

# GENERAL NEWS

## A RAILWAY COLLISION.

LOCOMOTIVE AND CATTLE TRAIN.

FIVE PEOPLE INJURED.

MAD BULLOCKS CHARGE RAILWAY MEN.

Persons living alongside the railway line near Newmarket station had their slumbers disturbed in the early hours of Wednesday morning by the sound of a terrific impact, which was accompanied by much bellowing. The cause of the disturbance was a collision between a light engine and tender going towards Melbourne and a four-truck stock train going to Newmarket, the bellowing being the protest of a truck load of frightened bullocks. Although the mishap was not attended by any serious human injury, it was bad enough. The following were hurt by the collision or a subsequent encounter with the bullocks:—

F. HACKWELL, engine driver, bruises and shock.

T. GRIMSHAW, fireman, bruises and slight concussion.

J. JORDAN, guard, bruises and injury to hand.

C. ROGERS, engine driver, injuries to throat and neck.

G. NUTT, ganger, cut face.

At about 4.15 a.m. a DD engine and tender in charge of Rogers and Jones left the stock yards for Melbourne. It was pitch dark, and neither man noticed that they were travelling on the down track instead of the up. After passing through Newmarket station Rogers noticed a train coming towards them, and realised the situation. Calling to the fireman to hang on tight, he shut off steam and applied the brakes. The collision then occurred. The DD engine got the worst of the encounter, the back of the tender, which received the force of the impact, being badly stove in, and the huge steel chassis members twisted into all shapes. The DD was partly derailed, as was also the other engine, which sustained injury to the cylinder and a general battering. The force of the collision lifted the rear of the first truck, which contained sheep, on to the truck behind, which was full of bullocks. The latter truck was severely damaged, and the doors were forced open, so that the cattle were able to escape. The rear wheels of the sheep truck

forced open, so that the cattle were able to escape. The rear wheels of the sheep truck were completely detached from the body, and could be seen later on lying by the side of the track. The breakdown vans were sent to the spot, and the two rear trucks, which were not damaged, hauled away. Passenger traffic was considerably disorganised, and many trains had to be cut out. A service was, however, maintained by using the single track. By 12.30 p.m. both tracks were in use again.

The bursting open of the door of the cattle van was followed by a stampede of infuriated bullocks, driven temporarily mad by the shock of the collision. Railway officials who were summoned to the scene, and the train crews, were for a time in considerable danger. Mr. J. Conlan, Metropolitan Superintendent, was walking along the track with a lantern when a bullock rushed at the light. It was so dark that Mr. Conlan did not notice the animal until it was upon him. He side-stepped to save himself, and rolled down the steep embankment. His light was shattered by the bullock, which collided with a signal post and left thereon some of its flesh and hair. The animal then returned and stood peering down at the official and sending out a blast of vapor from its angry nostrils. Guard Jordan also had an exciting experience. He was charged by a vicious animal and knocked off his feet. Upon his getting up the animal charged again. The bullock made a third attempt upon him, but missed its mark, and careered madly up the line bellowing loudly. Ganger Nutt had a similar experience, from which he received injuries to his neck. Eventually stockmen from the Newmarket yards came to the assistance of the railway officials. The fence enclosing the line was opened and the bullocks persuaded to go through it. They took the road towards the city, and for a moment there was a confused sound of careering cattle and angry bellowing. Then the metal-shod hoofs of the stock horses rang through the darkness, and the stock-whips spoke again and again as if a revolver duel were in progress. The horsemen had a tough battle, but the escapers were eventually penned up at North Melbourne. One bullock was killed by the collision, and another, after crashing into the railway gates at Kensington station, had to be shot.