

And those are from stations of which Palmerston North is the terminal station?—What we call either the terminal or subterminal.

What would be a subterminal—what is the distinction?—A subterminal is a station where a train may have a temporary stop—that is, it may come into the station and then go out later on, after some hours. A subterminal station is where a train makes a stop before it returns to where it started from.

You say there are twenty trains coming in and twenty trains going out of Palmerston North?—Yes, that is altogether. That is the present time-table.

According to your evidence there are twenty trains a day, but your evidence does not distinguish between what are through trains, what are local trains, or trains making Palmerston North their terminal station?—I said that at Palmerston North there were twenty trains going out and twenty trains coming in exclusive of through trains.

With reference to the goods coming through and going north, they would still have to go through the new station as they do now?—Yes. We will deal with the traffic at the new station as we deal with it now.

And deal with it in exactly the same way?—No.

You are aware that a large area, especially the area round the station, owes its value to the proximity of the station?—I think so. Undoubtedly the owners of that property have reaped a very large profit from the existence of the railway-station.

Is it not a fact that the bulk of the properties have been built there since the station was put up?—I think it is possible, but I could not say from my own knowledge.

Outside that portion from Main Street to Cook Street on the northern side, the area is all residential?—Speaking generally, in Palmerston North the area between the railway and the river—that is, between the Square and Main Street West and the river—is more or less of a residential character.

As soon as you get south of the gasworks the land is absolutely vacant?—Not that I am aware of.

I mean on the northern side—the Rangitikei Street side?—There are quite a number of houses there.

Not to the south of the gasworks?—Yes.

There are three between there and south of the Boundary Road?—I would not contradict you, but I know there is quite a number.

The removal of the railway-station would be to convert that into business sites?—I cannot speak very definitely on that point, but Mr. Johnston, an experienced man, and Mr. Nash, who is the Mayor of Palmerston North, and has been there for some time, and is a land agent, said that they thought that Main Street West would continue to be an important thoroughfare.

You cannot give any idea of what the value of that land would be?—No.

You are neither a land agent nor a land-valuer?—No, but I have to do some land-valuing.

You consider there is no object in going farther south than they have gone at present?—I did not say so.

Do you think there is anything to be gained by doing that?—I think there is a lot to be lost by doing it. Do you mean, in the interests of the community or in the interests of the Railway Department?

Well, the Commission has got to consider it not merely from the interests of the Railway Department but from the interests of the public, because there is a very large expenditure of money involved?—As far as the interests of the general public are concerned, I should look upon it as disastrous.

Why?—Because it takes them farther away from their business.

You are referring to the general public in Palmerston North?—Yes.

But you are taking them farther away from their businesses than they are at present?—No, I am not.

Well, the bulk of them you are?—No.

Do you mean to tell me that if the station is at Wood Street they will not be farther away from the Square?—Farther from the Square, but the Square is not the centre of the town. Practically the centre of Palmerston North will be very little farther away than the present station.

Why should that be disastrous?—I did not say that would be disastrous.

You said it would be disastrous to take the station farther south?—Yes, than it is at present.

*Mr. Myers.*] You have said that there is a certain amount of land in the neighbourhood of the new station-site which is subject to flooding?—That is so.

Does that present any difficulty whatever to your scheme?—Not the slightest difficulty.

Is it an aspect of the matter that you have taken into full consideration?—We have.

Is it a real difficulty, or is it merely something which you can easily overcome?—It is one of the ordinary difficulties of making a railway.

Can it therefore be regarded as anything more than a mere incident in railway-construction?—That is all.

Mr. Luckie has asked you whether the Department did not acquire certain lands in 1912—I refer to the Express Company's land and the Rhodes Estate land?—Yes.

And he asked you whether that land had been used for railway purposes, and I think you said only to a slight extent?—To a slight extent only.

Supposing you had in 1912 and the years immediately following used those lands for the purpose of increasing your station accommodation, would you or would you not by now have required to do