

GWR

~~INGERSOLL~~

WRECK'S

~~FEBRUARY~~ 24,

1860.

1856 - 1874

incl. KomoRa



## THE LATE RAILWAY DISASTER.

(From the Galt Reformer, of Wednesday.)

It becomes our melancholy duty to record the most frightful railway accident which ever happened in this vicinity. On Monday afternoon last, about three o'clock, as the Gravel Train employed on the Galt Branch, was passing over the bridge by the old Saw-mill in this town, the bridge gave way, precipitating twelve heavily loaded cars into the stream beneath, a distance of nearly twenty feet! When the locomotive (*Huron*) got about half way across the bridge, the Engineer felt it giving way. With great presence of mind, he instantly put on steam, and although the tender had partially fallen, succeeded in dragging it and one car to the other side. The coupling broke between the first and second cars, and before those on the engine could look around, the cars were plunging into the gulph beneath, burying three of the brakemen among the crashing ruins. When we reached the spot, a considerable number of townsmen had already congregated, but the scene which met their eyes was so dreadful, that some little time elapsed, ere united exertions were put forth to clear away the remaining portion of the bridge and the huge wreck of cars, which covered the unfortunate sufferers. It was plainly to be seen however, that no hopes of the lives of any of the three men could be entertained, as even the wheels of many of the cars were broken, the heavy wood work smashed into innumerable splinters, and the whole mass so jammed together that it seemed almost impossible to clear it away.

GWR

July 4  
1856



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### The Galt Railway Accident.

(From the Galt Reporter, of yesterday.)

#### THE INQUEST.

Thomas Kuller Sworn—Was driver of the Huron engine on Monday last. Was employed hauling gravel from the pit near Preston down the line. Immediately on getting on the bridge he felt it giving way. Called to the brakeman to "take off the brake," and put all the steam on to the engine, and shot ahead. Carried one Car safe across with him. The tender and car were thrown off the track, but after running a little way, the car again jumped on.

By a Juror—At what rate of speed were you running at the time of the accident—faster or slower than usual?

Slower, we were not running more than 10 miles an hour, on account of going to take on wood at the Galt Station. Had we been running faster, he believed more would have been saved.

Resumed—Immediately on getting across the bridge, witness looked back, and saw one of the parties who was killed, endeavoring to jump off his car, but he fell back into the crush. Had either 13 or 14 cars on—not sure which, as they run either. There were six brakemen on the train, three of whom were instantly killed, two slightly wounded, and one escaped unhurt.

By a Juror—Had you ever heard anything in reference to the bridge being unsafe?

No. Had run across the bridge going up about forty minutes before, and noticed nothing unusual about it. Was never under the bridge. Considered the bridge strong enough. If a place is thought to be dangerous, the road master always sticks up a green flag, as a signal of caution to engineers.

John Wilson sworn—Is a Brakeman on the gravel train. On Monday last witness had gone into the engine to get his coat, and as they were to take on wood at the station, he stopped there to help them. When about ten feet from the bridge he thought it looked low, but it crossed his mind that the laborers had been raising the track at each end of the bridge. Immediately on getting thereon, he felt the bridge swing, and on looking back he saw the tender sinking, and heard the engineer tell the brakeman to take off the brake.

By a Juror—Did you hear any creak, as of the bridge giving way?

I did not. It was a kind of swinging sensation.

By a juror—Do you think the sudden putting on of the steam on to the engine was the cause of your getting safely across?

Decidedly. Had he not done so, we should certainly have been dragged back into the ruins. Always considered the bridge a good one. Never noticed that it looked low before that trip. Was in one of the cars going up, and noticed nothing unusual. Were going slower than usual, as we were going to stop at



**RAN OFF THE TRACK.**—The morning train on Friday last, about 11 o'clock, immediately after having passed across Main Street on its road to Preston, ran off the track, but without doing any serious damage. It took some two hours to get the engine upon the rails again. We have not learned the cause of this accident, which it is a great blessing did not result in anything serious. We hope such attention will be paid by the Railway officials that we may seldom have to report the most trivial accident on the line. So far but very few accidents have occurred on the Branch, and we hope it may always maintain the name for security which it has heretofore received.  
Galt Reformer.

July 11  
1856



1856  
On Saturday night last, when the eastern bound train, on the Great Western Railway, was near Thamesville, about 60 miles from Windsor, two shots were fired at the engine driver, but, fortunately, missed the object in both instances. The driver is not aware that he has, on any occasion, given offence to any one; but it is supposed that, as four head of cattle were killed two or three days previously, near the same spot, that the shooting may have arisen from that cause. This would hardly seem probable, seeing that in the instance where the cattle were killed, it is one of those cases where the Company never refuse a just compensation.

As the day mail train was approaching Chatham on Wednesday last, an Indian was observed walking on the track; the whistle was sounded and the brakes put on; the Indian paid no attention to the warning, and the train could not be stopped in sufficient time, the unfortunate man was therefore caught by the cow catcher and thrown off the track. When taken up he was found to be dead. At the inquest it was discovered that he had been under the influence of "fire water." A verdict of "accidental death" was returned, and the engine driver, Mr Graham, was exonerated from all blame.

[Windsor Herald.]

ATTEMPT TO MURDER — On Monday night,

July 19

1856



## Another Accident on the Great Western Railway.

[From the London Daily Free Press, of Thursday.]

Yesterday morning another terrific collision took place on the Great Western at Ingersoll, which all but resulted in the wholesale slaughter of passengers. It appears that about 3.15 A.M. a heavy cattle train arrived from the West at Ingersoll, and was to remain on the siding to allow the Lightning Express from the East (due about 3.30 A.M.) to pass. The train had been shunted on a siding, when, by the alleged carelessness of a switchman in leaving the switch open, the engine ran off the track. The effect of this casualty was that only a portion of the cattle train was got on to the siding, some five or six cars remaining on the main track.

Matters were in this position, the people connected with the train endeavoring to get the engine on the siding again, and the six cattle cars remaining on the main track when up came the Lightning Express from the East, and smashed right into the cattle trucks. The immediate effect of the collision was to throw the engine, tender, and baggage car of Express train off the track, to force the tender into the baggage-car, and to utterly demolish some three or four cattle trucks, hurling the unfortunate hogs in all directions.

On our reporter's arriving at the scene of the accident, the line was found, as in the case of the late collision at London, strewn with the remains of the wreck. The engine "Hecla" was all but destroyed, the front part being entirely smashed in, and the underworks apparently hopelessly damaged. Under it lay the remains of a cattle truck, over which it had passed, the wheels, axles, and woodwork, being entangled with the wheels and works of the engine. Behind the tender was the baggage car with the tender forced inside—a perfect wreck. Several of the cattle trucks were torn to splinters, and some 20 hogs killed and maimed. From information we received, we learn that the only effort made to arrest the approach of the Express train, on the break down of the cattle train on the line, was the turning on of the danger signal at the Ingersoll Station! No one seems to have been sent along the line with a signal lamp, though a thick fog and drizzly rain, added to a dark night, rendered this second precaution indispensable.

Fifteen minutes were to spare, but the line was meanwhile allowed to be blocked; the Lightning Express was permitted to come thundering along; a terrific collision was the consequence, and had it not happened that

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1856



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Fifteen minutes were to spare, but the line was meanwhile allowed to be blocked; the Lightning Express was permitted to come thundering along; a terrific collision was the consequence, and had it not happened that cattle instead of human beings occupied the cars, a terrible loss of life must have been the result. As it was, from an inspection of the debris of the train, and a careful weighing of the facts of the case, it appears perfectly miraculous how the passengers of the Lightning Express escaped with whole necks.

The train fortunately consisted of but three or four cars, which rebounded from the concussion. Had it been a heavy train of a dozen first class cars, who shall estimate the loss of life and suffering that might have ensued!

#### ANOTHER NARROW ESCAPE.

As the 10,30 a. m. train entered the Ingersoll station yesterday, an accident, apparently trivial, but which might have resulted in disastrous consequences, occurred. A large pile of sawn wood was lying close to the siding, when the vibration of the passing train loosened the stack, and down came hundreds of pieces among the wheels of the carriages. Fortunately the train was slackening speed, and entering the station at about five miles an hour, else the cars must have been precipitated from the track. The communication cord running along the roof of the cars was quickly pulled, the driver obeyed the signal, and sounded the break-whistle, and the train was brought to a stand. Had it been going at full speed the result might have been very different. It is highly reprehensible in those who have the arrangement of the wood supplies to allow the stack to be placed so near the track. We hope this warning will have its

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## Great Western Railway.

On Tuesday evening last, as the accommodation train, going West, had proceeded to about the distance of nine miles West of Ingersoll, two of the axles of the driving wheels of the locomotive (one on each side) broke. Fortunately, the line was straight where this occurred, or the results might have been serious. As it was, the only consequence, as far as the passengers were concerned, was a detention in the "wilderness" until succour came, in the shape of a fresh engine and some cars which arrived from London, accompanied by the energetic and gentlemanly superintendent, Mr. Peacock; after which, the passengers were safely conveyed to London, where they arrived at 12 P.M. — *Com.*

February

24

1860

GWR Ingersoll



## COLLISION ON THE WESTERN.

Locomotive Runs Into an Express Train. Several Persons Slightly Injured. No One Killed.

The night express train, No. 12, on the Great Western, collided with the locomotive of the wood train at Waubune about 1:30 this morning. As nearly as we can ascertain from railway men whose mouths are closed to newspaper reporters by the order of the railway authorities, the particulars are these: No. 12 express east left London this morning with orders to pass the engine of the wood train at Waubune. On arriving there she found the engine had not reached that place, and so passed on to the eastern switch for the purpose of backing into the siding, according to orders. At the curve near the switch post she met the engine she was on the look out for, and a collision was unavoidable. It was, however, slight, and with the exception of John Price, one of the firemen, who was pretty badly shaken, no one was hurt beyond a few bruises. The engines were damaged considerably, and the road was blocked by the accident for several hours. There seems to be no blame to attach to any one, as it is usual for trains to pass a place and then back into a siding at a station where there are no telegraph operators, when they are not sure the train they are on the look out for has arrived.

November 5

1872



making an almost entire wreck of the vehicle. Fortunately no one was injured.

NEW RAILWAY BRIDGE.—It will be remembered that some months ago an old wooden bridge on the Great Western Railway, near Paris, broke down the moment after a heavy train had passed over it. Since then a fine iron bridge has been built at the place, and yesterday it was formally opened for traffic.

COOL BURGESS.—The inimitable delineation of eccentric characters, with his wonderful Prose—Master Renny and Mrs

January 25

1872

Paris Bridge



October 31

1872

Beamsville

# THE ACCIDENT ON THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.

## FURTHER PARTICULARS.

### LIST OF THE INJURED.

#### PROBABLE CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT.

(From our own Reporter.)

HAMILTON, Oct. 30.

Our Hamilton correspondent this morning visited the scene of the accident which occurred yesterday afternoon at Beamsville station to the Pacific express on the Great Western Railway.

The train was composed of nine cars, drawn by two engines, two of which were baggage-cars, four passenger, two Pullman, and one Wagner car. These were all well-filled, as they generally are on this train, with through passengers. The accident occurred on the west side of the station, while the train was passing over the frog of the sliding-switch, but whether the last passenger car, or the Pullman-car, which was next to it, left the track first, is unknown. It is, however, quite certain that two cars were off the track, and that the two Pullman and the Wagner went over an embankment about eight feet high, coming to the bottom upside down but, fortunately for the occupants, not breaking up; in fact, not receiving as much damage as the fall would lead one to suppose would be the case. There is no doubt but what the passengers owe their safety to the great strength of these cars; for had they broken up, the loss of life must have been fearful. Two of the first-class passenger cars left the track, but did not go down the embankment. The accident was undoubtedly caused by the spreading out of the wing rail of the frog, at which the cars went off. There were no broken hills or axles, which makes it evident that the spreading of the wing rail was the only cause. The track at this point is in excellent condition, and what force was brought to bear on the wing rail to make it spread, has not transpired.

The following list of names comprises those who were injured sufficiently to require medical aid:—

Mr. Furness, conductor of the train, received severe injury, causing concussion of the brain; he is at the station-master's house, and this afternoon was reported to be somewhat better, though still lying in a precarious condition. L. D. Frayne, from Cambridge, N. Y., received a severe scalp wound; he was removed from the station-master's house this afternoon to the Royal Hotel, Hamilton; his wound is not dangerous, and his cure will only be a matter of time. His wife, who was with him at the time of the accident, escaped with slight injury, and is now nursing her husband.

Mrs. Case, of Chicago, whose injuries are internal, but not dangerous. She is stopping at a private house in the village. Elvan Webb, wife, two children, and a nurse, from Paterson, New Jersey, all slightly injured. They were on their road to Salt Lake city, and will resume their journey to-morrow. Mrs. Baker and two children, son and daughter, were slightly injured; it was reported that the arm of the latter was broken in two places, but it is incorrect. They are from Paterson city, New Jersey, and are on their way to Salt Lake city, and will proceed on their journey to-morrow.

A. W. Somers and child, from the State of New York, received very slight injuries, not sufficient to detain them. Mr. Jelletta, from Iowa, had his foot sprained, and received a severe bruise on the side. He was removed to the Royal Hotel, Hamilton. Mr. Kennedy, merchant, of New York, received slight injuries, and is stopping at the same place. A. M. Archibald, and J. A. Sullivan, from Nebraska, were slightly injured, but not sufficiently to detain them there.

Quite a number who were bruised, and slightly injured, went on, refusing to give their names.

A number of the T. & M. Youngs were on the train, but with one or two exceptions, sustained no other injuries than a severe fright. There was plenty of medical aid. The Great Western officials did all that could be done to alleviate the sufferings of the wounded, receiving their grateful thanks.

We have received the following particulars of the accident from Capt. Wyatt, who was on the train. The captain was in company with Major Mayo, of Ottawa, in one of the first-class cars. The train was a little late leaving St. Catharines, and having on ten coaches, had two engines. Just before reaching Beamsville station, Capt. Wyatt went to speak to a gentleman in the next car, and was standing talking at the door, passing the station, when he felt a sudden jerk; saw the bell rope pulled; heard the engine whistle on breaks, and knew the car was off the track, as it was thumping on the rails. He looked back and saw the next coach pitching over the track and stopping partially on its side. He got out as soon as the car stopped, saw that the passengers in it could take care of themselves, and went to



Beausville

**THE LATE ACCIDENT.**--All the persons injured by the late accident at Beausville are doing remarkably well. Mr. Farness, the conductor, is quite out of danger, though his recovery will require some time. Mr. Kennedy, of Branford, Conn., is able to sit up, and contemplates proceeding on his journey to-morrow. All the others who were injured have gone their way rejoicing in their escape. The accident would have been much more severe than it was if the locomotive and tender had gone off the track, but they passed the weak point safely, and, as the cars left the track the connection was instantly broken. The steps taken by the authorities of the road to take care of the wounded and to repair damages were most energetic and judicious. As soon as the wounded were taken from the wreck, a guard was put over it to prevent interfering; medical assistance was brought upon the ground with almost miraculous celerity; physicians were brought from St. Catharines and Hamilton; a wrecking train was soon upon the ground and a large force of tracklayers was got to work repairing the track and clearing away the wreck. Before six o'clock the road was



Beamsville  
cont'd

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September  
17  
1873

the shoulders. The poor fellow's sufferings must have been beyond description. The hands were also badly burned. Across his breast still shone his watch chain, though nearly buried in the black of the scorched smock and vest. Not a few jurymen were much moved at the sight of the remains as they lay in view.

Having returned to the Hotel, the following witness was examined. He was much affected:

JOHN CARSON deposed:—I am a fireman, employed on the Great Western Railway; I have seen the body of the deceased, and recognize it as that of William Carson, my brother; he was twenty-three years old, was born in Ireland, and was a Protestant in attendance upon the Church of England; the last time I saw him alive was last night about 9.30 o'clock, when we were both in London, and when he appeared to be in good health; I know nothing of the accident.

After some discussion as to the best time to adjourn, the Coroner adjourned the inquest, to meet on Friday afternoon at three o'clock.

#### LATER.

We learn this morning, that about 7.30 a.m. the engineer Jackson, died at the Stoney Creek siding, at a house to which he had been removed. His wife had been with him all night. Deceased suffered a good deal, and was, we believe, sensible up to 11 o'clock last night, when he gradually sank. He had been much scalded internally, with steam and hot water, and the chances of recovery had been from the first of the most unfavorable nature,—for even had he revived sufficiently to allow of amputation above the knee, he must have died of other injuries. Dr. Bullen was with him all night, and present at his death. Jackson stated yesterday that when he arrived at Stoney Creek, he saw the other train standing on the siding, and thinking all was right went on at the rate of about six miles an hour; when a few feet from the open switch he saw the danger, and at once reversed his engine. Had he been running at full speed the consequences of the accident must have been of the most deplorable nature. He lived in London with his wife, had no family and was in excellent circumstances.

#### THE CAUSE.

The switchman at the siding was too ill for duty, and was so reported. A man was promptly sent down to take his place, and given an order to the conductor of the train to stop there and let him off. This he refused to do and the man was carried on to Grimsby. At that station he took the next train west and again showed his order, but again it was paid no attention, and he was brought back to Hamilton. So the office at Stoney Creek was vacant, and no lights were lit at the time of the accident. Mr. David Blount was conductor of the New York Express, and it was his duty to see that the switch was attended to. The forward brakeman of the train opened it and afterwards called to the one behind and



majority in the workmen were supposed to be Moss, and had the privilege been granted on polling day, there might have been more ground to find fault; but as it was not, it is only another instance of the old Tory tactics of trying to convert a bridge into a mountain, for the sake of a little political effect. With them, any thing will justify that.

### The Railway Disaster.

Since our last issue, two more victims have been added to those who had previously lost their lives by the burning of the railway car near Komoka, on the night of the 27th ult., namely, Mr. J. O. Harsten, of Shesaw, who died at McLarty's Hotel, Komoka, on Friday night, and Mr. John Robinson, of Watford, who died at the Tremont House, London, on Tuesday evening. Mr. R. was the tenth victim of this car horror. Mr. Harsten, it appears, was an American, who came to this Province about thirty years ago; and has for some time past been following the occupation of a patent right vendor. He has no relatives in this country, nor has he been keeping up any correspondence with his former friends, having separated from them in consequence of a disagreement, and never having written to them up to the day of his death. Mr. Robinson, who followed the occupation of a cabinet maker at Watford, was about 28 years of age, and leaves a young widow and three children to mourn his untimely death. He had his head almost split open by coming in contact with the end of one of the ties while jumping from the car, and also suffered serious internal injury, besides severe burns about the head and face, from the effects of which he never rallied.

Mr. John Hay still lies in Daly's Hotel, Komoka, and though there is reason to hope that he will recover, his recovery is slow, as well as irregular; for although at times apparently much better, he has had frequent relapses, so that he can hardly yet be pronounced out of danger. Mr. McKellar, another of the sufferers who is still at Komoka, and whose injuries at first were supposed to be slight, is also in a critical state. None of the other patients, so far as we have ascertained, are in a dangerous condition.

The Inquest was resumed on Monday. The jury first examined the car, which had been placed at their disposal by the General Superintendent. The lamp, Miller coupling, and general furnishings of the car were inspected, as also the working of the bell-rope over an oil car. A number of witnesses were then called, among others Mr. B. Zavitz, Mr. John McKellar, and Mr. Dougald W. Graham, but nothing was elicited to throw any fresh light on the catastrophe. Mr. George Williams, the engine-driver, who has been on the road ever since it was opened, was the next witness, and detailed what took place as to the stopping of the train when the conductor came up to tell him the car was on fire. Immediately on hearing this, he threw the air-brake on and reversed the engine, and brought the train to a stand, after running from 100 to 150 yards. He gave the same evidence as to the difficulty of using a bell-rope with oil cars, as was previously given by the conductor; but admitted that the rules required a bell-rope to be used with all passenger trains. Had the rope been brought to him, he would have fastened it, but it was the brakeman's duty to bring it to him. He was not aware of anything being wrong with the train till informed by the conductor, both himself and his fireman being on the look-out for signals at Komoka.

Mr. Muir, the Superintendent, was also examined, and read a number of the rules of the company, among them several which made it imperative for the engine-man not to start till a bell-rope was fastened to his engine-gong. He never knew of passenger trains being run without a bell-rope; and did not think there was any difficulty in working a rope on such a train as that in question.

Wm. McGregor, oil trimmer at the Sarina station, was examined as to the care of the lamps, and the quality of oil used. His duty is to see that the cars are all right before starting, and to trim and fill the lamps in the cars. He always saw that they were all right after cleaning them; he cleaned the lamps on the train which met with the accident; they were in a perfectly good condition, and the holders safe. He was also examined as to the quality of the oil used in the lamps, which he considered perfectly safe.

The Inquest was further adjourned until Mon.

Fire. A little after midnight, on the night of Wednesday last, our citizens were aroused from their slumbers by the clang of the fire bell, and the cry of "fire;" and on getting up to ascertain in what locality the fire fiend had fixed his quarters, it was found he had done so in the moulding shop of Blackie's foundry and machine shop, at present leased to Messrs. O. Jenks & Co.; and from the fact that no fire had been used in that part of the works for about three months, and moreover, that it was first discovered in a shed at the rear of the moulding shop, not connected with any other part of the foundry, there can be no doubt that the fire was the result of incendiarism. The fire was confined to this shed, and was just beginning to take hold of the roof of the moulding shop when those who first observed it arrived at the spot. The steam engine arrived soon after, and had the apparatus been in proper trim, the fire would in all probability have been extinguished before doing much damage. In the first place, the hose was attached to one of the plugs near the corner of the market, which are connected with the iron pipes laid from the river along the north side of Lochiel St.; but from some obstruction in the pipe, or the opening at the river being stopped up, it was soon discovered that no water was to be procured from that source. The hose had consequently to be extended to the river, and no sooner was a connection made in this way that the hose burst, so that the engine was practically useless in subduing the fire. Fortunately, however, a small hand engine, belonging to Mr. King, was in the foundry, and there being a good supply of water in one of the tanks connected with the foundry, it was got into play, and by its means, aided by Mr. Glynn, with one of his Babcock engines, the fire was confined to the moulding shop, otherwise it must have inevitably communicated with the engine-room, and from thence to the machine shop, and the whole would have been destroyed. As it is, however, the loss is very heavy, for not only is the moulding shop unroofed and generally wrecked, but all the "core-boxes" connected with the foundry—the accumulations of over a quarter of a century—are entirely destroyed, and nearly all the moulding-boxes as well, with a good many patterns, the loss of the "core-boxes" being estimated at between two and three thousand dollars; a loss which cannot be easily replaced, as no casting of any account can be done without them. And what makes the loss the more annoying is, they could all have been saved had the fire-apparatus been in proper working order. The buildings are partially insured, probably to the extent of four or five hundred dollars on that portion of them, which is burned; but that will go but a very little way in repairing the damage done. It was fortunate, however, that by means of the other appliances above referred to, the fire was kept from getting hold of the engine-room and machine-shop, as the loss would have been very much greater. The "Babcock" engine did good service in this way; and being the first time our citizens have had an opportunity of witnessing its effects, its operation was watched with considerable interest, the conclusion arrived at being, that in situations it can reach, and where it can be properly applied, its power of extinguishing fire is really wonderful. As an evidence of the confidence of those who saw what it effected in this instance, Mr. Glynn, the agent, has already secured an order for one of the machines from Mr. Blackie, the proprietor of the foundry, for the protection of his dwelling house; and from the favorable expression of opinion on the part of others, he feels satisfied other orders will follow as fast as he is able to fill them.

St. Patrick's Concert!—The Sons of St. Patrick propose celebrating the anniversary of Ireland's patron Saint this year, by a grand Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music, in the Court-house, and have secured some of the best musical talent at home and from abroad, for the purpose of giving the affair proper eclat. While the Concert may be regarded as a national affair, one which will possess greater claims and afford greater attractions to the sons of the Emerald Isle than to those of other portions of the Queen's Dominions; they hope to be honored with the presence of many of those connected with the Sister Societies of St. George and St. Andrew, the Committee having resolved to receive them.

Sarina  
Observer  
March 13  
1874

Komoka



### The Railway Disaster.

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The Inquest was further adjourned until Monday for the purpose of hearing

**ST. PATRICK'S CONCERT!**—The Sons of St. Patrick propose celebrating the anniversary of Ireland's patron Saint this year, by a grand Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music, in the Court-house, and have secured some of the best musical talent at home and from abroad, for the purpose of giving the affair proper éclat. While the Concert may be regarded as a national affair, one which will possess greater claims and afford greater attractions to the sons of the Emerald Isle than to those of other portions of the Queen's Dominions, they hope to be honored with the presence of many of those connected with the Sister Societies of St. George and St. Andrew; the Committee having resolved to spare no pains to make the Entertainment worthy of the patronage of all classes.



gh speed at which the train was going them as with a powerful bellows. The closet was shut and an effort by the engine driver to stop the train by the bell-ropes, this being done both by the Conductor and Mr. Moneroff, of Petrolia. This, the final resource in such cases, however, was useless, for the reason that the bell-ropes only extended to the oil tank car, and did not communicate with the engine-driver, except by running along the oil cars to the tender. The Conductor becoming aware of the state of affairs at once instructed a brakeman, named Burke, to pass along and alarm the fire, and get him to stop the train. Burke, however, after reaching the oil cars, durst not venture across them, being afraid he would lose his footing and fall between them, and he returned to the Conductor and told him so. In the meantime an effort had been made to disconnect the passenger car from the rest of the train. It was found impossible to take out the coupling-pin. On Mr. Mitchell becoming aware that the brakeman had failed to communicate with the engine-driver, he at once, at a good deal of personal risk, clambered along the train till he reached the tender, and called out to the engineer to stop, as the last-laid car was on fire. The train was at once stopped by shutting off steam and applying the air-brake, and the conductor and engineer went back to render assistance to the passengers there. Meanwhile a terrible scene was going on in the passenger car. The effort made to smother the flames in the closet proving unsuccessful, the door of the closet was shut, but in an incredibly short space of time the fire burst through the walls of the closet, and got ingress into the body of the car, and as all eyes were forward to the smoking car was cut off, the passengers were gradually forced back to the rear of the car. Those who got out first, held on to the ceiling with desperation, afraid to throw themselves off, at the risk of getting their necks or their limbs broken by being thrown violently on the ground from the fast-flying train. Faster and faster those behind crowded forward, till those who first got out were forced to let go their hold, and to drop off, to be followed by others in the same way. Several of those still in the inside of the car, raised or broke some of the windows, and made their exit in this way, some dropping at once, risking the consequences, in preference to remaining in the car to be roasted alive; others after getting out, holding on by the window sills till their fingers were scorched, and they were obliged to drop after all. By the time the train was brought to a stand still, the whole car was literally a sheet of flames, and sad to relate, of the ill-fated passengers, at least seven or probably more, had been in the first place suffocated by the smoke and flame, and in the second place roasted till their bodies, partly for some of the clothing, or some articles of jewelry on their persons, could not be identified. Of those who escaped nearly all received injuries more or less severe. Many were severely hurt by coming in contact with the hard road-bed, or rails, when they jumped or were forced to let go their hold of the iron railing; while some were severely burned about the face and head, before they got an opportunity to take the alternative of jumping at the risk of their lives, or remaining on board the car to suffer a worse death. The rapid progress of the conflagration may be judged from the fact, that from the time the fire was first discovered, till the train was stopped, during which the distance run is variously estimated at from three-fourths of a mile, to two miles, the whole upper portion of the car was burned, and nothing remained of it but the trucks. Now supposing the distance run to have been two miles, (and this is the farthest estimate we have seen given), at the rate at which the train was running, that could not have occupied more than four or five minutes; a very short time indeed for the burning of the whole upper works of a car; while if the Conductor's estimate of the distance run is taken, viz., three-fourths of a mile, the time could not have exceeded one and a half or two minutes.

Whatever the time, however, it was sufficient to cause the death of at least seven human beings, on the spot; one has since died of the injuries received; and in all probability others may yet succumb to their injuries. As soon as possible after the train was brought to a stand, the remains were carefully gathered up, deposited in a common, undistinguishable heap, on a platform of boards, and borne to Komoka, some two miles and a half distant. These remains, which lay in a heap in the baggage room of Komoka station on Sunday, were collated in the evening, and were supposed to represent the following persons:

John McKellar, School Teacher, Strathroy, who had been in a very low and critical condition up to yesterday morning, had begun to rally, and that his medical attendants had become more hopeful of his recovery. Another of the injured persons at Komoka was J. H. Hay, who had been in a very low and critical condition up to yesterday morning, had begun to rally, and that his medical attendants had become more hopeful of his recovery. Another of the injured persons at Komoka was J. H. Hay, who had been in a very low and critical condition up to yesterday morning, had begun to rally, and that his medical attendants had become more hopeful of his recovery.

were 10 or 20 passengers aboard. Heard some one say a drunken man had been in the water closet.

Reuben E. Hooper, of Woodstock, heard the breaking of glass in the closet and first thought it was one of the windows broken on the outside. Saw someone opening the door and doing something for a short time, and once or twice rose to see what was going on. In this time saw the light was brighter than it should be and prepared for danger. When the conductor came forward he said there was nothing wrong, but when he shut the closet door and went out by the front end, all got into confusion at once, and the passengers began to crowd toward the rear, and I was crowded out with the rest. I tried to get down the steps on the south side. It was full of people hanging on for life. I did what I could to push the people off the steps, but found it quite impossible. They clung so hard to the rails, being at the door I was getting suffocated with the smoke and flames. I fell down and got one leg between the brake rod and centre one and was pinned there until the fire removed those who were pressing upon me. The noise of people passing for breath was terrible. Some were groaning on the track, and others shrieking as they fell off. Very few fell off the steps, mostly all from the end of the platform. The people on the top were very foolish. The flame and smoke were coming out so strong from the door that a person could not fasten from behind it. So as soon as I could disentangle my leg I threw myself from the car. People were lying on a very hard, and I tried to pick them up as best I could. I then went on to the burning car, and moved all off the track that could not help themselves. Only one man was saved after the car was stopped. His name I heard to be Brethrick. I assisted to carry him to the second-class car. He did not complain of any pain, but asked for his daughter or child. I was sitting about midway in the car on the north side. The car was very full, and I don't think there were more than four or five seats with one person on them. I think from the time of the panic until the car stopped we ran about two miles, and I imagine we ran three miles after the glass fell. I was perfectly cool, and knew everything that was going on around me.

Thomas Harton, brakeman, was next examined, but his evidence did not supply anything additional to that given by the others; he thought the train running about 15 miles an hour; from two to four minutes might have elapsed from the time the crash was heard until the train was stopped.

Wm. Burke, brakeman, described his efforts to get to the engine, when told by the conductor to go to him and get the train stopped, and his failure to do so. Was afterwards sent back by Mitchell to prevent the Windsor train from running into them, and to see there were no dead bodies on the track; did stop the Windsor train, and came back with it to the burning car, and assisted those who were hurt; when he was sent back to signal the Windsor train the car was burned to the trucks. He was examined at some length as to the bell rope, his evidence going to show that while the rope is always left on the first, second, and baggage car, it is rarely passed from the last to the engine, when oil cars were on the train.

The Inquest lasted till 7.35, p. m., and was then adjourned till Monday next, in order that some of the injured passengers may be examined.

From the above, it will be seen that the cause of the accident, in the first place, was the falling or explosion of the lamp; and it is the first accident we recollect hearing of from such a cause. But it must be tolerably evident to all who read the sad history, that there would have been little, or rather no loss of life, had the train been promptly stopped as soon as the fire was discovered, which it could, and no doubt would have been, had the bell rope communicated with the engine. In that case there would have been ample time for all to get off the car, as it would not have burned with anything like the rapidity after being stopped, as it did while rushing through the air at over twenty miles an hour. The circumstances would therefore seem to require that henceforth oil cars shall not be conveyed at all on passenger trains, or that means will be supplied thereon which will permit a bell rope to be stretched across them to the engine, and that no train shall be allowed to run on any railway without such a safeguard.

Latest.—The latest intelligence from Komoka in reference to the sufferers was, that Mr. Hay, who had been in a very low and critical condition up to yesterday morning, had begun to rally, and that his medical attendants had become more hopeful of his recovery. Another of the injured persons at Komoka was J. H. Hay, who had been in a very low and critical condition up to yesterday morning, had begun to rally, and that his medical attendants had become more hopeful of his recovery.

KOMOKA  
1874  
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