

63. *Hon. Mr. Millar.*] Did you state that at the deputation to me at New Lynn I promised an island platform?—No, I did not state that you promised one. We pointed out the existing danger, and it was suggested that if the island platform came forward better facilities would be given; the public would not have to cross through the trains, and better accommodation would be given for shunting. We took it that if an island platform was put in it would not be merely a platform with a line on both sides, but that shunting accommodation and so on would be considered. At present all the shunting that has to be done has to be carried out on a bit of a loop line that is not big enough to swing a cat round. I have rung up the Traffic Inspector pointing out the congested state of affairs at the station and that goods had not been lifted, and asking for goods to be picked up. I have communicated that to the District Traffic Inspector's office time and again. Mr. Witty asked me why I had not pointed it out. I did not think of that at the time. The matter has been put before the Department more times than I have fingers and toes. We are not here to ask for things that it is utterly impossible to grant. We are here to place before you the existing conditions and to guarantee to you that the revenue of the station exceeds £15,000 yearly, and to state clearly that the quantity of goods handled at that station warrants better facilities. In view of the congested state that New Lynn Station has been in for a number of years it is marvellous there have not been more accidents.

64. *Mr. Dickson.*] You say the train has to go down a very steep down-grade—that is, the train coming in from Henderson to Auckland?—Yes.

65. What is the grade on the map—1 in 40, is it not?—[No answer].

66. You say that when the Town Board waited on Mr. Millar you asked him for an island platform and also a water-tank. Are you quite clear that you asked for the tank?—No, I did not say that we asked for a water-tank, but we pointed out the dangers existing at the water-tank when the train was going to take water; and we asked for an island platform.

67. Did you point out in writing to the Railway Department about the water-tank?—Yes, on the 4th March.

68. That was the letter to the Traffic Manager?—Yes.

69. What reply did you get?—That our correspondence from such-and-such a date had been received, and that the matter had been placed before the Department and was being looked into. Something like that.

70. Coming to the time of the collision: some of the witnesses stated that the train was on the move when the collision actually happened: can you give us any evidence on that point?—I am not in a position to say that it was on the move, but the general conversation was such.

71. You do not know?—I do not know from my own personal knowledge.

72. Do you know what the distance was between the water-tank and the train when you saw the train first?—I could point it out on the plan. The collision was a good bit this side of the bridge. [Place indicated on map.]

73. You see that mark there at the bridge, as showing where the collision occurred: from what you saw, is that correct or is it not?—I think the train collided a bit nearer the south side.

74. What distance was the end of the train from the water-tank when the accident occurred—or, rather, when you saw the train? The train was backing up to the water-tank there?—Yes.

75. How far did the train reach?—As nearly as I can say the two engines collided right here [place indicated] against this embankment; I should say 50 yards past the bridge.

76. Were any of the carriages past the tank?—Yes.

77. Do you know how many?—I could not say how many.

78. To the best of your belief this mark does not show the correct place of the collision of the engines?—When I witnessed those two engines they were about 50 yards on the north side of the bridge, and I should say the bridge is something like 250 yards from the tank.

79. You told Mr. Sykes, I think, that there were only one or two trains that people had to cross over to get into the other train?—Four trains.

80. How do the passengers get out of that train that is on the outer line to the north?—They get out of the carriage and walk along between the two trains; they go round the train.

81. The passengers out of either one train or the other, in order to get on the platform, have to cross through the other train?—Yes, it cuts both ways. The passengers going inward have to go round the outward train, and those going outward have to go round the other one.

82. *Mr. Veitch.*] Where were you when the accident happened?—I was sitting at breakfast.

83. In your home?—Yes.

84. How far is that from the scene of the accident?—My place would be about five minutes' walk distant, or less than that. I am only about three minutes from the station.

85. Do you know anything of the immediate causes leading up to the accident?—Yes. I do not know, mind you, of my own personal knowledge.

86. Do you know anything of your own knowledge?—I think that the goods-train was foul of the main line when the passenger-train was approaching.

87. What do you mean by "foul of the main line"?—It was on the main line and partly back on the back road. That is how it was when I saw it.

88. You put that down as one of the causes of the accident?—Yes, I should say that was the cause.

89. Any other cause?—No other cause that I know of. I am not in a position to say that those people were at fault for being there. The signals being overrun might be a breach of the regulation, but the obstruction on the line was the actual cause of the accident.

90. Do you know anything about weather-conditions?—Yes; I know that there was haze and that the rails were very greasy with dew. It was a foggy morning, and the rails were greasy.

91. What do you mean when you speak of going into the danger-zone?—What we have considered the danger-zone for a number of years is the point where the train goes round to