

88. And do you believe that the fitting of the brakes and the completion of the glass fronts will give a measure of permanent satisfaction to the men operating in the Auckland service?—Yes. Last July there was only one glass front fitted, and now there are about forty, I believe.

89. You have given us several instances of men who have been damaged in the service?—Yes.

90. Is it a fact that that man who was laid up in the hospital a short while ago was suffering from an old hernia and not the result of the car trouble?—No, it is not a fact. I wrote to him about that last week, and I had a letter from him to say that it was for varicose veins that he was operated on the previous time—a totally different thing.

91. The evidence you have is an expression of opinion that you took from the patient that this trouble was caused by operating the brakes of the car?—Yes.

92. You have direct evidence of that?—Yes. I have not seen Dr. Gore Gillon; he is in Christchurch, or I would have seen him before I came down.

93. Do you think having the glass fronts impairs the efficiency of the men who have to keep a good lookout?—None whatever.

94. Are you aware of any chest-disease or nasal trouble amongst the men through constant travelling in the dust and rain?—Yes. Dr. Hugh Keith gave evidence before the Court the time before last when we went up for an award, and I think Dr. Hardy Neill is treating several men for the same thing. One man, who is an inspector, had to go away for five weeks to get clear of a cold and obstruction in the nose.

95. Would you be surprised to hear that all the cars were built for the Auckland service with the exception of the four small red cars?—Yes.

96. From the start?—Yes, I should be surprised, because as a City Councillor during my term in the Auckland Council I understood that the first cars were obsolete when sent out.

97. Have you any evidence to prove that?—No, but they are not a patch on the Christchurch and Wellington cars. I have not seen the Dunedin cars.

98. *Mr. Herdman.*] Why do you specially desire this Bill to be passed?—Because it is our only hope of an amelioration of the condition of the men, to say nothing of the safety of the travelling public.

99. But can you point to any special provision in the Bill that would be of advantage?—Yes. I understand that it gives the Minister of Public Works control over the rolling-stock of any tramway company. I understand that at present there is no power to enforce the findings of the Royal Commission, and this Bill will give it.

100. Supposing your system in Auckland were managed by the municipality, would you be satisfied with that?—No, rather not. That is what we have fought for all along, but they have parted with it, and we have no control.

101. But, supposing the control of the system up in Auckland was vested in the city, would you be content?—Without a Bill of this sort?

102. Yes?—No.

103. Then your view is that the whole of the tramway services in the country should be controlled by the Minister of Public Works?—My view is that the persons who own them should not have the power to grant licenses, because they cannot say they are fit and proper persons. It may suit them to say the opposite.

104. You say you would object to the municipality controlling the system, that being your objection; so I take it that the only power you would be satisfied with would be the Minister of Public Works or the Crown?—Yes, I think they should exercise supervision over the licensing.

105. You think that our system here, for instance, and the Christchurch and Dunedin systems should not be controlled by the City Councils at all, but controlled by the Crown?—You mean State control under municipal supervision?

106. Then you will have dual control?—Municipal control under State supervision.

107. What do you mean by that?—That there should be some independent person in the shape of the Department for licensing motormen, the same as under the Inspector of Machinery who licenses engine-drivers. For instance, a motorman has an accident, and it may be that damage is done or life lost. With a company or even with the Corporation the first thing it does is to divest itself of as much responsibility in the matter as it can, and as a rule the man suffers. If it is a case of the equipment and the man, the man goes under every time. That is my experience and the experience of the men also.

108. In effect, you say that a Municipal Corporation is not capable of managing a tramway system?—No, I do not say that. I say that there should be some referee or umpire, or some supervision.

109. You cannot define that supervision?—I have defined it. It is defined in the Bill. If a tramway were giving satisfaction I do not suppose the Department would interfere; it would not be mad enough to interfere.

110. But surely your City Councils are quite able to manage a tramway system just as they manage any other system put in their charge?—I would not risk it with them. Kissing goes by favour as it did in the old days, and it is so in the City Council too.

111. Do you speak from experience?—Yes. I had a term as a City Councillor, and I know the wire-pulling for appointments.

112. I understand your principal complaint is about the brakes and the brakes only?—That is so. It is not a case of the whole Bill or nothing: we want the brakes first, and we must have that.

113. I gathered from what you said before that if you got the brakes plus the glass fronts you would be content?—No; that it would relieve the tension in the Auckland service.