

361. Do you consider you know all about the machinery of an engine?—I think I do. Of course there are parts I do not know the names of, but the working of the engine and the like of that I understand.

WILLIAM CLIMPSON, Railway Guard, sworn and examined.

362. *Mr. Pendleton.*] You were guard of the second excursion train to Ashburton on the 11th March?—Yes.

363. And in the usual way ought to have accompanied the train back?—Yes.

364. How did it come about that so important a man as the guard of a train was left behind?—After I got the signal from the Stationmaster I gave the driver the signal to start. I had to go down to the north end of the platform to give the driver "Right."

365. How far from the engine were you?—About five or six carriage lengths. After I had given the driver "Right," I made my way back to the van to get on to that, and in trying to keep the passengers and people back I could not get up. There was a big crowd of passengers, and the platforms of the carriages were crowded.

366. Did you leave any passengers behind?—No.

367. Why were those people crowding the steps?—Just to wish their friends good-bye. I got blocked by keeping these people back, and was unable to get on to the van. I tried to get on to one of the carriages, but I saw that I should have to knock some of the people down or knock myself down, and when I got back to the van it was worse.

368. I suppose you could have gone from one carriage to another?—Yes, if I had got on to a carriage.

369. You say you were standing about the fifth or sixth carriage: could you not have got on the seventh and worked towards the van?—Yes, I tried; but I wanted to get to my mate.

370. How long have you been a guard?—Nine or ten years.

371. Working on this line?—Yes.

372. And is it your usual practice, when you give the driver the starting-signal, to travel back to your van?—Yes. We start to collect tickets from the van. There is usually no difficulty in getting on the train, but there was such a crowd of people on this occasion. I was trying to make my way back to the van.

373. Did you report at once to the Stationmaster?—Yes; he was there.

374. And you saw?—Yes.

375. Had the train gone any distance when you told the Stationmaster you were left behind?—Yes.

376. Had you a signal in your hand?—Yes, a hand-lamp.

377. Was it getting dark at 6.5 on the 11th March?—It was getting dusk, being such a wet night. I ran for the van, and found I could not get on. I was running all the time. I gave the signal to the driver to stop, and in running to catch the van over the rails I slipped and got the lamp knocked out of my hand.

378. Do you think you showed the lamp in such a way, before it was knocked out of your hand, that the driver ought to have seen it?—Yes.

379. *Dr. Giles.*] That would be a signal to stop if they saw your lamp?—Yes. I took the lamp with me, although it was not sufficiently dark for it.

JOSEPH JOHN BURROUGHS, Porter at Christchurch, sworn and examined.

380. *Mr. Pendleton.*] Did you act as assistant to Climpson on the 11th March in running the second excursion train?—Yes.

381. From Christchurch to Ashburton?—Yes.

382. Did you join the train on the return journey from Ashburton?—Yes.

383. Where did you get on board the train?—On the carriage next to the engine.

384. How soon were you aware that the guard was left behind?—The only time I have got was when I had collected the tickets from the passengers in four coaches.

385. How did you learn that the guard had not been on board?—From one or two of the passengers—young people.

386. Were you looking out of one of the windows when you left Ashburton?—I was holding on to one of the irons.

387. Did you see Climpson trying to join the train?—No, because as soon as the train started to move I could not see. It was a bit of a curve.

388. Did you look out afterwards?—Yes.

389. Did you see any signal shown by any one running after the train?—No.

390. When you found the guard had been left behind, what was your action?—I started to make my way back to the van.

391. Did you get there?—Yes.

392. And then?—I did not take any action to stop the train, or anything of that sort.

393. Had you any notion where you were? Had you got through Chertsey?—No, we had not got to Chertsey.

394. Did you notice anything when you went through Chertsey?—Yes; the Stationmaster, with a green light showing.

395. You saw him do that?—I saw him from the end of the van.

396. *Dr. Giles.*] That meant "Go on"?—That is an "All-right" signal.

397. *Mr. Pendleton.*] Have you often run as assistant to the guard?—Yes; several times.

398. On that road?—Yes.

399. Can you form any idea as to the pace or speed?—No; my experience has not been sufficient to tell me any mileage.