

DEPARTMENTAL REPORT.

SIR,—

19th August, 1913.

With reference to the petition of Archibald Grandison and twenty-three others (No. 179, returned herewith) in respect to train arrangements at New Lynn, I have to report that recently the morning train from Henderson to Auckland overran, during a fog, the New Lynn home signal, which was standing at "Danger," and collided at that station with the morning train which was proceeding from Auckland to Henderson, resulting in a number of passengers being injured and some damage being caused to the rolling-stock.

The regulations governing the crossing of trains at all stations make ample provision for safety, and provide, among other things, that no train must pass a home signal at "Danger." The primary cause of the accident was the failure of the engine-driver of the Henderson-Auckland train to stop his train outside the home signal at New Lynn. He has admitted his responsibility, and he and the tablet-porter who was in charge of the station at the time have been dismissed. The fact of the driver committing this error does not indicate that the ordinary precautions for securing the public safety are not observed. The full facts of the case have already been ascertained and are as stated above.

I have, &c.,
T. RONAYNE,
General Manager.

The Chairman, Railways Committee, House of Representatives.

REPORT.

No. 179.—Petition of ARCH. GRANDISON and 23 Others, praying for Inquiry into the Causes of the New Lynn Railway Accident.

THAT, having heard the evidence of the petitioners, the officers of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, the officers of the New Zealand Locomotive Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Association, the officers of the Department, and other witnesses, the Committee is of opinion—

- (a.) That there was a light fog at the time of the collision.
- (b.) That the fog was not of such density as to necessitate the use of fog-signals.
- (c.) That driver Corich was guilty of an error of judgment in not slowing down early enough to avoid overrunning the "Danger" signal.
- (d.) That there is no blame attached to Porter Mortimer, who was in charge of New Lynn Station at the time of the collision.
- (e.) That the railway facilities at New Lynn are sufficient for the safe working of the traffic.

The Committee recommends—

- (i) That Porter Mortimer be exonerated.
- (ii.) That owing to his youth and his not being of ripe experience, driver Corich be reinstated in the service in a lower position for a time.

That the report, together with the minutes of the proceedings, and a copy of the evidence taken, be laid upon the table of the House and printed.

23rd October, 1913.

D. BURCK, Chairman.