

train, which is late, stops his train for orders, and the conductor hurries into the telegraph office, signs for the order, and takes it to the engineer, and says, "Billy, we meet No. 1 at the Summit," the engineer reads the order as Somerset, and away they go at a fifty mile an hour clip, they meet the other passenger train and the result is a head-on collision. This happened just before the holidays when a large number of young people were travelling from the state colleges and universities to their homes to spend Christmas, the misunderstanding resulted in the loss of forty lives.

Now I want to know if there is any way in which the telephone system would prevent an occurrence of this kind. Would it not be better, seeing that any man can use the telephone, if, after the operator has written the message down, the conductor, who would be waiting to receive the order, repeated the message to the train despatcher, and thus check the operator.

Mr. Fairlie,—

The telegraph superintendents of the United States and Canada have adopted a standard for the sending of messages for train despatching by telephone, whereby all numbers and names must be spelt after the number or name has been pronounced, for instance, take the following message—"Train number 98—n-i-n-e e-i-g-h-t will meet train number 27 t-w-o s-e-v-e-n at Somerset 'S-o-m-e-r-s-e-t.'" The standard rules state that where two letters or numbers have a similar sound the letters or numbers just previous must be called off. For instance if the first letter in the name of the station is "D," then the despatcher says, A-B-C—"D" or supposing the first letter is "O" then he would say "L-M-N—"O," etc. In that way the person receiving the message is able to locate the letter without any difficulty.

Practice shows that no difficulties of this kind have been encountered up to the present time, and there is no record of any accident having occurred through an operator when taking a message failing to correctly receive same.

After a very short period despatchers become so proficient in spelling out the words, that, to the ordinary man listening it sounds almost like jargon. An outsider listening on the line will have to pay very close attention to be able to catch the words as they are spelled out, so adept have the operators become in this method of sending messages.

Mr. Jefferis,—

I can fully appreciate the method you have described and the time that can be saved by the telephone system, also money for the company in delays, but, I was wondering if in your