

75. You said, since the Rakaia accident the slotted blocks in the same class of engines have been condemned?—Yes. I saw solid blocks on the engine I drove directly afterwards.

76. You said, in reply to Mr Taylor, you were not sure whether there were not some solid blocks on the engine at the time the accident occurred?—I think they had worn off, and had been replaced with slotted blocks.

77. You would not swear there were not solid blocks on your engine at the time the accident occurred?—I would not swear, for I forget; it is so long ago.

78. Do not you think, on a serious matter of that kind, and knowing it was the failure of the air-brakes to act, and the blocks, that you would have made that one of the first things you would have seen to after the accident?—It was not the blocks; it was the air-brakes that failed.

79. I understood, in reply to Mr. Taylor, you said that a slotted block in bad weather, with wet rails, had not the same power to grip?—After running with the slotted block, when you have a long run of about sixteen miles and bad weather like on that occasion, the tires on the wheels get greased and the brake has not the same effect, on account of the sand not being able to take the slush off the tires of the wheels quickly enough. Where the solid block applies to the wheel, and with the sand on, it has the effect straight away.

80. Do not you attribute some portion of the accident to the fact of these slotted blocks being on the engine?—At the time I thought that that was the cause. Later on I found out that it could not be, because, if they had gone on at all, they would have held that train quite comfortably for the distance I had allowed. I borrowed the books and went into the interior of that brake, and could see what really was the cause of it. One of these valves stuck out. It might have taken place after I left Ashburton. When I came to stop at Rakaia that brake would not go on at all, and I could not account for it.

81. You are satisfied now, after the inquiry, that the blocks had nothing to do with the accident at all?—It was because that brake would not act. I was not well up in the brake, but, having gone through the book on the interior of the brake, I found if that brake had gone on there would have been no accident.

82. The blocks had nothing to do with the accident?—No.

83. You seem to attach some blame to the department for not supplying the drivers with drawings and books of instructions with regard to these air-brakes?—Well, we should have been instructed on these brakes before we were allowed to take charge of the engines.

84. You also say these instructions are provided for the Dunedin branch?—They have a library attached to the foreman's office in Dunedin, and they have got books of all kinds there with the brakes and all in.

85. Yet you have not that in Christchurch?—No, there was not that in my time.

86. In paragraph 12 of your petition you state, "All your petitioner's little savings have been expended on his defence at the Supreme Court." Is that correct?—Well, I am over £60 in debt now and more than that, one way and another, and only for the chaps helping me, I do not know where I should have been now, for it has been a terrible expense. There are many things which I cannot account for. We did not get receipts for everything we had, and it is considerably over the amount stated.

87. And yet, according to the returns handed in to-day, there is a balance of £76 that is to be invested in trustees for the benefit of Mrs. Carter?—That money is only allowed at £1 10s. per week until it is done; they pay the rent and allow £1 10s. a week.

88. When you make this statement about all your little savings having been expended, that is misleading to say the least?—I do not think so. It is this way: my children are out of boots, and their clothes have got bad. We have bought no clothes since the accident, and all this has to be taken into consideration. I have nothing to give for boots or anything else. It will cost a good deal to get those things.

89. Your fellow employes collected £261 19s 1d?—I have never seen the amount.

90. They paid you £73?—Yes.

91. They gave Mrs. Carter £16 18s.?—I could not explain correctly what there has been given, but the receipts will show.

92. Witnesses' expenses at trial have been £24 4s. 4d. This has also been paid out of this fund?—Yes.

93. Also a lawyer's bill to Messrs. Joynt and Andrews, £70?—Yes.

94. The balance of the money, £76 7s. 2d., is in the hands of trustees?—Yes, and £10 I paid myself; that is not in.

95. The facts of the case are these: Out of your own money, since the accident occurred on the 11th March, you have paid £10?—£10 has been paid to the lawyers, and £13 has been paid to Mr. Cresswell on the place. It was over three months before I got any money at all from the chaps.

96. You were between twenty-four and twenty-five years in the Railway employment?—Yes.

97. What wages were you receiving prior to the accident?—12s. a day prior to the accident.

98. You were receiving 12s. a day for a number of years?—For about seven or eight years. Well, then, of course I have had other accidents. I got burned out four or five years ago, and lost everything I had. My children and I were out in the streets in our night-dresses.

99. Was there no insurance?—Yes, the house and the furniture were insured, but the money had to go towards building the house again. Directly after that, one of my children was ill and died, and I had a big expense over that.

100. *Mr. Taylor.*] How many hours were you on duty on that week of the accident?—Eighty-four hours and five minutes in that week.

101. *Mr. Morrison.*] You were paid overtime, I suppose?—Yes, thirteen hours and fifteen minutes on Monday, the 6th March; thirteen hours and twenty minutes on the 7th March;