

because, if the Government issued a certificate to the men when they passed the examination, our superior officer would not have power to take that certificate away from them. At the present time, if an accident occurs the fault is always thrown on the men, instead of, probably, on the equipment, to which it may be due. If it is a brake-failure, a brake-failure is never admitted, and the man is always punished for it; no matter what it is, the men have always been punished all through. The Government would have power to step in and hold an inquiry into any accident, and decide whether it was the man or the brakes.

50. There is an inquiry held now into every accident or alleged accident?—Yes.

51. Assuming that the Government had the right of passing the motormen, what safeguard would that be to the public other than they have at the present time?—I do not know that it would make any difference so far as our service is concerned here in Wellington.

52. Is it not more in the interests of the public to have an inspection made by competent officers who are alive to all the requirements of the service and the examination that the motormen have to pass?—It is quite within the power of the Government to get a man to do that as well as the Corporation.

53. You said that a certificate from the Wellington Corporation would not be allowed to be used on the Dunedin tramways?—Yes.

54. But why would the Government be able to do that?—Because it would be a universal examination.

55. But why would a Government examination better qualify you?—If it was an examination for the whole of New Zealand it would enable the men to go to any other system.

56. There are peculiarities in all tramway systems?—There are slight differences.

57. Take the examination of the Wellington tramway motormen as carried on in Wellington: if a motorman works on the trams here for two or three years and then goes to Dunedin, he would still have to go through some examination?—I do not think so. I think he could drive the same cars there.

58. Why could there not be an interchange of recognition with the certificates the same as for plumbers?—At the present time that matter is being considered, and it is coming up at our conference in February.

59. If there was an interchange of those certificates, would not that meet the position?—Well, I really could not say myself. The matter will be fully considered at our next conference.

60. What is the objection to the loose-leaf business?—It means that there is a loose leaf instead of a repair-book. If I go in to-night and book a car up that is wrong, the next morning that leaf is taken away. I might get the same car the following day, and I shall have to book her up the same, and we have nothing to refer back to. There is nothing to prove that that car has been defective for any length of time.

61. But should not each day's work stand for itself?—No, the car might get gradually worse and worse, and then all of a sudden there would be a failure: then the fault is thrown on the man, and you have nothing to refer back to.

62. Are not the cars examined every night so far as the brakes are concerned?—So far as we know, they are.

63. Is it not the intention of the department that the brakes should be examined every night?—I believe so.

64. Are you of opinion that the magnetic brake in Wellington is efficient for the work required?—It is as efficient as any brake that can be obtained at the present time.

65. Assuming that the City Council decided to equip the trams with the air brake in addition to the magnetic brake, do you not think the multiplicity of brakes would be rather against efficiency than otherwise?—No; the air brake works independent of the motors altogether.

66. You remember the car that was tested on the Brooklyn line after the accident—one of the big cars loaded with pig iron?—Yes.

67. And the brake was applied to see how far the car would travel before being pulled up. Do you remember anything about that?—No, I cannot say that I know the particular car. I know that at one time when a new car was built we always tested it over Brooklyn.

68. Well, take the test that was carried out on the Brooklyn grade: the car, together with the load, totalled 20 tons, and that car was pulled up on the Brooklyn grade in 50 ft. Would you not consider that a sufficient brake?—Yes, at the time it acted like that, but there is always the chance of a brake going wrong.

69. But is there not a chance of every brake going wrong?—Yes.

70. *Mr. G. M. Thomson.* In the case of a motorman coming from Dunedin or Christchurch with a good certificate, would it not be eligible here?—At the present time, no.

71. Why?—Because he has to be a conductor for twelve months before he can be a motorman.

72. That is the rule of the Wellington Corporation?—Yes.

73. The motormen here are cut off altogether from the passengers?—Yes.

74. So that it would not matter to the motorman whether the car was overcrowded or not—they would not interfere with the safe driving of the car?—On some cars. On the combination cars the door opens, and the passengers go out at the motorman's end, and at times of heavy loading it is impossible to keep them off the platform without you throw them off—they will not get off if you ask them. On the palace cars they cannot get near the motorman to interfere at all.

75. On the Brooklyn grade can they get near the motorman at all?—No.

76. *Mr. Poole.* Is it the desire of your federation to raise the standard of efficiency amongst the motormen generally?—Yes.

77. And, seeing that that is so, do you think that a general certificate covering New Zealand would be preferable to the present state of affairs?—I believe it would be.