

ways in which accidents happen to trains, should be to fit up every train, no matter at what speed it is travelling, so that it shall be possible to arrest its progress in the same space, as if it consisted only of a single vehicle, provided with a proper break. Now in this accident, the guard in the fourth vehicle states that he became aware of something being wrong as he passed the Junction, and immediately began to apply his break, and it was found hard on after the accident, and there is no doubt that the first check to the speed must have been experienced when the vehicle off the rails struck the facing points and subsequently the check and wing rails; and the result of so many vehicles being off the line acting much more effectively to stop a train than any break action on the wheels or rails could do, is shewn in the short space in which it was arrested. The reversed position of the various vehicles which got off the line is evidently due to the momentum of the after part of the train running freely on the rails, and pushing off at the side one vehicle after another. Now this, in my opinion, would have been altogether changed if the retarding force of the single break-van had been applied at the tail of the train, so that the carriage in which Dr. Baly rode would, in all probability, not have run more than half the distance it did, (244 yards from the Junction,) and a valuable life would, probably, have been saved, and the character of the accident been materially mitigated.

This probability would have been largely increased if a guard in a van at the tail of the train had had a much larger proportion of break power placed under his control, by means of continuous breaks. The same act of putting on a single break, suffices to put on continuous breaks; and some of these are so constructed that the time of putting the break blocks on the wheels does not exceed a second of time altogether, and in accidents of this kind, seconds of time are of the utmost importance.

The company's management is also open to remark in having fixed the tire on the middle wheel of the

tender in so inefficient a manner, when it was put on new. The locomotive superintendent has long since patented a superior mode of fastening tires on wheels, and he stated that he had full authority from the directors to do what was right in his own department. The blame therefore must certainly rest on him. Attention should also be directed to the practice which appears to prevail in the Company's locomotive workshops of allowing the ends of studs or bolts, having threads cut on them, to project different lengths outside the inner rim of the wheel. These studs should be cut to such a length that the outsides of the thread should not project beyond the holes, into which they are inserted. If this is not done, no engine driver can ever say, with respect to the wheels of the engine, whether the end of the stud is inserted into the hole in the tire, or merely abuts against the tire,—and thus he cannot tell whether the wheel is safe or unsafe to run in the event of the tire breaking.

I should not omit to state that no blame appears to attach to any of the Company's servants travelling with the train or on duty at the junction—and credit is certainly due to the driver and fireman for the steps they took to stop the up express train. Had they not been successful in doing so, it is very likely that the up express train would have run into the carriage which was lying foul of the up line 526 yards east of the up distant signal—because it is not the practice, although it ought to be, for drivers to stop at a distant signal when on at danger, but they continue to whistle and run past it, and then look out for the junction signal, and prepare to obey its indications. I enclose a plan of the line furnished to me by the Railway Company, showing the positions of the various carriages after the accident.

I have, &c.,
W. YOLLAND,
Col., R.E.

The Secretary of the
Railway Department,
Board of Trade.

MANCHESTER, SHEFFIELD, AND LINCOLNSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, 25th March 1861.*

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 Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire 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 on the 6th instant near Dinting.

I have, &c.
JAMES BOOTH.

The Secretary to the
Manchester, Sheffield,
and Lincolnshire Railway
Company.

SIR,

Whitehall, 20th March 1861.

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 12th 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 6th instant, near the Dinting Station of the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway.

Three quarters of a mile to the west of the Dinting Passenger Station and Junction, there is, at Old Dinting, a goods station, provided with a warehouse and several sidings. It is situated on a nearly level gradient, though the sidings fall towards the eastward, and is protected by signals. It is approached from the west on a curve, and the view in that direction is obstructed by the warehouse.

A porter in the goods department, of the name of Benjamin Thorpe, shunted an empty coal waggon at 6.30 in the morning in question, out of the coal siding into another siding, commonly called the back siding, which was next to the main line from Manchester. He moved it from the coal siding in order to get it out of the way of other waggons; and he placed it in the back siding that it might be ready to be taken away at 10.50, by the pick-up train, to the Dunkirk Colliery. He put down the break of this waggon, but was unable to pin it down, because the pin was broken off.

There was a stop-block near the end of the siding, to prevent waggons from being moved forward nearer to the main line than was safe for the passage of trains; but Thorpe omitted to turn this stop-block into its proper position, and the excuse which he offers for this omission is, that he was engaged at that time in shunting a coal train from the up to the down main line, to allow a passenger train to pass it, and that the performance of this other duty caused him to forget to apply the stop-block as he ought to have done.

He states that he passed the waggon at half past 9 o'clock, on his way to the warehouse, and that it was then "all right," in the place in which he had put it; but that before he had (walking from it) had time to reach the warehouse, it must have been blown forward towards the main line, as the 9.15 a.m. passenger train from Manchester, coming up at that moment, struck it, and turned it over on its side.

The passenger train was composed, in the following order, of an engine and tender, a dummy van, a horse

box, a second-class, first-class, and second-class carriages, and a break-van. The driver approached the old Dinting Station at a speed of 30 miles an hour, but shut off his steam as he passed the warehouse, to go cautiously over the Dinting viaduct, which was in process of renewal. He was looking out for the signals from the viaduct after he turned the corner of the warehouse, and did not observe that the waggon was in the way of his train until he was within 10 yards of it. The corner of his buffer-plank struck it, as he was travelling at a speed of 25 miles an hour, and knocked it forward; it grazed the sides of, and damaged all the vehicles, as they passed it; it threw the first and second-class carriages, fourth and fifth from the engine, off the rails; and it caused the passenger train to be pulled up within a short distance.

It is stated that one of the passengers was injured, and that another has complained of being injured.

Fresh coaches having been procured, the train proceeded on its journey with the same engine, about an hour and a half afterwards.

There was a high wind, it appears, from the westward, on the morning in question. The accident was clearly occasioned by the omission of the goods porter to make use of the means that had been provided for its prevention, by turning the stop-block across the siding after he shunted the waggon into it.

It was particularly necessary that he should do so during the prevalence of such a wind, though it was his duty to adopt this precaution under any circumstances.

The only further observation that I need make with reference to the accident is, that better siding accommodation is evidently required at the Old Dinting goods station. Thorpe's attention was taken up, he says, in this instance, in shunting a coal train from the up to the down main line, to get it out of the way of a passenger train which was due to pass; and it appears that this is an operation which has to be performed every morning. The present siding will only hold 15 waggons, whilst the train may be composed of 29 or 30 waggons; and other trains have sometimes to be stopped while the down main-line is blocked in this manner. In fact, Thorpe has been reported, at times, for so stopping the trains. This shunting of trains from one main line to another is always an objectionable proceeding, and in order to avoid it, it is desirable that further siding accommodation should be afforded, though the want of it was not the cause of the present accident.

I have, &c.,

*The Secretary,
Board of Trade,
Whitehall.*

*H. W. TYLER,
Capt. Royal Engineers.*