

of that cart. The position as far as the employees are concerned, and particularly the conductors, is that if the motorman does not happen to warn his conductor, which we do by ringing the foot-gong, that a cart is close—if we do not happen to do that and the conductor is taking his fares with his feet on the footboard, he is knocked off. We have already had two deaths due to accidents of that kind, and there have been several minor accidents. There is another matter which is of vital importance so far as tramway motormen are concerned, and that is the repair-book. We have a loose leaf, and we wish it done away with. We require for this purpose a fixed-leaf book with a column for the motorman's name, the car-defect, the examiner's or fitter's initials, and the repairs that have been effected. Now, in some instances it has happened that a car has been booked up with some defect which perhaps might be attributable to some defect in the brakes. It may not be much, but it may lead to a serious accident if neglected. A few weeks afterwards this car has been booked up, and it has not been touched as far as we know, and a few weeks afterwards a similar accident may occur under a different motorman. He does not know that that car has been booked up for a defect in the brakes some three weeks previously, and he is called upon to account for that accident. Had he the right, as we previously had a short time ago, to look up the back records in the repair-book he would be able to see that this car was booked up for defective brakes, and on pointing out this similar accident I have no doubt he would be cleared by the management. That was the position taken up by the management of the Corporation tramways previously; but we had rather a serious accident some time ago in Cuba Street, and since that time the repair-book has been altered, and, instead of having the fixed-leaf book, we have the loose-leaf. At the present time a man fills up a leaf each day, but what becomes of that leaf I do not know. Possibly it goes to the shed-foreman, and possibly it may get lost. If a car is booked up for the brakes failing and the particulars are put upon a single loose leaf, there is nothing to prevent that sheet being accidentally lost. Therefore, when another accident arises due to brake-failure, we naturally want to look up that book to see whether this particular car or some other car has been booked up with a brake-failure. While we had the fixed-leaf book we could look that up, but now that we have the loose leaf it is a simple matter for it to be lost. I would point out that the onus of responsibility is thrown on the men every time without any chance of clearing themselves. Now, in regard to overloading, that is provided for in the Bill, but the question of fast time-tables is a matter that should be taken into consideration. There is another matter of vital importance which it is necessary should be embodied in the Bill, and that is provision for an Appeal Board. The proposal of the federation for an Appeal Board is to have a representative from the employers, one from the employees, and one to be mutually agreed upon, and, failing that, one to be appointed by the Government. We consider that would be a very fair Appeal Board, and we are prepared to abide by its decisions. I would point out that in Wellington we have endeavoured always to get an independent Appeal Board apart from our employers, and it is with the utmost difficulty that we have been able to approach anything like an Appeal Board. At present our Appeal Board consists of the Tramway Committee. In the first place the Tramway Committee decides all dismissals, and it seems rather a peculiar position that you have to take your appeal before the same tribunal that decided the dismissal, and therefore it is necessary that the tramway employees should have an independent Appeal Board. The next very important item, and one which would go a long way to minimise accidents, and one which is of the utmost importance, is the platform contrivances. These we consider should be uniform. The sand-punch, foot-gong or warning-gong, the switches, and the hand-brake dog or pawl should be universal. That is absolutely necessary where a man changes cars four or five different times a day. If the cars are not uniform in their design as regards the sand-punches, brake-pawls, and switches, if an accident or emergency arises in which a man is called upon to use his sand, and on the car he previously used he put his foot to the front position to get the sand and in the next car he puts his foot to the back position, a serious accident might arise. When a man changes his car the involuntary movement would be to put his foot to the front where the sand-punch was on the car he had just been on; but it would not be there. That is the whole of the statement I wish to make.

5. *Mr. G. M. Thomson.*] Are you a motorman?—Yes.

6. In the case of the repair-book, could you not get over that difficulty if you had a carbon duplicate?—Yes, that would overcome the difficulty providing that the copy was placed in the hands of the union, and the department to keep the original. That would be a simple means of overcoming the difficulty.

7. *Mr. Luke.*] You say you prefer the old Bill that was drawn up two years ago in preference to the present one?—I should like to state that we prefer the provisions of the old Bill, but we should like to see the present Bill placed on the statute-book if we cannot get those amendments which I have brought forward. We understand fully the position of the Auckland tramwaymen, and we understand also that if they do not get this Bill through this session they are liable to have cast upon them further hardships for perhaps a further period of six or eight months. I know from the business transacted at the meetings of the federation that several men have been injured through the want of an efficient emergency brake, and on that account we are prepared to waive the proposed amendments, and allow the Bill to go through as it stands.

8. You think the present examination is too exclusive; you prefer a Dominion examination?—Yes.

9. You do not think the local authority is not sufficiently large in its sphere of operations?—No. The position is this: that if we had a Government examination, and were issued certificates, that would give us a legal standing which we do not now possess, and would also give the Government the right to hold an inquiry at any time they thought fit. If the view was taken that a motorman was to blame for an accident, you can understand the position. We have a conductor who is now serving or has just served six months' imprisonment for manslaughter. A charge