

15. On the 26th June your petitioners were advised that the Telegraph Department required that the double-trolley system should be adopted, with careful insulation, to see that none of the current should reach the rails or the earth along the route of the tramways.

16. Your petitioners humbly set forth that, if these requisitions are insisted on, the project of adopting electricity as a motive-power must be abandoned, as not only will the cost of complying with them be too great, but what is much more important, the double trolley is too complicated.

17. Your petitioners humbly submit that they have a grievance, in that, after all the trouble and expense necessary to effect the arrangements referred to, and after all the local bodies (five in number) have gone through the required formalities, and given their consents, the Telegraph Department should, at the last moment, have made the requisition in question. Four months have elapsed before the objection was mooted.

18. Your petitioners further humbly submit that the attitude of the Telegraph Department is unreasonable, and that that department should, at its own cost, insulate the wires of the Telephone Exchange, and take such other precautions as they may deem necessary for making their exchange a self-contained system.

19. Your petitioners humbly submit the following considerations in support of their contention :—

(1.) That, for the reasons set out in paragraph 3 of this petition, the requisitions are unreasonable, and are made without a due appreciation of the advantages of the single-trolley system.

(2.) That by making these requisitions the Telegraph Department is, in effect, claiming a paramount right to use the streets for telephone purposes; whereas the streets are primarily designed for pedestrian and vehicular traffic, which it is the object of the electric tramway system to promote.

(3.) That the Telephone Exchange is not a matter of general concern like the telegraph, but of local convenience only, like the tramways, and less so than the tramways as regards the number of the public benefited.

(4.) That for the tramways rents are paid to the several local bodies for the use of the streets, whereas the Telephone Exchange uses the streets without contributing in any way to the local bodies' revenues.

(5.) That the Telephone Exchange has been constructed on a principle suitable only where no other electric agent is used concurrently in the same or adjacent streets; whereas it should be, as your petitioners humbly submit, a self-contained system, and not such as to preclude local bodies from improving by electric agency the traffic of their own streets.

(6.) That, apart from the establishment of any other electric agency in the streets, the Telephone Exchange is at present defective, because not properly insulated.

(7.) That the telephone system will be appreciably improved by proper insulation apart from tramway or other electric interference, by the removal of present buzzing and cross-talk, inconvenience to telephone subscribers.

(8.) That telephone companies in other parts of the world have to insulate their exchanges at their own expense.

(9.) That the Telegraph Department are not authorised by law to discharge their electric currents into the public streets, and the present use of the streets for that purpose is unlawful.

(10.) That, if the local bodies desire to discharge such currents into the public streets, the local bodies in which the streets are vested, and not the Telegraph Department, have the paramount right to do so.

20. Your petitioners also humbly submit that under the Tramways Act the propriety of the system proposed ought to be considered on its own merits, and not with regard to what your petitioners humbly consider the side issue, of its probable effect on the Telephone Exchange.

Your petitioners, therefore, humbly pray your honourable House to take the foregoing matters into consideration, and make provision affirming that the local bodies, whose licensees your petitioners are, are entitled to the paramount right to use the streets as a field for the discharge of electric currents in connection with the use of electricity as a motive-power on tramways, and that, if the Telephone Exchange will probably be affected thereby, then the Telegraph Department should bear the expense of insulating the telephone wires and taking any other precautions requisite to prevent the exchange from being affected.

And your petitioners will ever pray, &c.,

The Common Seal of the Dunedin City and Suburban Tramways Company (Limited), was hereunto affixed, this 5th day of July, 1893, in the presence of—

(L.S.)

GEORGE FENWICK,  
HENDERSON LAW,  
JAMES HAZLETT, } Directors of the said Company.