

pointed to leave Atherton Station, 4 miles from Bolton, for Kenyon Junction, at 2h. 50m. p.m., was delayed in consequence of the waggons not being ready, and a passenger train, which usually follows this goods train, was allowed to precede it at 3h. 42m. p.m., and this goods train, drawn by two engines and consisting of 25 waggons of coals, 12 waggons of merchandise, 19 empty waggons, and one break van at the tail of the train, left Atherton for the Kenyon Junction at 3h. 55m. p.m. Immediately after leaving Atherton there is a steep incline of about 1 in 86 for a length of about 2 miles. The driver of the leading engine informed me that he kept the steam on for about $\frac{1}{4}$ a mile after he quitted Atherton Station, and when they were well down the incline he noticed a party of platelayers on the line, and immediately afterwards saw one of the party coming towards him. It was just after sunset, and the evening rather foggy, with misty rain, and it was not until he got near the platelayer that he saw he had a red flag in his hand. As soon as he saw the red flag, he reversed his engine and turned on the steam; his fireman put on the tender break, and the driver sounded the steam whistle for the breaks. He also observed the driver of the second engine reverse his engine, and turn on the steam; and the fireman of the second engine states that he applied his tender break as soon as the whistle was sounded. The driver of the leading engine also informed me that there was no time or space after he observed the platelayer with the flag for the reversal of the engines to do any good in stopping the train before the leading engine got off the line on the right-hand side, where two lengths of rails had been taken out by the platelayers, for the purpose of being replaced by new ones. The leading engine, after getting off the road, fell over on its right side, and was followed by the second engine and by about 27 waggons; the second engine partly mounted on the leading engine, and the waggons mounted on both engines and on each other to a very great height. The driver of the leading engine jumped off on the left side, and fell among some rails, and was badly cut in the thigh; his fireman followed, and escaped with a severe shaking. The driver of the second engine was killed on the spot by some of the waggons falling on him as he stood on his engine. The fireman of this engine was thrown off, and rendered insensible, the waggons piled up over him. The driver of the leading engine states that they passed the platelayer with the red flag in his hand not more than from 50 to 100 yards back from the spot where the rails had

been taken out. The breaksman of the goods train says it might be 150 yards. The fireman of the leading engine says that he saw the platelayer first when they might be 250 yards from him, and that he appeared to start out from the gang of platelayers and run towards them. All parties connected with the train state that they travelled down the incline at the usual speed, estimated at from 17 to 20 miles an hour.

The platelayer, who had been sent out with a red flag towards Atherton, maintains that the train passed him when he was about 607 yards from the spot where the rails had been taken out. He pointed out the spot on the following day, and the distance was then measured with a tape. He admits that two keys had been loosened before he left, but that none had been taken out; and he says that he shouted out to the driver of the leading engine that some rails were loose, as the train passed him. Like the generality of railway accidents, the testimony given by the servants belonging to the locomotive department does not agree with that given by those having the care of the permanent way, as to the true cause of the accident, in this case the removal of the rail, without having complied with the printed regulation, which I am informed is strictly enforced.

Rule No. 331, page 124, says—"A man with a red signal must always be stationed at least 1,000 yards' or if on a descending gradient 1,200 yards, back, or more if the incline is a steep one, before a rail is taken out, and during relaying operations, &c." Now, whether the platelayer was back 100 or 600 yards, this rule was disobeyed; and the jury at the Coroner's Inquest returned a verdict of manslaughter against the ganger of the platelayers; and he has since been tried at Liverpool, and found guilty, and sentenced to 3 months' imprisonment with hard labour; he being a very steady man of good character, which probably diminished the amount of punishment. It appears that he had expected the passenger train would return back from the Kenyon Junction on its way to Atherton before the goods train from Atherton, and had proceeded to take out these two rails, immediately after the passenger train had passed towards Kenyon Junction; indeed, I understand some of the keys of the rails had been loosed before the passenger train went by.

The Secretary,
Railway Department,
Board of Trade.

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

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, 1st February 1861.

SIR,
I AM directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade to transmit to you, for the consideration of the directors of the London and North Western Railway Company, the enclosed copy of the report made by Colonel Yolland, R.E., the officer appointed by their Lordships to inquire into the circumstances which attended the collision that occurred on the 16th December at the Trent Valley Junction of the London and North-Western Railway.

I am, &c.
JAMES BOOTH.

The Secretary of the
London and North-Western
Railway Company.

Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, 29th January, 1861.

SIR,
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 collision that occurred on the 16th ultimo, between a mail train and a special

cattle train at the Trent Valley Junction of the London and North-Western Railway.

This Junction, with the main line of the London and Birmingham Railway, is situated about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles west of the Rugby Station platform. It is situated on an embankment of about 30 feet in height, and it is protected by the usual semaphore junction signals, and by distant signals toward Birmingham and Stafford; that towards Birmingham being rather more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile distant; and the other towards Stafford at about 600 yards distant. The distant signal on the line towards Birmingham can be seen for about 700 yards before it is reached. Notice had been given to the station master at Rugby that an up special cattle train for London might be expected there about 1h. 0m. a.m. There is always a good deal of uncertainty respecting the times of arrival of these cattle trains; and a little after 2h. a.m. the signalman on duty at the Trent Valley Junction observed the special cattle train approaching the junction, and the driver whistled for the signals to be taken off to allow him to enter the station. The whole of the signals were at the time at danger; all the lights were burning well, and the night was a

fair night. The signalman turned off the up distant signal on the Trent Valley Line, and lowered the corresponding arm on the semaphore at the junction, for the cattle train to proceed; and when it had got to about 200 yards from the junction, the signalman observed that the 1h. 20m. a.m. up mail train from Birmingham was rapidly approaching. He observed it first before it reached the distant signal which was on at danger against the train, as well as the up main semaphore signal at the junction, but the mail train continued to advance, apparently without paying any attention to the danger signals; and the two trains came into collision about 30 yards from the signalman's box. The cattle train consisted of engine and tender, and 21 waggons, while the mail train was made up of engine and tender, 2 vans, and 2 carriages. The cattle train was slightly in advance, and the engine of the mail train ran crashing into the waggons of the cattle train, some waggons from the front, and knocked them off the rails, forcing them up against the signalman's elevated stage and box, and overturning and throwing it down the embankment into the field below. The signalman fell with it at the foot of the embankment, and was a good deal hurt, bruised, and contused, so that he has only just been enabled to return to his duty. I consider he had a very narrow escape.

A good many of the waggons were altogether destroyed, many very valuable animals were killed, and a large number injured. The engine and tender of the mail train and the whole of the other vehicles were also thrown off the rails, and blocked up the down line; fortunately they did not run down the embankment or the consequences would probably have been very much more serious. I understand that no passenger was hurt.

There were two guards with the mail train riding in a break van at the tail of the train, and they corroborate the statement of the signalman as to the fact of the distant and semaphore junction signals being against them as they approached the junction. The head guard also states that they were running at from 30 to 35 miles an hour, and when he saw the distant signal against them he put his break on and on seeing the semaphore junction also against them he put it on harder, and that it acted properly. Neither of the guards were able to say whether the engine driver kept the steam on or not, the signalman thought it was on, and he did not hear any whistle for the junction signal to be taken off. All agree in saying that there was no diminution of speed as the mail train approached the junction.

I did not see either the engine driver or fireman of the mail train, both had been discharged by the Com-

pany, but I was told that immediately after the accident the former had said that he could not stop as he had no control over his engine. I made inquiry of the locomotive foreman at Rugby who was on the spot about fifteen minutes after the accident occurred, and he told me that when he got there the engine was in reverse gear, that the regulator was not quite shut, and that the break appeared to have been applied to the tender, but of course he could not say whether it might not have been done after the accident happened. He also stated that the engine was not materially injured, and in consequence of the statements made by the driver, it was examined, and there was no ground for the driver saying that he had no control over it.

According to the statements made to me, there does not seem to be any doubt whatever, that the collision was entirely occasioned by the wilful neglect of the engine driver and fireman of the mail train in not keeping a proper look out.

I am a strenuous advocate for engine drivers being very well paid, not overworked by excessively long hours, and being rewarded for good conduct; but on the other hand, when there is, as in this case, strong grounds for believing that a very serious accident, fortunately not leading to any fatal results, has been occasioned by gross neglect, I think the safety of the public travelling on railways requires that such men should be prosecuted in a criminal court; and I do not think the Company should have allowed the case to be dropped by a simple dismissal of the engine-driver and fireman.

In the instance of the accident between Atherton and Leigh, the ganger of the platelayers was prosecuted and convicted for an offence not more serious than these men committed on the 16th ult.

This accident affords another exemplification of the unwise policy pursued in giving the mail train so small a proportion of break power, and of the folly exhibited in not insisting on a communication between the guard and the engine-driver being established on all passenger trains. Had the guard had more break power under his control or been supplied with the means of signalling to the driver, the attention of the driver would have been recalled to his duty, and a collision would probably have been avoided which will probably not cost the company less than 1,000*l.*, besides endangering the lives of one of their servants and the public.

I have, &c.

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

W. YOLLAND,
Colonel, R.E.

LONDON AND SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

*Railway Department, Board of Trade,
Whitehall, September 3, 1860.*

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 London and South-Western Railway Company, the enclosed copy of the report made by Captain Tyler, R.E., of his inquiry into the circumstances attending the accident which occurred on the 29th July to a passenger train on the Yeovil and Exeter section of the London and South-Western Railway.

I am, &c.
T. H. FARRER.

*The Secretary to the
London and South-Western
Railway Company.*

SIR,
In compliance with the instructions contained in your minute of the 13th 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 Sunday the 29th ultimo, on the Yeovil and Exeter section of the London and South-Western Railway.

As the 3.30 p.m. passenger train from Yeovil, consisting of 2 engines and tenders, 2 first, 2 second, and 2 third class carriages, with 2 break vans, one in the front and the other in the rear of the carriages, was travelling in due course on that day between the Honiton and Feniton stations, the tender attached to the leading engine suddenly left the rails. When the train had proceeded 20 yards further the second engine also left the rails, and the coupling gave way by which it was connected with the tender in front of it. The leading engine, having thus been liberated from the remainder of the train, ran forward for nearly a quarter of a mile, when it was brought to a stand without being itself thrown off the line, although it had dragged its tender over the sleepers and ballast for that distance.