

Appendix No. 22.

ACCIDENTS.

Great Western
Railway.*Great Western Railway, London Terminus,
Paddington, January 4, 1853.*

SIR,

I HAVE been desired by the Directors of this Company to acquaint you that they have carefully considered the report of Captain Galton on the Heyford accident, which was received in your letter of the 17th ultimo, and they have since conferred with Mr. Brunel, Mr. Gooch, and their other officers respecting the signals, and the nature of the lamps used for them.

Captain Galton was good enough to make the suggestion, when he visited the spot, of moving the auxiliary signal to a better position, and greater distance from the station, which was executed at once, a measure entirely approved of by the Board.

They have since given orders that, at any station where the approach to it is upon any curve affecting the clear and direct sight of the lamp, flat glasses with reflectors shall be used instead of a lens. On the main line of the Great Western, the flat glasses had been adopted, but the lamp makers had recommended, as giving the more intense light to signals, the other glass, and Mr. Brunel is of opinion that they afford a superior light, excepting where the approach is on a curve, as at Heyford.

The station master was dismissed for his gross disobedience of one of the most important regulations of the service, so essential to safety.

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

I have, &c.

CHAS. A. SAUNDERS,
Secretary.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, January 7, 1853.*

SIR,

I HAVE been directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, and to inform you, that my Lords have much satisfaction in learning that the Directors of the Great Western Railway Company have so promptly attended to the recommendation of their inspecting officer, with reference to the late accident at the Heyford station on the Oxford and Rugby Railway.

I have, &c.

*The Secretary of the
Great Western Railway Company.*

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

APPENDIX No. 23.

Appendix No. 23.

Lancashire and
Yorkshire Railway.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, March 13, 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 a collision which took place on the morning of the 14th ultimo at the Bury station of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. At half past one A.M. on that morning a goods train, while in the act of passing from the down to the up line, at a crossing to the eastward of the station, was run into by another goods train, which had come up from the westward and run through the station without stopping.

The Bury station of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Company is protected by distant auxiliary signals on each side. These signals are worked by wires from the platform, and the signal-man who turns them can see from his post at the lever whether they are on or off. When set on for danger they show two red discs by day, and a red light at night, as is usual on the Lancashire and Yorkshire line. On seeing the danger signal all trains are bound to stop; and it is only in case an all-right signal is shown that a train is allowed to run through the station without stopping.

In the daytime the Company maintain a sufficient staff at the Bury station to ensure the efficient working of the signals at the same time that the ordinary work of the station is proceeded with; at night, however, there being no passenger trains running, the staff is reduced to a single watchman, who is required to attend to the working of the signals and at the same time direct and assist to conduct all the shunting, &c. of the goods trains. These duties are not compatible one with the other; for the proper working of the signals requires that there should always be some one at the station to see that they are turned on and off at the proper times, and that when once turned on or off they should not be improperly interfered with; whereas the duty of attending to the shunting of the goods train requires the watchman to move away to points 300 yards from his station, and to remain there sometimes for a considerable time, during which he cannot be fairly held responsible for the maintenance of the danger signals.

On the morning in question it appears that several goods trains came up in succession from the westward, and that the danger signal having been turned on, on the western side, was not afterwards touched by the signal watchman. Three trains had obeyed the signal, and after stopping at the station had passed on in safety; and the signal-man, still thinking the line safe under the same protection, was busied about 300 yards from the levers in expediting the shunting of a train which had come up from the eastward, when a fourth train from the westward ran through the station without stopping, and came into

violent collision with the waggons of the other train as it was moving through the crossing from the sidings of the down or northern line. The driver and fireman of the train which thus ran through the station were both killed; and the guard of that train states, that he did not notice how the signal stood. There is no direct evidence, therefore, to show whether the death of these two men was owing to their own recklessness in running past a danger signal, or to the malicious or thoughtless act of some unknown party shifting the lever while the signal-man was away. There is, however, the strongest probability that the latter was the case, for on the signal-man going back after the collision to see how the signal stood he found it set to "all right," whereas he had left it set to "danger."

The circumstances of the collision seem to call for but one remark, namely, that the duties of the Bury station cannot be safely confided to the exertions of any single individual, and that neither at that nor at any other station should the person charged with the proper working of the signals be required to attend to other duties which call him away to a distance. I beg to suggest that the night staff at the Bury station be increased.

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

I have, &c.
R. M. LAFFAN,
Capt. Royal Engineers.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, March 15, 1852.

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, a copy of the report their Lordships have received from the officer appointed by them to inquire into the circumstances attending an accident that occurred at the Bury station on the 14th ultimo, and to request you to call the attention of the Directors to the observations contained therein, as to the insufficiency of the staff at that station for the performance of the duties required of them.

My Lords direct me to observe that a very great responsibility must attach to the Directors of the Company if any accident should again occur at this or any other station upon their railways from a similar deficiency in the working staff, owing to which there are thrown upon a single individual important duties on the due performance of which the safety of the traffic must wholly depend, and which, to be properly performed, require his attention at different places at the same time, and cannot, therefore, be safely confided to the exertions of any one person.

The Secretary of the
Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company.

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

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway, Secretary's Office,
Manchester, March 18, 1852.

SIR,

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, enclosing a copy of a report from Captain Laffan of his inquiry into the circumstances attending an accident at this Company's station at Bury on the 14th ultimo, and I am to state that the report in question and the observations of my Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, shall receive every consideration.

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

I have, &c.
JNO. DUNSTAN jun.,
Secretary.

APPENDIX No. 24.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, July 31, 1852.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you the accompanying extracts from a report they have received from their inspecting officer appointed by them to inquire into the circumstances which attended an accident that occurred on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway on the 17th instant, and to request that you will call to the attention of the Directors the observation contained therein, as to the necessity of enforcing upon their servants a constant attention to the mechanical apparatus used in working distant signals.

The Secretary of the
Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company.

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

Extract from Captain Laffan's Report on the Collision that occurred on the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway on the 17th July near the Wigan Station.

"The junction of the siding was protected by an auxiliary signal, distant about 400 yards; and prior to allowing the main line to be blocked, the pointsman turned over the lever