

The Late Railway Accident.

The particulars of the accident on Friday last, at section 4, western division of the Great Western Railway, may be best gleaned from the following evidence, adduced at the inquest held on view of the dead bodies.

As the cars were coming from the west, about two o'clock, P. M., two cows were observed on an embankment of the Railroad, by the engine driver, Horton, who was an experienced hand, and has driven engines on Railroads for the past sixteen years. On arriving near the spot where the accident occurred, he saw the two cows, one on each side of the track; when at the spot, one of the cows attempted to cross the track, but before it had done so, the engine struck her, knocked her down, and along with two baggage cars, passed over the cow; the third, fourth and fifth cars flew off the track, and the engine was stopped about 200 yards from the spot at which the cow was struck. At the time of the accident, they were travelling at the rate of about fifteen miles an hour, in consequence of the engine being disabled during the previous thirty-six miles travel. The guard was up at the time. The engineer believed, if they had been travelling full speed, the cow would have been thrown completely off the track. There were no fences on the track at the embankment. Six of the passengers were killed in the luggage car, one by having leaped out of the car. The verdict is as follows: "That the death of the parties, except the one who leaped out, was in consequence of the car in which they were passengers having been thrown down an embankment, whereby they received certain injuries of which they died." That the said accident arose in consequence of a cow being on the track, &c. The jurors would further remark that the said road, not being fenced on its whole route, is much to be deprecated, and are of opinion that the Company should use every exertion to have it completely fenced forthwith, and they are also of opinion that the practice of placing emigrants in the same car with the heavy luggage, is attended with much danger, and should be discontinued." — *Middlesex Reporter*

Brantford
Expositor,

June 13
1854

ACCIDENT ON THE GREAT WESTERN RAILROAD.
There was very considerable excitement in the city yesterday, caused by the report that the Tuesday afternoon express train had run off the track near Paris, and that a great number of the passengers were killed, but, on making inquiries at the depot and at the telegraph office, we could get no information. We cannot see the object of this, for when an accident happens, the truth should be at once told, for rumor, ever busy, makes it worse than it really is, and the facts cannot ultimately be suppressed. From a friend, who was on the cars we learn that the train ran off the track at Princeton, in consequence of a rail having been taken up. The American Express car, and three other passenger cars were considerably smashed. Two persons were killed and several others seriously injured. He states that four red flags were exhibited along the line of approach, but the engineer did not observe them but ran on.

Hamilton
Spectator

June 29

1854

Diabolical Attempt on the G. W. Railway.

On Tuesday morning last, the 20th inst., an attempt was made by an individual, who has given his name as John Irvine, to put obstructions on the rails of the Great Western. This diabolical attempt to throw the cars off the track (which, had it succeeded, might have cost the lives of many passengers by the express train), was fortunately frustrated by a gravel train, carrying materials from the neighborhood of Smith's Creek, first reaching the spot. It was found, on the evidence of the Conductor, given before the Magistrates of the Town of Woodstock, on Thursday, that the engine encountered, near Princeton, first, one piece of timber thrown across the track, which the guard fortunately threw off: next, at about 1 1/4 miles from that place, a round stick two inches in diameter, was also laid on the rail, and not being perceived, the locomotive run over and cut it in two, though there was serious danger of the train being thrown off the track. A little further on one of the mile posts, some six or seven inches in diameter, which are now being placed along the line to mark the distances, was found across the track, placed there doubtless by the same hands, and which must have thrown off the locomotive were it not perceived and the engine stopped in time to have the post removed. Had it remained until the express train arrived, it is impossible to estimate the loss of life and property which would probably have been occasioned.

The person suspected of this offence, than which it is scarcely possible to conceive a greater, was actuated, as appears from the evidence, simply by a spirit of revenge against one of the Company's Conductors for doing his duty, under the following circumstances: The supposed culprit had taken his place in a previous passenger train. The conductor, Mr. Woodhead, on passing through the cars to receive the tickets, found that this person had none; and upon his fare being demanded, he refused to pay it. He was, therefore, upon arriving at the next station (Princeton) desired, according to the Company's rules, to leave the cars, and compelled to do so, after a good deal of objection, and vowing vengeance as he left. He was seen to proceed along the line, and, in one hour from that time, the discovery was providentially made by the gravel train.

June 29 1854

Another Collision on the Great Western.

An accident, which might have been attended with results the most disastrous, took place on the Great Western Railway, near Thamesville, on Friday evening last. This accident seems to have happened through utter carelessness. It appears that a freight train was backing in the side line, when it was run into by a passenger train, we believe destined for the Suspension Bridge. We are happy to add that no lives were lost. The escape, however, was almost miraculous, both Engines having been badly smashed, and severely damaged. The frequency of these accidents is certainly damaging the character of the road. Although this one was productive of no fatal result, yet the great risk which was run by the passengers, shows the necessity for increased vigilance on the part of the officials. We believe that the main cause of the accidents on the Great Western, is in consequence of the unusual amount of travel on the road, and that no other line—no matter under whose direction—would be able to prevent entirely, similar occurrences to the above. But lately, every week, the telegraph has informed us of a collision or accident of some sort, and we are forced to come to the conclusion that the men employed, are guilty in many cases, of the grossest carelessness. The Company therefore should lose no time in making enquiries into the character and qualifications of every person, holding a responsible situation in their employ, and unless every confidence could be reposed in them, they should at once be discharged. Unless this is done, we shall continue to hear of accidents, and we are afraid that some may again occur attended with similar results to the melancholy affair at Baptiste Creek. The following particulars are from the *Spectator* :—

"We grieve to learn that another collision also occurred on the Great Western Railway, between a passenger train and a freight train, near Thamesville, on Friday last. As usual, no correct particulars have reached us yet; but we are happy to state that no lives have been lost. Both locomotives have been badly smashed. The escape from loss of life, or even injury to any of the passengers, as we are informed, is most miraculous, and can only be accounted for by the probability of the drivers having discovered the impending danger in time to lessen the force of the collision. Be this as it may, the fact of the collision having taken place affords additional evidence of the inefficient management of the road, or incompetency of the men employed upon the trains. The public may well ask, when are these things to have an end?"

— The allusion made to us in the pre-

Galt
November 15
1854

Thamesville

GRAND TRUNK

ACCIDENT!

The Boiler of a Locomotive Explodes!

Yesterday (Monday) forenoon, an accident of a very unusual nature occurred on the Grand Trunk Railway, near Widder, nothing less than the explosion of the locomotive boiler. The violence of the explosion was such that a portion of the boiler, weighing nearly 600 lbs., was thrown a hundred yards into a field! The fragments flew right and left, injuring both fireman and brakeman. Happily, all the passengers escaped. Several of the cars were more or less damaged. It is presumed that the explosion occurred—as most all explosions do—from letting the water get too hot and the fire too hot; consequently, water was pumped in, the steam generated faster than it could escape, and hence the accident.

London
Advertiser.

Tuesday
November 14
1865

FATAL RAILWAY ACCIDENT.

ONE MAN KILLED AND ONE BADLY INJURED.

(From the London Advertiser of the 10th.)

A lamentable accident occurred this morning about five o'clock at Newbury station, Great Western Railway, resulting in the death of a fireman, and the serious wounding of an engine driver.

The facts appear to be about as follows: A freight train going east had run upon the siding at Newbury to allow the night mail train to pass, and had been standing on the siding only a short time when the express approached at full speed. Either through neglect or design, and it does not appear clearly as yet to which cause it can be assigned, the switch at the east end of the station was left open and the express, instead of following the main line, turned into the siding and dashed full speed into the rear of the freight train.

The collision was terrific. Both locomotives were knocked into shapeless masses, and cars piled upon each other and broken or damaged to a considerable extent.

But the most unfortunate and deplorable incident of the disaster was the wounding of the engineer and fireman of the express. The latter, William Nelson, was scalded in a shocking manner, and after lingering until ten minutes past nine a.m., death put an end to his sufferings. The engine driver, Collison, had one leg broken above the ankle, and was otherwise bruised, his injuries being of a most painful character. Both the victims of this sad accident belonged to this city. Nelson was a young man, 22 or 23 years of age, of exemplary character, steady and industrious, and one of the chief supports of a widowed mother. His death is deeply felt and deplored by the employees of the road, and a large number of friends and acquaintances throughout the city. Collison is also well known in London, having been connected with the Great Western for a number of years, and been a resident of this city during the greater part of the time. He was brought in by the express train between noon and 1 p.m. to-day, and carefully carried to his home, a number of sympathising friends and fellow workmen being at the station when the train arrived, ready to offer every assistance to alleviate his sufferings. Nelson's body did not arrive by the same train, but it was expected in during the afternoon or evening.

Though the consequences of the accident have been deplorably serious, it is a matter of congratulation that the destruction of human life has not been greater. The express train was filled with passengers, and the cars were somewhat damaged, but not one person so far as we have been able to ascertain was injured. The shock knocked the occupants of the cars about somewhat rudely and aroused them to a sense of the danger they had so fortunately escaped, but beyond the fright occasioned not a single casualty occurred among the passengers.

There is no question that the accident was caused by the misplacement of the switch to the east of the station, but it is not clearly determined as to how the switch was opened. The train standing on the siding had not interfered with it, because it ran in from the other direction and had no occasion to use it; and the conductor of the train that had last passed out of the station to the east is positive that the switch was properly shut off after his train had passed over it. It is hinted at that some evil disposed person must have purposely opened the switch, but no reason is assigned for the supposition beyond the fact that the switch was open, and the last person who used it asserts he closed it.

There is another explanation offered which may solve the mystery. It has occasionally happened that the key-pin fastening the cog wheels which move the rails back and forth has slipped from its position, so that when the handle turned the cog-wheel revolved without altering the position of the rails. In this way it would be quite possible that a man who had turned the handle of the switch in the proper direction would feel quite satisfied that he had performed his duty, while at the same time the switch had not been altered in the slightest.

A coroner's inquest was summoned at Newbury on the body of William Nelson, at which no doubt the full circumstances connected with the accident will be elicited.

October
21
1870

Newbury

1872

London

London

THE RAILWAY DIFFICULTY.—For several months the traffic of the main line of the Great Western Railway has rapidly increased, and to such an enormous extent that only by the most acute manœuvring can the road sustain with any safety the tremendous pressure. The number of trains passing through this city daily exceeds forty, many of them of more than ordinary length and all heavily laden. It is surprising the amount of stock and number of passengers there are constantly traversing the line. The employees are often bauldered with the superabundance of work devolving upon them, and the heads of the road are frequently at a loss to know a what way to meet the demands for means of transportation. It would be suicidal on the part of the company to refuse the traffic and allow its course to be diverted into other channels, while to receive it presents almost insurmountable difficulties. The opening of the Air Line will probably bring a wholesome relief to all connected with the route either in the capacity of officers or subordinates, but as the great country to the west increases in importance, the volume of trade passing over the great highway to the east must necessarily become greater, and little permanent respite can therefore be looked for from that quarter. It will in the end in all probability be necessary for the Company to extend their accommodations here, and the purchase of several blocks along the line in the heart of London for sidings is already mooted. This might meet the necessities of the railway, but we fear it would only aggravate the perils of traffic to and from the south part of the city, the hindrances to which are now a great cause of complaint. The people must bear with the Company as patiently as possible their present trying situation and look over slight faults which are not inexcusable just now in the hope that the management, which is in good hands, will provide a remedy that will meet the requirements of the road without unnecessarily inconveniencing the citizens.

August
30
1873

SERIOUS SMASH-UP!

A Crowded Excursion Train Collides
with a Freight.

OVER TWENTY PERSONS INJURED!

A lamentable accident occurred to the crowded passenger train returning with the excursionists from the Great Western employees' picnic, held at Windsor yesterday, and the fact that the great majority of those on board the train were residents of this city was sufficient to create the most intense anxiety throughout the city when the news of the unfortunate occurrence became known here. Thousands left London yesterday to partake in the pleasures of the picnic at Belle Isle. Each returning train during the night brought back groups of the excursionists, but hundreds still remained, and as the hours of the night passed away and morning came without news of the train in which they were travelling, there was no little anxiety among the families and friends of the absentees. Later it began to be whispered about that something had happened and the anxiety increased to alarm, which was further intensified when it became known that a collision had occurred and that over twenty of the excursionists were injured, some of them perhaps fatally. The excitement continued on the increase until the morning express arrived with a number of the passengers of the ill-fated train on board, and their account of the disaster, while it brought grief to many, relieved the anxious fears of the majority. From them it was ascertained that about three o'clock this morning as the excursion train was about entering the station yard at Thamesville, it ran into the rear end of a freight that was endeavoring to enter a siding for the purpose of allowing the excursion train to pass. The engine and tender of the latter were thrown from the track, a complete wreck; the first passenger car was thrown almost completely on its side, two other cars "telescoped," and almost every car in the train was damaged more or less by the shock. The engine driver and fireman jumped an instant before the collision and escaped uninjured, but the unfortunate passengers who crowded the wrecked cars did not escape so easily. Legs and arms were broken, cuts and bruises were plentifully distributed, and a scene occasioned which would move to compassion the most unimpassible. Men, women and children—infants some of the latter—lay groaning and screaming in pain and fright. The terrified passengers who escaped uninjured did all they could to relieve the sufferings of the wounded and rescue them from the wreck. Medical attendance was not lacking and all that could under the circumstances be done, was done to care for the unfortunates and restore order and confidence from the confusion and alarm that prevailed. Among the injured

August 30
1873

which they were traveling, a little anxiety among the families and friends of the absentees. Later it began to be whispered about that something had happened and the anxiety increased to alarm, which was further intensified when it became known that a collision had occurred and that over twenty of the excursionists were injured, some of them perhaps fatally. The excitement continued on the increase until the morning express arrived with a number of the passengers of the ill-fated train on board, and their account of the disaster, while it brought grief to many, relieved the anxious fears of the majority. From them it was ascertained that about three o'clock this morning as the excursion train was about entering the station yard at Thamesville, it ran into the rear end of a freight that was endeavoring to enter a siding for the purpose of allowing the excursion train to pass. The engine and tender of the latter were thrown from the track, a complete wreck; the first passenger car was thrown almost completely on its side, two other cars "telescoped," and almost every car in the train was damaged more or less by the shock. The engine driver and fireman jumped an instant before the collision and escaped uninjured but the unfortunate passengers who crowded the wrecked cars did not escape so easily. Legs and arms were broken, cuts and bruises were plentifully distributed, and a scene occasioned which would move to compassion the most unimpassioned. Men, women and children—infants some of the latter—lay groaning and screaming in pain and fright. The terrified passengers who escaped uninjured did all they could to relieve the sufferings of the wounded and rescue them from the wreck. Medical attendance was not lacking and all that could under the circumstances be done, was done to care for the unfortunates and restore order and confidence from the confusion and alarm that prevailed. Among the injured our informants were able to name: Mr. and Mrs. Nichol, of this city, and several of their children—all more or less injured. Mrs. Nichol we regret to learn, so seriously wounded that her life is despaired of. Mr. and Mrs. F. Groves and two children, legs and arms broken. Miss Sutherland, spine injured. Mrs. Sutherland, slightly injured. Mrs. Nelson, legs seriously bruised. Mrs. Black and daughter, Strathroy. Mrs. McEwan, Strathroy. Mrs. Dowry, St. Thomas. Mr. and Mrs. Blashwell. As to the cause of the accident, statements differ. It appears that the freight train was running ahead of the excursion, with orders to lay over at Thamesville, to allow the latter to pass. A heavy fog prevailed and the driver of the excursion, who knew the freight was ahead, failed to distinguish the red light at the rear of the freight at a sufficient distance to enable him to avoid a collision, and he was scarcely aware of the danger ahead before the crash came. Others again say that there was no light burning in rear of the freight, and others still have an entirely different version to tell. The express east at 1 p. m. brought in all the uninjured passengers with the exception of one car load, which was left at Komoka, on account of the condition of one of the wounded women on board. She could neither be removed nor stand the jolting of the car in motion, and it was consequently left on the siding. As soon as a train could be got going west we despatched a reporter to the scene of the calamity with orders to gather the particulars on the spot and telegraph the result of his inquiries for our readers. Up to 4 p. m. we received no message from him, neither Montreal nor Dominion companies being in a position to open communication with their offices in Thamesville.

RAILWAY ACCIDENT.

Serious Collision on the Great Western Railway.

NONE KILLED, BUT MANY INJURED.

London, Aug. 30.—The second train bringing the Great Western employees here from the picnic at Belle Isle ran into the tail of No. 26 freight about a quarter of a mile west of Thamesville, about 2 o'clock this morning, badly smashing the engine, conductor's car, and two passenger coaches. The engine broke loose from the tender and tumbled into the ditch. The passenger coaches, by the concussion, were "telescoped," and reports say that sixteen persons are injured. Amongst the wounded are Mrs. F. Groves of this city and her four children, the latter having their legs broken; Mrs. John Nichols, wife of the letter-carrier, had her arm broken; Mrs. Nelson, of this city, had her leg broken and several had their backs badly hurt. Those are all the names that can be obtained at present.

The train had twenty-three coaches, crowded with passengers, and the wonder is that more were not injured. It is said that the latter part of the freight had broken loose, and was standing on the main line which, owing to the heavy fog, was not observed until it was too late to avert the calamity. The engineer and fireman, Messrs. J. Irwin and J. Leslie, remained on the engine and escaped without harm. The excitement in the city is great, the majority of the people on board belonging here.

The trains going east were delayed about three hours, but the roads are now clear.

ANOTHER ACCOUNT.

London, Aug. 31.—One of the excursion trains conveying the employees of the Great Western railway home from their annual picnic, met with an accident between the hours of two and three o'clock yesterday morning, which was attended with serious consequences. It appears that the second excursion train while leaving Thamesville station ran into the caboose in the rear end of the Blue Line freight, conductor, it is said, smashing that car and doing considerable damage. As soon as the engine struck the caboose it turned half way round from the force of the concussion, having previously separated from the tender, and ran head foremost into the ditch. The tender, by the force of the concussion, was thrown violently against a first-class passenger coach, which it damaged considerably and caused it partially to topple over; and in turn the other passenger cars received similar shocks. Strange to say, however, the second and third cars from the engine were not so seriously damaged as were the fourth and fifth. These latter were old second-class affairs, and not being possessed of as serviceable buffers as the first-class cars that preceded them, they were in a measure more affected by the concussion. In the fourth car, were seated, about fifty passengers, all more or less asleep, and quite unprepared for the shocking occurrence which followed with such dire results to several of the occupants. The shock was a severe one, and was almost immediately followed by a "telescoping" process, by which part of the sides and roof were pushed about half way through the next car; and here it was that the unfortunate passengers received their injuries. It should be mentioned that at the time of the collision a dense fog prevailed in the vicinity of Thamesville, rendering it a matter of great difficulty for the engineer of the excursion train, Mr. Irwin, to see more than twenty feet ahead. The darkness of the night too, materially hindered the driver from seeing the lights on the rear car of the freight, and he was thus unable to control his train, which was composed of twenty-three heavily laden cars, in time to avert the collision, which followed almost instantly after the red light was observed.

Women and children, who had been in the moment before comfortably asleep, were pitched higher and higher into groups, while others were lying bleeding, and apparently lifeless on the floor of the car, and in the seats. The most of them had their legs broken by the concussion. Several were jammed between the cars, and suffered severe bruising and injuries to the back and sides. One family, that of Mr. Fred Groves, an employee of the "A. & L. Line," consisting of

HS.
September 1
1873

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Women and children, who had been but the moment before enjoying a sleep, were pitched higher and higher into groups, whilst others were lying, bleeding and apparently lifeless on the floor of the car, and in the seats. The most of them had their legs broken by the concussion. Several were jammed between the seats, and suffered severe bruises and injuries in the back and sides. One family, that of Mr. Fred Groves, an employe of the Air Line, consisting of Mrs. Groves and four children were all hurt. One of the little girls had both of her legs broken below the knee, and the other three of them, a brother and two sisters, were also among the injured. Mrs. Nichols had a leg and arm broken and thigh bruised, and suffered serious internal injuries, so much so in fact that during yesterday her life was despaired of. This afternoon, although much better, she was unable to be removed home. An aged woman, named Nelson, who keeps a market garden in this vicinity, had one of her legs broken. She was brought home at noon yesterday. Mrs. Black, the wife of a carpenter, and her daughter, had their limbs bruised, as also had Mrs. McKinnon and Mr. Birdall of Strathroy. Mrs. and Miss Sutherland, who live at one of the stations on the Barnia branch, received injuries in the back and other minor bruises about the body. Mr. Lowry, of St. Thomas, was also a sufferer.

It is next to impossible to obtain a correct list of the injured, but the above includes all that are known to be hurt to any extent. When the engine left the track and went headfirst into the ditch, the driver opened the exhaust pipe and allowed the steam in the boiler to escape. Had he not thought of this, the collision might have resulted more disastrously than it did, and by his thoughtfulness is due the fact that there are not several fatal casualties by scalding. The fireman, James Latta, was taken out of the cab window while the engine lay in the ditch, and both he and his mate escaped without a bruise. The conductor and brakeman in the caboose of the freight also escaped unharmed. The excitement in the city during Saturday forenoon was of the most intense description, especially amongst those who had friends and relatives on the train. The feeling was heightened by the silence of the railway officials, from whom but meager details of the affair could be obtained. The arrival of N.Y. and C. express trains relieved the fears entertained, and those who had been in a state of anxiety were comforted by the appearance of their friends. It is to be regretted that the picnic which was so pleasantly arranged should have been marred by such an untoward happening. The wonder is not that thirteen of our people were injured, several fatally, but that the larger number of the passengers of whom there were not less than 1,000 were not killed outright. It is a fact that the engine was running at a speed of 15 miles an hour at the time of the collision, and it was not until about three hours and 15 minutes after the accident that the fire was extinguished. The firemen of the fire department were called to the scene, and the fire was extinguished. The firemen of the fire department were called to the scene, and the fire was extinguished. The firemen of the fire department were called to the scene, and the fire was extinguished.

1873
September 1

THE RECENT COLLISION.

Condition of the Injured Passengers.

So far no deaths have resulted from the late terrible accident to the Great Western excursion train on Saturday morning last, but several of the wounded are far from being convalescent. The Groves family appear to be most seriously affected, one of the children, a little boy, having had to suffer the amputation of an arm. This poor little fellow's seems to be the most serious case of all, and it is quite probable he will not recover. Mrs. Nichol is also in a dangerous state, but telegrams of this morning are of a favorable character and strong hopes of her ultimate recovery are entertained. The others are reported doing as well as could be expected and they will be taken to their homes as soon as their wounds will permit of their removal.

All day yesterday gangs of men were engaged "reconstructing" the cars and the caparized engine so as to facilitate their removal to this city, whence they will be sent into hospital. The road is now quite clear of all obstruction.

Who is to blame for this accident has elicited a great variety of opinions from those who were on the train and all others interested; we withhold all conjecture as to the solution of this question until such time as the company shall have made their investigation into the circumstances connected with the sad affair. Great indignation is felt at the manner in which the passengers were treated by the station officials at Thamesville, and we would recommend that the company do not overlook in their investigation into the causes of the accident the conduct of their servants after its occurrence. It is well known that the wounded and their friends for hours after the collision were unable to communicate with their friends here and elsewhere, owing to the fact that the Montreal Telegraph Company's office was in the G. W. R. station and the officials in charge refused to allow their messages to be transmitted.

September 1
1873

London
Advertiser

RAILWAY ACCIDENT.
SERIOUS COLLISION ON THE GREAT
WESTERN RAILWAY.

NONE KILLED, BUT MANY INJURED.

(From the Mail Correspondent.)

London, Aug. 30.

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ANOTHER ACCOUNT.

London, Aug. 31.

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September 3
1873

RAILWAY SMASH-UP.—A smash-up occurred on the Great Western Railway at a creek a short distance from Windsor. Two freight trains ran into each other, and created a mass of debris that served to block the track for some time. A new bridge was being built over the creek, and at this point the trains were running on the same track. Nobody was hurt, and in due course the obstruction to traffic was removed, passengers having in the meantime been transferred from one side of the accident to the other, and allowed to continue their journey with as little loss of time as possible.

SABBATH SCHOOL CONVENTION

August 13

1875

London Advertiser

~~Hamilton~~
RAILWAY ACCIDENT.—About twelve o'clock Monday night last, freight train No. 17, going east, collided with engine No. 30, at Baptist Creek, on the Great Western Railway. Through some misunderstanding of orders the switch was misplaced, and the trains met just at the bridge crossing the creek. The engineer and fireman of No. 30 to save themselves jumped from the engine to the water beneath and escaped without injury, falling about ten feet of water. The engines and cars were badly wrecked, while a large amount of freight was damaged. An investigation is to be made as to who was culpable for the accident. Sept 1 1875

H. Spectator

September 1 1875

RAILWAY COLLISION.— A serious collision occurred on the Great Western Railway near Baptiste Creek, between 11 and 12 o'clock Monday night, whereby a large amount of damage was done to the rolling stock and engines. It appears that two freight trains, Nos. 30 and 19, ran together in consequence of a portion of the double track having been swerved, as it were, into one line, while workmen were engaged in making certain alterations near by. The engine drivers being unaware of this fact, came rattling along until it was too late to avert the calamity, and the consequence was a collision, which smashed drawheads, couplings, engines and cars into pieces, causing an immense amount of damage. The drivers jumped in time to save their lives. The debris, which was piled on the track, prevented the express trains from passing, and passengers and baggage had to be transferred, occasioning a delay which, under the circumstances, could not be avoided.

September 3
1875

Railway Accident.

GREAT WESTERN EXPRESS THROWN OFF THE TRACK—THE DRIVER KILLED AND THE FIRE-MAN FATALLY INJURED.

LONDON, May 18.

The afternoon express of the Great Western Railway West met with an accident at Sifton's Out, four miles west of the city, involving the probable loss of two lives. The switch being left open at that point, the train ran off while going at almost full speed. The locomotive upset and the steam chambers burst, the escaping steam scalding the engineer, George Irwin, and the fireman, Joseph Pringle, his son-in-law, in a horrible manner. The train stopped without any further serious accident, the passengers escaping with a severe shaking up. A relief train was at once dispatched from London, and the men brought here and their injuries attended to. Irwin's body is scalded from head to foot to such an extent that he cannot recover. Both men belonged to Windsor, and were much respected servants of the company. In a few hours the wreck was cleared, and the express went on to its destination.

LATER—The engine driver, Irwin, expired in great agony this evening and an inquest was immediately held by Coroner Hagarty, which has just now (midnight) concluded. The facts elicited were that the section men were working a gravel train in the neighborhood, and at the switch at Sifton Out—Hyde Park—found a "tight rail" caused by the sun's heat. They got their train through all right and some time after proceeded to fix the switch properly. To get some men for this purpose the men went some distance off. While they were so occupied the express came along at full speed, when one of the men hearing the steam reversed exclaimed, "My God, that switch is open." On hurrying to the spot they found the locomotive on its side, and the engineer and fireman writhing in their torments, and the cars generally off the track, the passengers pouring out pell mell to help the unfortunate. The section boss, David Spence, admitted his responsibility for the open switch, by saying that if it was open he must have left it so. The jury retired shortly before 12 o'clock.

The deceased, George Irwin, was a man of considerable wealth in Windsor, his rents bringing upwards of \$200 per month, yet he worked on the line from habit. He was Grand Treasurer of the Oddfellows' Order, and very popular therein.

At the latest accounts, Pringle was rapidly failing.

LONDON, May 18.—At 1:30 A. M. the jury returned a verdict, placing the responsibility for the death of George Irwin upon the

May 19
1876

SERIOUS RAILWAY ACCIDENT.

The Engineer and Fireman Severely Scalded.

A serious accident happened to No. 1 Express at 1:50 this afternoon at Hyde Park. It is not just now definitely known how, but as the train ran off the track it is supposed the switch was left open. The engine-driver and firemen, the former named George Irwin and the latter being his step-son, were severely scalded, so much so that it is doubted if they can live. They were brought back to this city at three o'clock, when Mr. J. E. Dawson and Dr. Moore went out to the scene of the disaster. It is not known how many others have been injured. The locomotive and first two cars were tumbled down the embankment, but the track will be clear this evening.

London Advertiser

MAY 18

1876

NTY.

THE RAILWAY ACCIDENT.

DEATH OF THE ENGINE DRIVER.

INQUEST TO INQUIRE THE CAUSE.

A Verdict of Manslaughter Returned.

ARREST OF THE SECTION FOREMAN.

Our readers will regret to learn that shortly after we went to press yesterday, George Irwin, the driver of the engine which ran off the track at Sutton's Siding, died from the injuries he received at the accident. Deceased lived in Windsor, where he was a large property holder, and at one time held the position of Alderman. He was also a prominent Odd Fellow, being the Treasurer for the Grand Lodge of Ontario. His wife was telegraphed to, and she arrived here last evening, accompanying the remains back to-day. Dr. Hagarty summoned a jury, who chose as foreman Mr. John Cousine, and an inquest was held last evening at the station, the following evidence being taken:—

David Spence, section foreman of the G. W. R., sworn—I was about five hundred yards from the accident when it occurred, and had one man with me at this time, which was about 1:50 p. m.; three of my gang were nearer the scene than me; the engine, way baggage, express baggage, and second class (or smoking) cars were off the track when I arrived at the place, which is a little under a quarter of a mile west of Hyde Park Junction; the switch leading to the main line siding is at the Junction.

To a Juror—I am not a switchman there; to the best of my knowledge, the accident occurred in this way: A little after 12 o'clock a gravel train ran in to the siding from the east, and opened the switch at the west end to get on the main road; in company with my men we went down to the west end of the switch, in consequence of one rail having shot forward about half an inch, we got the switch closed at last, and let the train out; I left two men there, and they came back and told me that the switch was tight again, caused through expansion; I then took four men and fixed the switch, and let the Sarnia and No. 6 Express East go over; then it was all right; I then went to work, and took one of my men and cut a short rail for the switch, and left the other three men behind—about 200 yards east of the switch; I don't know whether I shut the switch myself or told my men to shut it after we fixed it before we left, and I don't know whether it was shut or not, when me and my assistant got up to where we were to cut the rail, the Express west came out of town, while we were measuring it; a few moments afterwards we heard the steam of the engine reversed, and Barclay (my assistant) said, "My God, that switch is open;" I looked around and said to Barclay, "Part of that train is off the track;" I then went up to the scene, and saw the engine lying on its side, and the cars off the track; the people came out of the cars and assisted to take the engineer and foreman off the engine; when I went up to the place the switch was open, but not as though it was opened by a

charge of the injured men, and proceeded to the scene of the accident to see if there was anything further to do; after going through the train, and ascertaining that no other persons had been injured, I returned to the city and went to see deceased, and remained with him until he died—which was at two minutes to six; he died in consequence of injuries received at the accident; the deceased had inhaled a good deal of the hot steam, and his tongue was dreadfully swollen.

J. E. Dawson, sworn—I am Assistant Superintendent of the G. W. R. at London station; first heard of the accident about 2:20 p. m.; I went out in company with Dr. Moore and others to the scene; when I arrived there I found considerable confusion and the engine down the bank and three cars off the track; the switch was open when I got there, and it could not possibly have been properly fastened, because part of the train was on the switch; the cause of the accident was owing to the switch being wrong; whoever opened the switch is responsible for closing it; the rules of the Company are very distinct on that point; the trackman (or foreman, if he opened it), was the person responsible for closing it; deceased was one of the oldest and most careful drivers on the G. W. R.; we don't keep a switchman at the west end, because one is not required, as no passenger trains cross there; it is merely used by the gravel trains, and the men thereon open and shut it when they use it; there are targets set for these switches, and when the switch is correct the target runs parallel with the line, and when it is open the target board stands against the engineer; the company has been curtailing expenses for the past two years; a regular switchman has never been stationed at that particular siding, and it has been built for over ten years to my knowledge; I say that the person who opened the switch is responsible for the closing of it, and that if it had not been open the train would have passed over in safety and the accident would not have occurred.

At half-past eleven the jury retired, and after an absence of about an hour returned the following verdict:

"That we, as Jurors, are of opinion that from the fact of the Great Western Railway Company not having a proper switchman there they are fully responsible for the death of George Irwin; and we also are of opinion that the section foreman (David Spence) was the last man at the switch, and therefore must have left it open, and with the Company, is equally responsible for George Irwin's death; and that we, as Jurors, recommend that all these switches should have proper men to take care of them for the future."

Coroner Hagarty therefore issued a warrant for the arrest of David Spence, which was duly executed and the prisoner lodged in jail.

The fireman, John Pringle, stepson of the deceased, is lying at Thornton's Hotel, where he was conveyed on his arrival in this city. It is feared that he inhaled some of the steam, and it is hardly probable he can recover. His betrothed, Miss Cooper, of Port Huron, was telegraphed for to-day.

MAY 19

1876

Accident on the G. W. Railway.

A terrible accident took place on the Great Western Railway, at a point about four miles east of London at two o'clock May 18, which resulted in the Morning Express west running off the line, through a switch being left open, causing fatal injury to one, and probably two, persons. The express left London at the usual hour, 1.40 p. m., and proceeded, as far as Sifton's cut, at the western end of which there is a switch, which through carelessness had been left open. The train was running at the rate of twenty miles an hour. Immediately upon leaving the track the locomotive toppled over, several of the flues burst, and the steam and boiling water rushed out in large volumes. The engineer (Mr. George Irwin, of Windsor) and the fireman (Jus. Pringle, also of Windsor) were scalded by the escaping steam to a fearful degree, before any assistance could be rendered them. The effect of the engine succumbing was such as to bring the entire train to a sudden standstill, the force of the concussion being experienced by the passengers, some of whom were thrown from their seats, although none were injured, so far as we can learn. One car left the rails, remaining in an upright position. The utmost consternation prevailed amongst the passengers for some time.

David Spence, section foreman of the G. W. R., in his examination, said: I am not switchman there; to the best of my knowledge the accident occurred in this way:—A little after 12 o'clock a gravel train ran in to the siding from the east, and opened the switch at the west end to get on the main road; in company with my men we went down to the west end of the switch, in consequence of one rail having shot forward about half an inch; we got the switch closed at last, and let the train out; I left two men there, and they came back and told me that that switch was tight again, caused through expansion; I then took four men and fixed the switch, and let the *Express* and No. 8 *Express* go over; then it was all right; I then went to work, and took one of my men and cut a short rail for the switch, and left the other three men behind—about 200 yards east of the switch; I don't know whether I shut the switch myself or told my men to shut it after we fixed it before we left, and I don't know whether it was shut or not; when me and my assistant got up to where we were to cut the rail, the *Express* west came out of town, while we were measuring it; a few moments afterwards we heard the steam of the engine reversed, and Barclay (my assistant) said, "My God, that switch is open;" I looked around and said to Barclay, "Part of that train is off the track;" I then went up to the scene, and saw the engine lying on its side, and the cars off the track; the people came out of the cars and assisted to take the engineer and fireman off the engine; when I went up to the place the switch was open, but not as though it was opened by a switchman, the pin not being in its position; I saw the body of Irwin in one of the baggage cars, where it had been placed by passengers; the company has no switchman there, and whoever opens the switch is responsible for the proper closing of it; I could not say if there had been a switchman there that the accident would have been averted; the accident was caused by the switch being open; if a switchman had been stationed there he would in all probability have seen that it was properly shut, or else have signalled to the train coming from either direction; the only trains that have used this switch of late are the L., H. & B. gravel trains; none of the express trains use the siding; before the London, Haron & Bruce line was built two trains a day generally used the siding; since the L., H. & B. was built I could not say how many trains used it daily, but the average is from four to six; no train passed east over the switch from the time I fixed it until the accident occurred; I am responsible for the switch when I use it.

When other witnesses had been examined the jury returned the following verdict:

"That we, as Jurors, are of opinion that from the fact of the Great Western Railway Company not having a proper switchman there they are fully responsible for the death of George Irwin; and we are also of opinion that the section foreman (David Spence) was the last man at the switch, and therefore most have left it open, and with the Company is equally responsible for George Irwin's death; and that we, as Jurors, recommend that all these switches should have proper men to take care of them for the future." David Spence was arrested and awaits trial.

Brantford.

May 26

1876

When the wheel broke down it fell
onto the road and was run off the
road with through damage for Chas.
of the New York Central Express
breaking of a wheel of one of the
passenger cars.

100

GRAPHIC STATEMENT OF AN INJURED PARTY
HINCHER.

HOW THE ACCIDENT OCCURRED.

THE LINE, BLOCKED.
Immediately on being notified of the

STATEMENT OF AN INJURED PASSENGER
 Wm. H. Mason, one of the injured

[illegible]

RAILWAY COLLISION AT WABUNO.

Two Locomotives Pitch into one
Another and get Smashed.

FIREMAN INJURED.

A serious collision took place at the Wabuno siding of the G. W. Railway this morning about one o'clock, between No. 12 passenger express going east and a wood train coming west. It appears that the engineer of No. 12 was under the impression that the wood train had cleared the siding and passed on. In this he was mistaken, and the consequence was that both locomotives ran into each other with tremendous force and got severely smashed. The fireman on the engine of the express, a man, named Price, living at Suspension Bridge, jumped off the train and got severely, but it is hoped not dangerously, injured. The wreck caused by the collision was pretty extensive, and a corps of men from this city were engaged until about eight o'clock this morning in clearing the track. The west bound trains, which had to submit to a detention of seven or eight hours, passed through here at nine p. m. Breakfast was sent down from here for twenty, that being the number of passengers delayed, all very fortunately escaping injury by the accident.—*London Herald*, Tuesday.

November 6
1877