

114. It would put the employees in the tramway service on friendly terms with the employers?—Yes. They have spoken of these other matters, but it all pales into insignificance as compared with the brakes.

115. Do you think, if you got your brake system improved, and your glass fronts, that so far as the public are concerned in Auckland they would be satisfactorily protected—we are chiefly interested in the public?—Yes, I think they would.

116. *Mr. Glover.*] You have had some little experience in Municipal Corporation matters?—Yes.

117. Do you think the deed of delegation is complied with in Auckland so far as the tramway is concerned?—No, it has not been. The halfpenny fares in Queen Street is one instance.

118. You and I having so many years in the Municipal Corporation, did you not raise your protest against parting with the tramways in the first instance?—Yes.

119. In reference to the runaway that took place in Wellesley Street, do you think the cause of that car running up to the Art Gallery was through defective brakes?—Because the motorman could not gain control of his car. He tried his best.

120. You say the runaway of that car was due to defective brakes?—Yes. I know the motorman.

121. So far as the strap-hangres are concerned, what is your opinion about them?—It ought never to have been allowed. Any person paying his fare has a right to a comfortable seat.

122. You know there have been some regulations made by the Corporation whereby certain cars are to have strap-hangers?—Yes. The combination cars should not have them at all.

123. You are aware that I strongly opposed them in the Municipal Corporation?—Yes.

124. What is your opinion so far as the strap-hangers are concerned in overcrowding these cars—would not that tend to cause a greater tension on the motorman when coming down the declivities?—The conductor cannot see and cannot reach the motorman. In the event of anything happening to the front motor the motorman cannot rush to the back, and it interferes with the attention of the men.

125. When the car coming down Pitt Street some time last Christmas had an accident and ran into a cart, do you not think that was due to the time-table, the motorman being bound to keep up to his time-table and the cars running quicker in Auckland than elsewhere?—We have put the stop-watch on them, and it is the fastest service in the Dominion. There is only two minutes allowed for a margin on a journey, whereas you have five minutes here; only two minutes to swing the pole and get away again, and you get a "Please explain" if you are longer than that. One man got a "Please explain" for being six minutes late on the Grey Lynn line.

126. If the people of Auckland were cognisant of the fact that in coming down the grades the brakes may be ineffective, do you think the public of Auckland would travel so much in the tram-cars as they do at the present time, if they only knew what risks they were running?—I am sure they would not. It is a case of "where ignorance is bliss."

127. You are thoroughly satisfied upon this question: that where the public of Auckland travel much more than they do in any other portion of the Dominion on the trams—that if they were conscious of the fact that they were running the risks, they would not travel so much?—Yes. There were twenty-two million passengers carried last year.

128. Do you think, if they were to get effective brakes—say, the air brakes—that that would fill the bill so far as the cars are concerned, and would obviate all that difficulty?—It would obviate a good deal of it.

129. Is it not a fact that during the last six months, when that Commission was set up—was it not a fact that the motormen did not require to take upon themselves the responsibility of the position not to jeopardize human lives, and that is the reason the people went on strike?—I do not understand you.

130. The people went out on strike at that time?—Yes.

131. Because of the defective brakes, and one of the reasons being that they thought that they were going to safeguard the public interests by going out on strike?—The primary reason was the discharge of one man, but that has not assisted matters.

132. You consider that if there were proper and effective brakes, in accordance with what the motormen consider to be right, that would relieve a great deal of the tension that exists?—Yes.

133. *Mr. Lang.*] Can you say how many fatal or serious accidents have been proved to have been caused by defective brakes?—No.

134. You do not know how many have been directly caused?—Only in my own mind I am satisfied.

135. Can you give any idea of the proportion?—One was the case of Ben Paul, but I would not say it was absolutely proved to be the fault of the brakes; but there is always a rider to one of those verdicts, and it unmistakably showed that in that case the air-brakes would have prevented it. I am sure the air brake would have prevented Paul being killed. I wired to the tramway unions of Dunedin and Christchurch asking them to support us in this matter. Wellington has a deputation here now and is supporting us, and I received the following telegram from Dunedin: "Union approves Tramways Bill. Have wired local members of Parliament urging them to support same.—HAYMES, Secretary."

136. *Mr. Poole.*] In connection with the removal of the switch-boys at the foot of Wellesley Street, did the restoration of those boys to their positions take place on account of the newspaper correspondence or the deputation to Mr. Walklate making representations in connection with the unreliability of the brakes?—Both, I think—the correspondence as well.

137. Did you mention the unreliable nature of the brakes on that occasion?—Yes. Before that they had a straight run up the hill in case of emergency.