

6. In regard to the South Eastern Company, that the amount of break power on their trains should be increased, in cases when heavy trains are run at high speed. London and South Eastern Railway and

7. In regard to the South Eastern Company, that, at least until the system of working on the Brighton Railway be altered, more formal notice should be given when it is necessary to divide any special trains which may be run over that railway. London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway.

I have, &c.

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

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

### SOUTH EASTERN RAILWAY COMPANY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,  
Whitehall, November 7, 1854.*

South Eastern  
Railway.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you the enclosed copy of the report of the officer appointed by their Lordships to inquire into the circumstances attending the accident which occurred on the 26th ultimo, at the Sandwich station of the South Eastern Railway.

My Lords direct me to request that you will call the attention of the directors to the remarks of the inspecting officer, upon the custom which appears to prevail upon this branch of the South Eastern Railway of running the engines in one direction with their tenders foremost, and to observe that my Lords trust that, if in consequence of the exigencies of the traffic or otherwise, the engines cannot be turned, the Directors will take steps to supply engines that are better adapted for moving in either direction, than those which appear to be at present in use on that portion of their line.

My Lords direct me, in conclusion, to state that they are gratified to learn that arrangements have been made to prevent a recurrence of a similar accident, by appointing a person to take charge of the points where this accident occurred.

I have, &c.

*The Secretary of the  
South Eastern Railway Company.*

DOUGLAS GALTON,  
*Captain Royal Engineers.*

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,  
Whitehall, November 6, 1854.*

SIR,

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your letter of the 31st ultimo, 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 26th ultimo, at the Sandwich station of the South Eastern Railway.

The branch of the South Eastern Railway, extending between Minster and Deal, a distance of nine miles, has within the last three months, been converted from a double to a single line, partly, as I am informed, in consideration of the nature and amount of the traffic, and partly because the permanent way was required elsewhere.

The Sandwich station is situated on this branch, at five miles from Minster, and three miles from Deal, and since the change above referred to, the original up line of the station has been used as a siding, and the down line has been employed as the only main line. To the north of the Sandwich station, and some sixty yards from it, are a pair of points leading to the original up line, and, forty four yards to the north of the points, there is a public road level crossing, with gates and gate house.

On the evening of the 26th ultimo, the 1.30 p.m. passenger train from London, due at Sandwich at 6 o'clock, arrived at that station at 6.10; and instead of running along the down line to the station platform, passed through the points above described to the up line, and came into collision with some loaded waggons which were standing on it. The passenger train consisted of engine, tender, five carriages, and a horse box, and the whole train ran upon the up line without any part of it having been thrown off the rails; but about eight of the passengers were injured by the concussion, though, fortunately, none of them to a serious extent.

The evidence goes to show that no cause whatever can be assigned for the accident. The station master saw some goods trucks pass through the points in

South Eastern  
Railway.

question an hour and a half before the occurrence of the accident, and, from a distance of forty yards, he watched the points falling back into their proper position after the goods trucks had passed out, and the points were not afterwards used until the accident happened. The porter of the station, whose duty it is to attend to the points, as far as oiling and cleaning them, states that he oiled them on the morning of the 26th, and that when he went to tea, an hour before the accident happened, he particularly observed that they were all right for the down line, as he always did, of his own accord, after the goods trucks passed through them. The station master, porter, and engine driver examined the points together, a few minutes after the accident, and found that they were all right; and the gatekeeper examined the points almost immediately after he heard the crash of the collision, with a like result.

It appears that the engine was travelling tender foremost at the time of the accident, and that this is, to a certain extent, a practice on this portion of the line, but I do not find any solution of the difficulty from this circumstance alone. The flange of the near tender wheel must have been  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches from its proper position to have caught the tongue of the points, and in that case, in all probability, the other wheel of the tender would have been thrown to the wrong side of the off rail, as it appears that the wheels of the tender were in correct gauge. The gauge of the rails near the points, I found to be about  $\frac{1}{8}$ " wide.

The points are selfacting, and I can only conclude, from all the circumstances of the case, that some of the sand from the ballast had been collected on them, and, having been mixed with the oil, prevented their falling entirely back, after the passage of the goods train. It seems possible that the station master, from a distance of forty yards, may have seen them fall partially back, and have believed that they regained, altogether, their original position; as well as that the porter, whose duty it is to oil and clean them, but who had only oiled them on that morning, was similarly deceived.

I am happy to learn, that, with a view to the prevention of similar accidents of this nature, the porter has now been ordered to hold the lever of these points for the passage of every down train: and that the points are to be placed still nearer to the station, in a position in which trains will pass them at a speed considerably more reduced. I have only to add, that, although the practice of employing the engines with the tender foremost may not have been in any way instrumental in producing this accident, I think it would be, for many reasons, desirable that it should be discontinued.

I have, &c.

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

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

South Staffordshire  
Railway.

## SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE RAILWAY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,  
Whitehall, November 2, 1854.*

SIR,

I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of the Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you the enclosed copy of the report of the officer appointed by their Lordships to inquire into the circumstances attending the collision that occurred near the Wednesbury station of the South Staffordshire Railway on the 29th of September last.

My Lords direct me to request that you will call the particular attention of the Directors to that part of the report in which the inspecting officer states that it is the custom on the South Staffordshire Railway for the green, or cautionary signal, to be entirely disregarded by engine drivers, and to be passed at the rate of 30 miles per hour.

My Lords would point out to the Directors, that if the Company's regulations provide that cautionary signals are to be given, great laxity of discipline, and consequent danger to the public must accrue, if those signals are permitted to be habitually disregarded by their servants.

It would also appear from the report, that the persons in charge of signals are in some cases left to their own judgment for estimating the interval of time that elapses between the passage of trains; and my Lords therefore direct me to point out that, when upon a line of railway (as is the case upon the South Staffordshire Railway), the required intervals between succeeding trains are