

RETURN No. 25.

REPORT ON THE ACCIDENT ON THE RIMUTAKA INCLINE, AT THE HORSE-SHOE GULLY.

ON Saturday, the 13th September, 1880, the No. 6 South train arrived at Cross's Creek, the foot of the incline, in due course. At Cross's Creek the Fell engine was attached as usual. The train consisted of six vehicles, in the following order: Two 4-wheel composite carriages, one passenger brake-van (ordinary), the Fell engine, two covered goods vans (laden), and one incline brake (with clip-brakes). When the train was about 60 chains from the Summit, at a place where the line crosses a gully in bank, and on a 5-chain curve, a gust of wind struck it, and the two carriages and passenger-brake were instantaneously blown off the line rails and thrown down the embankment at right angles to the rails on the inside of the curve. The train was travelling at the usual speed of about five miles per hour. All the woodwork of the carriage in front was torn from the framing, and carried to the bottom of the gully. The frame turned over with the wheels in the air. The second carriage and the guard's van were blown on to their sides, and were hanging on to the engine-coupling, which was twisted and broken. So great was the strain on the one coupling-chain that was holding all the weight, that when, at a later period, this coupling-chain was cut, it parted with a loud report, and allowed the carriage and van to slide down the bank. The engine was stopped within a few yards; the incline brake was detached from the rear, and run down the incline for help. Before it returned, another gust caught the laden vans behind the engine, and turned them on their sides, breaking the engine-coupling. The formation at this spot was wide enough for the vans to lie; they, therefore, did not go down the gully. Three children were killed; one died afterwards from injuries to the skull; five adults were more or less seriously hurt, and eight more slightly. A searching official inquiry was held, followed by a Coroner's inquest. After a great deal of evidence, the verdict of the jury was that the Railway Department was in no way to blame. Considerable discussion ensued, and many suggestions were made, as to the best modes of protecting the trains, and it was finally decided by the Engineer in Charge, North Island, to erect a strong pallisade fencing about 9 feet above the rails, on the windward side of the line, in two places where the wind concentrates in the gullies, rushing down from the ranges. These effectually protect the passing trains, breaking and deflecting the wind, and will render any similar accident unlikely.

RETURN No. 26.

WELLINGTON SECTION.

STATEMENT of EXPENDITURE under Casualties and Improvements, &c., for Year ending 31st March 1881, included in Classified Expenditure.

Description.	Amount.	Description.	Amount.
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Rimutaka slips	314 6 9	Points and crossings at 19-mile siding ...	4 11 6
Damage by floods at 4½ miles	28 16 0	Lengthening platform, Upper Hutt ...	25 15 9
Removing wreckage after Rimutaka accident, and repairs to stock	275 13 1	Lowering goods-shed platform, Kaitoke ...	0 10 0
Expenses, &c., allowed to injured persons ...	430 0 0	Water supply, Kaitoke	12 15 4
Building groins, Hutt River	205 1 0	Belmont Station platform	12 4 0
Draining slips	207 3 11	Lower Hutt platform, &c.	10 7 8
Box drain at Summit	25 4 0	Removing urinal, Kaitoke	3 18 0
New box culverts	15 5 0	Lengthening platform, Petone	12 3 6
Stone protection for bridges	24 8 0	Pipitea Station alterations	3 19 8
Stone protection, Summit reservoir	8 16 9		
Protecting slopes	29 16 0	Total	£1,650 15 11