that is, the centre and eastern platforms,) give double in the one case, and a third more accommodation in the other, than the ordinary side platforms do, and it is only on extraordinary occasions, such as these excursion trains, that the platforms are deficient; and as the Board had already decided, two months before the receipt of Captain Laffan's report, that they would in future limit the extent of the excursion traffic, and had made arrangements with other Companies for passing part of the goods and passenger traffic by other routes that now passes through the Bolton station, and had made preparations to apply to Parliament for power that, if granted, would still further relieve it, I am not aware that anything more than the arrangement of points, crossings, and sidings (which I herewith submit) can be done to remedy the difficulties represented by Captain Laffan as existing at that station, the area (about twelve acres) and shape of which is limited by stipulations which Parliament insisted on in passing the four Acts for constructing railways running into and using that station, viz., Manchester, Bolton, and Bury Railway and Canal, Bolton and Preston Railway, the Bolton, Blackburn, Clitheroe, and West Yorkshire Railway, and the Liverpool and Bury Railway.

With regard to the remark upon the indiscretion on the part of the superintendent at Liverpool in detaining the regular passenger train for the excursion passengers there can be no question, which he did under a wrong impression, that the engine and train intended to take them had not arrived, from its being unable to come into the Tithebarn Street station, owing to the enormous influx of passenger trains both on the East Lancashire and Lancashire and Yorkshire sides of the station, and a vast increase of passengers on that day, swelled by an unexpected circumstance, that is, unexpected so far as the regular traffic of the line is concerned, viz., the sailing of the Great Britain steam ship on the previous Saturday for Australia, to witness the departure of which thousands of people visited Liverpool with the ordinary tickets, and remained over Sunday. With reference to

the proceedings at Lostock Junction, as to the arrival of so many trains at near the same time, I consider the pointsman, as well as the engine drivers and guards, used a sound discretion in drawing forward on a fine summer's evening to where they would be protected by the signal lights of the junction itself, and covered by the Bullfield light at a distance of 800 yards from each other while in motion, which is in accordance with their instructions under extraordinary circumstances, in preference to staying at a point of junction where they would have had to have detached their guards on both lines to have displayed a much less perfect signal than that by which they would be covered, as indeed was proved by their arriving safely at the Bolton station, and within the Bullfield signal; and this proceeding did not arise from any disregard of the usual and ordinary course of instructions, as Captain Laffan supposes, but from the unusual and extraordinary fact which brought the second order for one train approaching another while in motion into operation. With reference to the collision itself, it arose wholly from the neglect of the unfortunate man who had been specially appointed to the duty of attending to the Bullfield signal and lights; and Captain Laffan has assumed a cause for exculpating this individual, a very special pleading, directly at variance with the evidence given both to himself and the coroner's jury, and the whole course of his remarks in reference to this, the admitted principal cause of the accident, is well calculated to relieve from responsibility and loosen discipline from the only parties who after all can actually carry out details, that is, the engine drivers, guards, and signalmen.

In reference to Captain Laffan's remark as to averting a second accident, that was averted by the ordinary course pointed out by the general instructions, by the engine driver of the train which pitched into the goods train sending back a light to protect his own train, which would not have been required had the unfortunate man at Bullfield performed his duty by lighting his lamp, and which was repeated on the succeeding train in like manner. Captain Laffan has indulged in other speculative opinions as to the character of the traffic, the mode of issuing tickets, and the disinclination of the Company to develop it as between Liverpool and Bolton, which are certainly not borne out by the facts; the only intervening town being Wigan, the other part of the line running through a coalfield, and not an agricultural district as is stated, more scantily inhabited probably than any other part of the Lancashire and Yorkshire system, and the total receipts for the eleven intermediate stations being only 122*l.* for that week, for all description of passengers and parcels, the lowest average receipt being 8*s.* 7*d.* and the highest 4*l.* 14*s.* 4*d.* per day; and the means of developing which on this, as well as other parts of the line within the limits of their Act of Parliament, it can hardly be considered presumptuous in supposing that many years experience in the character of the traffic and the wants of the public may be as well understood by the Board of Directors as that of a mere cursory and speculative opinion, founded evidently upon very superficial information, and with reference to the development of excursion traffic during the last summer, the general prosperity of the country did magnify it so rapidly after the fine weather set in, so as to tax the entire energies and stock of the Company to an extent never before approached, and having been committed to afford, in the various districts served by this Company, the same facilities they had on previous years, they could not curtail them without causing grievous disappointment to the industrial classes, which all the other railways in the neighbourhood were supplying to as great a comparative extent.

With regard to the break van. From the vast number of junctions, and, generally speaking, the numerous and short trains supplying the wants of the Lancashire and Yorkshire district, it is impossible practically to carry out the system of having a luggage van in front and a luggage van in the rear of each train; as trains starting from Liverpool, Manchester, Normanton, and Goole would in many places be so encumbered and detained by the attachment of such vehicles to each, that it would be practically impossible to carry it out. We therefore have a considerable number of break carriages, in addition to the break vans and, and whether the van or the break carriage be in the rear of the train the guard has to ride on it, which gives, so far as a retarding force goes, the same security that a van does.

Now, with regard to Captain Laffan's remark on the manner in which these excursion trains are worked, and his objection to employing agents. As respects the latter, they are in every respect in addition to the Company's staff, and they send people locally acquainted and locally interested with the excursionists, to, as far as the can, guard them from imposition and mistakes, and in every other way to contribute to their reasonable enjoyment; and the objection to their employment, urged by Captain Laffan, has evidently been put forward on imperfect information; for whether the Company trusted wholly to their permanently employed servants, nothing that he urges as to the unequal or excessive supply of carriages and means would be in the slightest degree altered, which is proved by the large description of excursionists carried wholly without their assistance, when the numbers depend more on the state of the weather than any other circumstance, and consequently, without the control of the elements, the only preparations that can be made either in the one case or the other, is an approximation to probable wants limited by our capabilities, as we have as early information under any circumstances from the agents as we could have from our own permanent staff of the number of tickets likely to be issued, and which in the case of the agents is limited, while in the case of the permanent staff they are supplied with a stock to meet all ordinary or extraordinary circumstances; and the object of employing the agents is, first, to afford information and protection which the

Appendix No. 27.

ACCIDENTS.

Lancashire and
Yorkshire Railway.

Appendix No. 27.

ACCIDENTS.

Lancashire and
Yorkshire Railway.

Company's regular servants could not contribute; and, secondly, to prevent the attention of the ordinary staff being diverted from the regular traffic.

Now with regard to the mode of working these trains, which Captain Laffan says is so obviously objectionable as to make it superfluous to point out how so lax a system must not only endanger the excursionists but the regular passenger traffic, the precautions are precisely those which necessarily occur every day on almost every line in the kingdom where any additional train from the ordinary ones is run, and, in addition, consists as follows:—Every week, when any excursion trains are appointed to run, there are certain days selected for them, being indeed those most convenient for the parties themselves, but limited to certain days of the week and certain hours for starting from every point where they have to take up or set down passengers; the stations they do not stop at are treated as all time bills are,—omitted in the bill; and every station, whether the train stops at it or not, as well as every point of junction, is furnished with a list of the trains and the time they may be expected to stop, if they do stop, either for taking in water or taking up or putting down passengers; but, as all these these trains are made subservient to the regular trains, no possible reliance could be placed upon strict punctuality of arrival, which, in fact, depends more on the weather, or any change in the weather, than Captain Laffan seems to have taken into consideration, and the electric telegraph is at the disposal of every station, to inquire where they are and afford any information to guards and engine drivers, if necessary, which, together with the well-regulated system of signals established on the Lancashire and Yorkshire line, leaves the mode of conducting not so obviously objectionable as it seemed to have appeared to the Government inspector, who rests his whole faith of perfection on the reliance of what is not, and probably cannot be, practically worked out any day on any railway, viz., that of strict punctuality and perfect regularity in the speed and motion of trains, to place too much importance on which would be well calculated to relieve from responsibility the only parties who can really ensure safety, and with the precautions here detailed every practical means of carrying out the details to ensure safety must rest upon the engine drivers, signalmen, and guards. I make this remark without at all wishing to undervalue punctuality, and the supply of clocks for the outside as well as the inside of stations and junctions, already ordered by the Board, will carry out that part of Captain Laffan's suggestion. In concluding these remarks, I cannot refrain from adding that great misconception very frequently exists on the part of casual inquiries with respect to the long hours that are exacted from certain railway servants, an opinion that Captain Laffan has evidently arrived at, in his endeavour to exculpate the unfortunate man at the Bullfield signals; the whole duty that this man had to do on ordinary occasions was limited to a very brief time in the day, and on the extraordinary occasions, when excursion trains were running, when he had always been called upon to attend his signal, which he had done on the previous Saturday night up to ten o'clock, did not involve either in hours or exertion what is frequently done by an infirm woman at a turnpike gate, and from ten o'clock on Sunday night to half past six on Monday morning he had no duties at all imposed upon him, although he would frequently volunteer to take the duties for half a day for any one of the Sunday porters, and those porters would relieve him for the whole or a portion of the day on his making application to the station master. Captain Laffan also observes the custom in working the excursion trains is to take the best of the porters off to act as guards on the extra trains; that is very true, not only as regards the extra trains but with respect to the regular trains; all the guards on this line go through a considerable servitude as porters first, from the most intelligent and active of which the guards are selected, as the best school to qualify them for their duties, under the belief that an ordinary porter can be very much more readily furnished than a qualified guard; in carrying out the same system, whenever extra hands are wanted in the passenger department the very much more numerous staff of that attached to the merchandise traffic is placed at the disposal of every station master to select his assistants from, in preference to engaging raw hands upon such emergencies, leaving the merchandise department to supply itself for any temporary service from that source; and, on the occasion to which Captain Laffan's report applies, in consequence of an epidemic (dysentery) existing throughout Lancashire and Yorkshire, we had to draw very frequently on this resource to supply the place of porters who were off duty from indisposition.

I have, &c.

JNO. M. LAWS.

To the Board of Directors of the
Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

12, Wilton Crescent, Belgrave Square, London,
January 27, 1853.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour herewith to return the papers which accompanied your letter to me of the 7th instant, and I regret that continued indisposition has prevented my returning them to you at an earlier date.

There are some passages in Captain Laws' second report upon the accident at Bolton upon which I wish to offer a few remarks, for I think they express opinions as to the management of railway traffic which, if actually carried into practice, must necessarily lead to danger.

In many respects, however, Captain Laws agrees with the views set forth in my report upon the same accident; as for instance, Appendix No 27.

1. That the accommodation at Bolton was insufficient;
2. That it was an act of indiscretion on the part of the superintendent at Liverpool to detain a regular passenger train for the accommodation of excursion passengers;
3. That it was necessary for the efficient working of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway that clocks should be visible from the line at all stations and junctions; and,
4. That the time had come when it was necessary to limit the extent of the excursion traffic, the rapid and dangerous development of which had, to use Captain Laws own forcible expression, "taxed the entire energies and stock of the Company to an extent never before approached;"

ACCIDENTS.

Lancashire and
Yorkshire Railway.

and I am happy to learn, from Captain Laws' report, that the Company have made arrangements to diminish the amount of traffic which has hitherto passed through the Bolton station, by diverting it over other lines; that the clocks, so much wanted and so often demanded, are now being set up; and that the Directors have resolved in future to limit the extent of the excursion traffic.

But upon several points to which I had called the attention of their Lordships in my report, I find that Captain Laws entertains opinions entirely opposite to mine, and as the opinions of the general manager of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway must necessarily exercise great influence over the safety of the public travelling upon that line, I deem it necessary to make a few remarks upon them.

Captain Laws states it to be his opinion that the Company's servants at the Lostock junction "used a sound discretion in drawing forward on a fine summer's evening," instead of detaining the trains at the junction till the interval of five minutes between each train had elapsed; and he adds that the "proceeding" (of allowing seven trains to follow one another through a junction within less than a quarter of an hour) "did not arise from any disregard of the usual and ordinary course of instructions, as Captain Laffan supposed, but from the unusual and extraordinary fact which brought the second order for one train approaching another while in motion into operation." I really cannot sufficiently express the surprise I feel at finding such opinions entertained by the general manager of one of the principal lines in England.

I beg to hand to you herewith a copy of the printed instructions furnished to all the servants of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company for their guidance. At page 16 you will find that, in common, I believe, with every railway company in this empire, the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company endeavour (as far as plain and definite rules can avail for that purpose) to ensure there being always an interval of *at least* five minutes between any two trains following one another through a junction, and so careful are the Directors upon this point, that they give orders that even when the full five minutes have elapsed, the greatest caution must be observed; yet the general manager of the Lancashire and Yorkshire line thinks that his subordinates exercised a sound discretion in passing seven trains through the Lostock junction within less than a quarter of an hour!!! If such be the opinion of the general manager, of what use is it to issue any printed instructions? At page 18 you will find the "second rule, for one train approaching another while in motion," to which Captain Laws refers; and you will, I think, agree with me, Sir, in considering that it has no connexion whatever with the working of a junction, but simply specifies the minimum distance to which one train overtaking another upon unguarded parts of the line may be allowed to approach.

Captain Laws thinks that, as regards the instructions sent to the pointsman at the Bullfield siding, I have "assumed a cause for exculpating that individual, a very special pleading, directly at variance with the evidence," &c. Now if you will refer to my report you will find that I did not exculpate the pointsman, for I said expressly that his leaving his post "showed either great indifference to the safety of the traffic, or an unfortunate want of judgment;" but you will also find what, perhaps, the general manager of the Lancashire and Yorkshire line thinks special pleading, namely, that I inculpated the general management of the traffic, in showing that the printed notice furnished to the pointsman was so imperfectly and loosely drawn up, that the unfortunate man could not (according to the ordinary mode of construing the English language) consider himself bound by it to remain at his post after his usual period of attendance had expired.

Captain Laws says that in my report I have indulged in "speculative opinions as to the character of the traffic, the mode of issuing tickets, and the disinclination of the Company to develop it as between Liverpool and Bolton, which are certainly not borne out by the facts." Upon this point, also, I beg to refer you to my report, and you will there find that instead of indulging in speculative opinions I stated facts, which Captain Laws does not attempt to meet. I stated that the use of return tickets in the regular traffic was restricted within extremely narrow limits, whereas the irregular or excursion traffic was sought to be developed by such an extended use of return tickets as endangered the safety of the regular trains.

Captain Laws enters into a detailed argument to show that it is unnecessary to have a luggage van at the tail of every train; for that the Company have a number of break carriages, and that whether it be a break carriage or a luggage van which is at the tail of a train, the guard who rides upon it has an equal retarding power at his command. Now,

Appendix No. 27.

ACCIDENTS.

Lancashire and
Yorkshire Railway.

Sir, if you will refer to my report, you will find that this argument does not meet the question. I did not ask for a luggage van at the tail of a train, I simply stated that there should always be at the tail of every train a guard provided with an efficient guard's break, and it was the neglect of the Company's officers in not sending any guard to work a break at the tail of the passenger train from Liverpool which, in conjunction with other circumstances, led to the late unfortunate collision.

Again, Captain Laws enters into a detailed vindication of the employment by the Company of "agents" to conduct the sale of their excursion tickets; but if you will refer to my report you will see that I in no way blamed the employment of "agents," but found fault with the neglect of the Company's regular servants and officers to find adequate accommodation for the numbers of excursion passengers they paid the agents to attract to their line.

Captain Laws endeavours to defend the present lax and dangerous method of conducting the excursion traffic, (i. e., starting trains with no other instructions than to make their way as they best may to their destination,) and for that purpose argues that, inasmuch as absolute punctuality of arrival and departure is unattainable, it is better not to attempt to keep the excursion trains to any regular time. This, in so far as I can understand the paragraph, is the only argument employed, and it appears to me to call for no reply.

At page 7, line 19 onwards of his report, Captain Laws makes a statement which is totally at variance with the evidence of every one of the Company's officers and servants examined by me. He says that "the whole duty the pointsman had to do on ordinary occasions was limited to a very brief time in the day." Every witness examined by me stated distinctly that the pointsman was required, on ordinary occasions, to be on duty from half-past six in the morning till eight at night, and I cannot imagine that thirteen and a half hours of wearisome attendance upon trains and signals (the more wearisome perhaps from not being laborious,) can be properly described as a duty "limited to a very brief time in the day." Again, at line 35 of the same page, Captain Laws states, that "from ten o'clock on Sunday night till half-past six on Monday morning, the pointsman had no duties at all imposed upon him." I presume that for "Sunday night" I may here read "Saturday night," and that Captain Laws means to say that the pointsman at Bullfield had no duties imposed upon him on Sundays. If so, the statement is directly at variance with the evidence of the pointsman's immediate superiors at Bolton, who distinctly stated to me that the pointsman at Bullfield, like all the other pointsmen about the Bolton station, was required to be on duty every second Sunday at such places as the inspector should appoint, and that, therefore, he had only every alternate Sunday free from work.

Lastly, Captain Laws vindicates the custom of sending out the best porters from the stations to act as extra guards to trains, but, as usual, directs his arguments to points which I had in no way blamed. I found no fault with the Company's officers for sending out porters as guards wherever the staff at the station was sufficiently numerous; it was the mistaken practice of maintaining at stations a staff so inadequate that the necessary step of sending away some of the porters left the remainder too few in number for the efficient management of the traffic, with which I found fault.

In conclusion, I beg to say that I do not consider Captain Laws' report in any way a reply to mine, and that till the statements I made and the arguments I used are really met, I see no reason to modify any of the opinions I expressed.

Capt. Simmons, R.E.,
&c. &c.

I have, &c.

R. M. LAFFAN,
Capt. Royal Engineers.

RULES referred to in Captain LAFFAN's Report of the 27th January 1853.

11. IN case of trains on both lines approaching the point of junction at the same time, the main line trains are to have the right of road, and the other trains must be stopped until such main line trains have passed.

12. If the other trains have to follow the trains on the main line, or vice versâ, past the point of junction, an interval of five minutes must elapse previous to their being allowed to do so, and then great caution, and the general regulations as to distance, must be observed.

2. Engines travelling on the same line shall not approach within 800 yards of each other's trains, unless expressly required.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, March 4, 1853.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you, for the information of the Directors of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, a copy of a further report which my Lords have received from Captain Laffan, relative to the accident which occurred at Bolton on the 23d August last, and which formed the subject of Captain Law's report enclosed in your letter of the 21st December.

My Lords direct me to observe, that satisfactory as it is to their Lordships to be informed that the general manager agrees with some of the opinions expressed in the report of the inspecting officer, and urged upon the attention of the Directors in my letter of the 13th November, it would have been much more satisfactory to their Lordships to

have received some assurance from the Directors that effective measures had been adopted with the concurrence of the Directors, to remedy the several evils which contributed to produce the accident in question, and as to which the manager does not question the opinion of the inspecting officer.

My Lords cannot but feel great regret, as expressed in my former letter, that so many of the evils pointed out as contributing to cause this accident should have been allowed to continue upon the lines of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company after the serious accidents which had already occurred, and after they had been forcibly brought to the attention of the Directors by their Lordships.

My Lords desire me also to express their regret that the general manager of the Company should, in his report to the Directors, maintain the propriety of a disregard by the servants of the Company, upon whom depends the safety of the traffic, of the regulations issued by the Directors for the guidance of their servants and the safety of passengers, and also, that the Directors have not given their Lordships some assurance with reference to other points, called to their attention in my letter of 13th November last, but not noticed in the general manager's report.

My Lords desire me to add, that they regret that the Directors have not afforded any explanation as to the observation in the concluding paragraph of my letter, in which their Lordships expressed their regret that the Directors should have continued to run excursion trains after they had received the report of their own superintendent recommending the discontinuance of this description of traffic. They think it right to inform the Directors, that if they continue to neglect the suggestions which, in the discharge of their duty, my Lords think it incumbent upon them to offer them, they will have no reason to be surprised if they find that the attention of Parliament is called to that circumstance in an especial manner.

I have, &c.

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

J. L. A. SIMMONS,
Capt. Royal Engineers.

APPENDIX No. 28.

LEEDS NORTHERN RAILWAY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, August 5, 1852.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to inform you that, in compliance with the instructions of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade conveyed to me in your letter of the 24th ultimo, I have inquired into the circumstances connected with an accident that occurred on the Clarence Railway near Stockton-on-Tees on the 21st July, and I have to report, for their Lordships information, the following particulars:—

The Leeds Northern Railway forms a junction with the Clarence Railway, about three quarters of a mile from the terminus of the latter at Stockton. The Clarence Railway, which is one of very early construction, has these peculiarities,—that the space between the two lines of rails is but four feet instead of being six feet, and the traffic is run on the right hand line of rails instead of on the left hand line, as is the more usual practice. The Leeds Northern Railway work their traffic on the customary side, viz., the left. The Stockton station of the Leeds Northern Railway is placed about three quarters of a mile from the junction of the two lines. The Clarence Company object to any carriages or engines, except their own, running on *their* line; the interchange of traffic, therefore, between the two lines takes place at the Stockton station of the Leeds Northern Railway, and the portion of the latter railway, between the station and the junction, is worked as though it were an extension of the Clarence Railway; and all passenger trains of the latter railway now run to the station of the Leeds Northern Railway, and keep the right hand line up to that point.

The signals at the junction consist of two signal posts, each carrying a disc; one of these discs is painted red on each side, and is placed to command the traffic on the up and down lines of the Clarence Railway; when it is turned on, both lines would be stopped, and vice versa; the second disc is painted red on one side and white on the other, and is placed facing the junction line, and according as the red or white side is exhibited trains are stopped or allowed to proceed from the Leeds Northern station to the junction. Near the station there is another signal (a semaphore) to further stop the ingress or egress of trains. The junction signals, in their arrangement, are not such as are usual at junctions of lines of greater traffic; they would, however, answer all the purposes of safety if properly worked. The disc junction signals had been in use about three weeks previous to the accident; before they were put up, the junction was worked by means of a semaphore signal, but the drivers on the Clarence line were not accustomed to them, and the discs were substituted for them. The Clarence line is quite straight from its terminus to a distance of about three quarters of a mile beyond the junction signals.