

SERIOUS ACCIDENT TO THE YARMOUTH STATION-MASTER

Mr. H. G. SPINKS, the well known stationmaster at Yarmouth, met with a regrettable accident on Saturday morning, which unfortunately has necessitated the amputation of his right arm at the Royal I.W. County Hospital. At about quarter to 8 Mr. SPINKS was engaged in shunting operations at the station siding and was endeavouring to apply the hand-brakes to four empty coal-trucks which had been "kicked" back into the siding, "kicking" back being the term applied to the operation of pushing trucks into a siding by a disconnected engine. After the trucks have gained sufficient momentum the engine stops and the trucks run into the siding alone. It is then that the brakes are applied by pressing a lever at the side of one of the trucks. Mr. SPINKS was no doubt standing near the metals awaiting the oncoming trucks and in his endeavour to grasp the brake lever fell either through slipping on the frosty surface of the sleepers or from some other cause. There was no one in the immediate vicinity at the time and apparently no one witnessed what actually occurred. However, it seems that SPINKS was knocked backwards, his head striking violently against a sleeper. he must have then rolled towards the metals, as the grease-box on the outside of the axle caught his right arm and badly fractures it. Pieces of the pipe which was in his mouth at the time were subsequently discovered lying by the metals, having been run over by the wheel of the truck. The unfortunate man's cries were heard by several platelayers and others who were working near and he was carried into the station and medical assistance summoned. Drs. YOUNG and THOMARSSON were soon on the scene and did all that was possible to relieve the agony of the stationmaster. The injuries to his arm were of such a serious nature, however, that they ordered his immediate removal to the County Hospital at Ryde, whither he was conveyed by the next train. Mr. SPINKS showed remarkable pluck and nerve and did not lose consciousness at any time. Besides the injuries to his arm, he had two severe wounds on the scalp, both of which had to be stitched up. On his arrival at the County Hospital the injured man was examined by the medical staff, who decided that there was no alternative but to amputate his arm at the shoulder. This was successfully accomplished and although suffering greatly from shock the patient has been making good progress.

The unfortunate occurrence aroused the deepest sympathy for Mr. and Mrs. SPINKS and the members of the family. Mr. SPINKS was only married, for the second time, a few months ago. He was formerly in the Army and served through the South African campaign. On his return from the war he entered the service of the I.W. Central Railway Company and he has gained the respect and esteem of all with whom he has been brought into contact. He was formerly stationmaster at Shide but removed to Yarmouth some four or five years ago.

Of late years he seems to have been dogged by misfortune. The death of his first wife whilst he was at Shide was a great blow to him, and since he has been at Yarmouth one of his sons had the misfortune to break his leg in the school playground. The amputation of the arm is also additionally unfortunate from the fact that his other arm has been broken twice and is partially disabled. During the week Mr. SPINKS has been making good progress, and on inquiry last Friday night we ascertained that the improvement was well maintained.
