

## LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

SIR,

*Manchester, 21st July 1871.*

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, in obedience to your minute of the 14th instant, the result of my inquiry into the circumstances which attended the accident to Mrs. Richards, at Tyldesley station of the Manchester, Eccles, Tyldesley, and Wigan branch of the London and North-Western Railway, on the 14th June.

Tyldesley station is about nine miles from Manchester, and nearly midway between that place and Wigan.

It is the junction for trains from Kenyon junction, Wigan, and Bolton. There are two platforms; the up platform and the booking offices are situated on the north side of the railway, and the communication with the town and district is from the north side; the down platform lies on the south side of the up and down main lines, at a distance of about 20 feet from the up platform, and there are two other lines of railway lying south of the down platform, one of which is used for the down traffic of the branches to Kenyon junction and Bolton, and the other for goods traffic. The up platform is about 110, and the down platform about 100 yards in length. The ground underneath has been mined for coal, so that the height of these platforms is not exactly uniform, and it may vary from 18 inches to two feet above the level of the rails. The ends of these platforms are ramped off, and when the line was opened some seven years ago, it was then intended that passengers should cross from the one platform to the other by the ramps at the end of the platforms. Subsequently some planks have been placed nearly opposite to the booking offices, on each side of the main up and down lines, to serve as steps to facilitate crossing on the level from one platform to the other, and the greater portion of the passengers cross in this manner. The view in each direction is uninterrupted.

I am informed that on the evening of the day in question Mrs. Richards had accompanied some friends, who were leaving Tyldesley for Bolton by the 8h. 27m. p.m. train, to the down platform. The train for Bolton stood on the south side of the down platform, and when it left Mrs. Richards passed across the down platform to the north side, for the purpose of crossing the up and down lines, and thence on to the up platform, opposite to the booking office; and it is stated that a porter, who was standing on the up platform, opposite to the place where Mrs. Richards was about to cross, called out to her not to do so, and that some other passenger, who was also on the down platform, and

about to cross to the up platform, also called out to her not to cross, as the 7h. 50m. p.m. up goods train from Bolton to Tyldesley was seen to be approaching the station from the west.

Mrs. Richards does not appear to have heard or to have taken any notice of the caution, nor to have been aware that the train was approaching, although the engine-driver is also said to have sounded the engine whistle; and she was struck down by the engine of the up goods train, some of the wheels passed over one leg, and she was dragged some yards between the up platform and the train.

Tyldesley station is made use of by a large number of passengers. No less than 5,547 passengers took tickets for the down lines, and 3,147 passengers for the up line, during the month of June, and the whole of the down lines passengers must necessarily cross the up and down main lines on the level in order to reach the down platform, and a considerable portion of the up passengers probably returned to the Tyldesley station.

The railway traffic is also very considerable. There are 75 up and down passenger trains and 43 goods trains in the course of the 24 hours, besides engines running round trains and shunting.

The staff at the station consists of a station-master, booking clerk, ticket collector, and three porters, besides signalmen and porters employed in the goods yard on the eastern side of and away from the platforms.

I cannot state that the crossing from the up to the down platforms during daylight is a particularly dangerous one; there are very many which are far worse; but looking at the present magnitude of the passenger traffic, and the probability that it will largely increase, I think it a question deserving of the consideration of the directors of the London and North-Western Railway Company, whether they should not have an underground passage between the platforms constructed, as the ground will readily admit of this being done.

I saw two members of the local board of Tyldesley with Shattersley at the station, and they informed me that a memorial was to be presented to the directors of the London and North-Western Railway in favour of the construction of an under or over bridge, and also of some additional shelter on the down platform.

I have, &amp;c.,

*The Secretary*  
(*Railway Department*),  
*Board of Trade.*

W. YOLLAND,  
*Colonel.*

Copies of the above report were sent to the company on the 2nd August.

## LONDON AND SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

*Board of Trade*  
(*Railway Department*),  
*Whitehall, 15th July 1871.*

SIR,

I have the honour to report, for the information of the Board of Trade, that, in compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 4th instant, I have inspected the site of the accident by which Mr. R. F. Dale unfortunately lost his life on the 27th ultimo, near Twickenham, on the London and South-western Railway.

At the junction of the Thames Valley Railway with the London and South-western Railway, on the south of Twickenham, there is a signal cabin, and there are two level crossings near this cabin. One of these level crossings, close to the cabin, and on the north of it, is used as an occupation crossing, for horses and vehicles as well as for foot passengers; and the other, which is about 100 yards south of the cabin, is used by foot passengers only.

The latter crossing, at which Mr. Dale lost his life, crosses obliquely four lines of rails,—two lines of the

London and South-western Railway, and two lines of the Thames Valley Railway; and it is therefore a very long crossing. It has a stile only, in the railway fence at each end of it, but it accommodates the greater number of foot-passengers. I was unable to ascertain the exact number of persons using it at any particular time; but there seems to be no doubt that the traffic over it is very considerable, and especially on Sundays.

The former crossing is much shorter, passing over two lines of rails only, and at right angles to them; and it is protected at either end by a larger gate for horses and vehicles, and a wicket-gate for foot-passengers. The larger gates are worked together, by machinery from the inside of the cabin, by the signalman; but the wicket-gates are free to be used by foot-passengers at their own discretion. This crossing is less used by foot-passengers than the other; because there is no connection with it on the east of the railway from the footpath leading to Teddington, Bushey Park, and Hampton Court.

It would appear that Mr. Dale, a gentleman of