

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS NEAR MIRFIELD.

DRIVER AND FIREMAN KILLED.

As was briefly reported in our issue of yesterday, accidents, which caused the loss of two lives and great damage to rolling stock, occurred at a late hour on Thursday night on the London and North-Western Railway about a quarter of a mile from Mirfield station. At that point the Lancashire and Yorkshire and London and North-Western lines run side by side, and there is a loop line, which is used for shunting. A goods train, starting from Manchester for Leeds at 2.53 p.m., ran on to the loop line about twenty-five minutes to twelve, in order to allow a fast goods train from Liverpool to Leeds to pass. The signalman signalled the Liverpool train, and it is thought, from what afterwards occurred, that the driver of the train on the loop line took this as a signal for him to proceed. He did so. The points, of course, were not set for his train to pass on to the main line, and the engine consequently dashed into the buffer-stop at the end of the siding. Smashing it to matchwood, the engine fell over an embankment into the field below, a distance of 27 feet, taking with it a number of the trucks, and part of the parapet of a bridge which spans a road running under the railway at this point. Only about half a dozen trucks were left on the metals, and these rebounding, left the rails, and went on to the down main line, blocking it completely. The guard of the train, Ed. Fielding, Hyde-road, Manchester, seeing that something was wrong, jumped off the train before the crash came, and ran back to stop the fast Liverpool train, which he heard approaching. Waving his red lamp, he managed to indicate to the drivers of the two engines drawing it that there was danger ahead. He also shouted to them to jump off, and they, having done their best to pull up, did so. It was well that they did, for the foremost engine dashed into the trucks which had rebounded on to the line. This did not stop it; it broke loose from the train, and after going some thirty yards farther, tearing up the line as it went, fell on its side on the edge of the embankment. The second engine "buckled," and some of the trucks behind it were thrown on to the up line. One of the men, jumping from his engine, went over the embankment, through the hedge at the bottom, and into the field below. Fortunately, he was not much hurt.

This was the state of things when another fast goods train, leaving Leeds at 10.45, came in view. Fortunately, the driver perceived the danger in time, and shut off steam. This, no doubt, prevented another terrible smash. When the engine of this Leeds train reached the trucks on the line its speed had been considerably reduced, and it was little the worse for the inevitable collision, but some of the waggons behind it were thrown off the rails.

In the meantime the men in charge of the Liverpool train had gone down the embankment to see if they could find the driver and stoker of the Manchester train. They found the fallen engine broken in two, and on the top of it, piled as high as a cottage house, were some twelve trucks. The rescue party soon found the driver, William Glover, Longsight, Manchester, and although he was very seriously injured, he could speak. He told his mates that when he saw the signal, which he thought was for him to proceed, he and his stoker were engaged in putting a new glass into the steam gauge, and that they did not perceive their danger till too late. The last words that the poor fellow uttered before he died were, "How's my mate?" The breakdown gang, which arrived soon afterwards, had to work till about eleven o'clock yesterday before they found the stoker, who was terribly mangled. Part of his head was cut off, and an arm was missing. His remains were removed to the Black Bull Hotel.

Many of the trucks are in a wrecked condition, and the engine, lying one half in the field and the other half at the bottom of the embankment, will need considerable repair, if, indeed, it is considered worthy of what will almost amount to reconstruction. The breakdown gang had many hours of hard work before they succeeded in clearing the lines, and making them fit for a resumption of the traffic.

The deceased driver Glover, who was only 28 years of age, was a stoker up to the beginning of this year, and had not travelled much between Leeds and Manchester. The stoker had not been identified up to last evening, but it is believed that his name is White, and that he lived at Longsight.