

138. *Hon. Mr. R. McKenzie.*] If either the pneumatic or magnetic brakes were installed on the Auckland service, do you think all the motormen would have more confidence in their own lives and the lives of the public than they have at present?—Yes.

139. That is the reason you think they are anxious to get the better system of brakes?—Anything better than we have got.

140. You made some reference to the report-sheets?—Yes, the car-defect book.

141. What was the object in substituting the sheets for the book?—The object, we take it, was to prevent the men from searching up to find the character of a car. Cars are like people, they have good and bad characters. It prevented the searching-up of the character of a car to see what was the condition of the brakes. I had the result of a month's booking-up by two men who ran one car, and I think there were fifteen or sixteen bookings-up by those two men, and sheets were then put in the place of the book. There are now single sheets.

142. Do you think every motorman and every conductor in this Dominion wants this Bill?—Yes, I do.

143. You reckon that every one of them think every tramway system should be run under Government supervision?—Yes, I think so.

144. Do you see any reason to object to the tramways being run under Government supervision?—No. I do not think any Department would be so foolish as to interfere with any system that was well run.

145. The Government have the same supervision in regard to railways and steamers carrying passengers?—Yes, in regard to life-belts and passengers and so forth.

146. *Mr. Glover.*] After the final decision of the Commission sixteen months ago, if the company had acquiesced in the findings of that Commission, do you think there would be any need for this particular Bill being introduced?—We should not have come down and forced matters.

147. *Hon. Mr. R. McKenzie.*] If this Bill had been on the statute-book at the time the Commission reported, do you think the Minister would have allowed the Auckland Tramway Company nine months to put the brakes on the cars?—He would have allowed a reasonable time.

148. He would then have had the necessary power?—Yes. I was surprised there was no power to force them.

149. *Mr. Myers.*] The present brakes require a certain amount of energy to work them, do they not?—Yes, and an uncertain amount—you never know when you are going to get the pressure.

150. Well, I say a considerable amount?—Yes.

151. And may we take it that that is a factor in this question on the part of the men?—Oh, yes! a big factor.

152. The men would like, apart from any other consideration, a brake which does not entail so much labour?—So much labour and so much responsibility—the responsibility goes with it.

153. Supposing the company say that if the Department will approve they will proceed at once—that is, with reasonable despatch—to install the air brake on all their cars, that would get over the principal difficulty, and the men would be satisfied on that question?—They would be satisfied on that question, yes.

154. Now, so far as the glass fronts are concerned, the company, I think, promised that as each car came into the barn the glass fronts would be put on?—But they have not kept it. On several occasions when cars have been put in they have not had the glass fronts put on.

155. On how many occasions?—On two occasions—two that I wrote about.

156. But on forty or more occasions when the cars have gone in the glass fronts have been put on?—Yes, but they ran short of timber in a kauri-timber district, and that is one reason why they were not put on earlier.

157. You said before that there have not been many runaways recently, as the brakes have been better adjusted?—Yes, that is so.

158. I suppose it would be fair to say that things have been much more satisfactory in that particular direction since the Commission sat?—Yes, in the adjusting, but there has been no less hard work.

159. But runaways have not occurred since the Commission sat?—That is so. I cannot call to mind any.

160. You have spoken of the number of men who have been injured: with the exception of Christmas, was not all that evidence given at the Commission?—With the exception of Christmas, Fletcher, Belmont, and Miller. Those are recent cases.

161. Now, with regard to Christmas, whatever you may believe to be the fact as to the cause of the rupture, is it not a fact that Dr. Lindsay and the hospital doctor have expressed the opinion that Mr. Christmas was suffering from a hernia of long standing?—I was not aware of that.

162. I suppose if you were told that Dr. Lindsay and the hospital doctor had given such certificates you would not dispute it?—No.

163. Now, I suppose that a car might run away through the wheels skidding, may it not?—Yes.

164. Well, that would not be through defective brakes. Would not that be through the brake being put on too hard?—Yes, that would be so.

165. So that would it not be very difficult to say that any particular accident happened through a defective brake?—No, because in some cases some of those runaways have been caused by the chain-rods jamming on the under-gear.

166. But I am speaking of a case which you may think is caused by the brakes. What I am suggesting is that it is difficult to say because it might equally be caused by the brake being put on too hard?—It might be so. I do not say it is so.