

67. Is there the extent of the variation that there is in Christchurch between the hand-brakes and air brakes?—I cannot understand that question.

68. What is the difference in the equipment of the cars you use here?—You appear to be on the wrong tack. I stated distinctly that it was necessary that the platform contrivances, such as the foot-gong, the sand-punch, and the brake-pawl, should be in uniform positions on the platforms.

69. And your reason for that is that if you get into an emergency you act almost instinctively?—That is so.

70. You have never driven one of the Auckland cars yourself, have you?—No.

71. Would you be competent to drive an Auckland car?—Yes.

72. At once?—I do not say at once, but I would after about an hour's practice on that car standing idle in the shed.

73. Would it not be necessary for you to satisfy some authority that you were able to drive that car?—Yes.

74. Would a colonial certificate be sufficient to qualify you to drive an Auckland car?—Yes.

75. On an Auckland car you would not have this instinctive habit?—The instinctive habit does not come to you on your car—it is your practice. If I had been employed as a driver in Wellington and was taken as an employee into the tram service, I say that with about an hour's practice in the car-shed I should be able to drive a car in the Auckland or any other service.

76. Do you know who gives the first decision in regard to the dismissal of a man in the Corporation here?—I do not know.

77. If I say it is the Manager, will you deny it?—No, I would not. I have just said I do not know who gives it.

78. I am instructed that it is Mr. Richardson who gives the dismissal first, and that there is an appeal from Mr. Richardson's decision to the Tramway Committee?—I can answer part of it, and that is, we have had two recent dismissals that the Tramway Committee decided.

79. Do you know what the practice is?—No, I do not know how the dismissals are decided.

80. Do you know of any man being reinstated after being heard by the Tramway Committee?—Yes, we had a conductor reinstated last week. He was dismissed for dishonest practices, I believe, and on the appeal he was reinstated.

81. In regard to the repair-book, when a car is reported defective it is supposed to be put right immediately—that night?—Yes.

82. If you get out on the road with a car you can detect whether the brakes are defective, in your opinion, can you not—if an accident happens?—Not at any particular time. I will give you an instance. With electrical equipment the slightest defect that may take place inside the car will give almost undreamt-of possibilities. Now, it is a fact that the electric brake employed here in the city is worked by means of resistances, and if that resistance becomes heated, as it does through constant use, then the power of that brake is decreased on that particular notch or notches.

83. You could at any inquiry call for all previous reports as to cars, could you not?—No.

84. Have you ever done it?—We have tried it.

85. And been refused?—Yes.

86. By whom?—I think, by Mr. Richardson, but I would not be certain on the point. I have never known a case where we have been able to produce reports that have been required. When we have a case arising from an accident we cannot get hold of information except what we have in our heads.

87. Have you ever asked for back reports to be produced to you?—Well, Mr. Chairman, I am almost certain that we have asked for those reports and they have not been produced to us, but I cannot say definitely unless we look up our previous correspondence. You must understand that we are here on memory and that we are not prepared to meet such questions as are being put now, and I cannot deal definitely with the point.

88. In regard to the Brooklyn accident, was there not a suggested brake-failure which was disproved at the inquiry?—I want to protest once more that I cannot carry that in my memory.

89. Well, the Cuba Street accident, was there a brake-failure reported there?—Yes. There was a brake-failure reported there, and it was admitted that the brakes had failed.

90. Was it reported in that instance by the Public Works Department that the brakes had failed?—We do not know. We have never received any report from the Public Works Department, and that has been a bone of contention with us.

JOSEPH JOHN WALKLATE further examined. (No. 10.)

1. *Mr. Davey.*] Regarding the loose-leaf reports that are taken away every day where the book used to exist previously, can you tell the Committee whether any request has been made by the tramway employees for the production of those sheets, and that they have been refused?—No, there has been no request.

2. *Mr. G. M. Thomson.*] Do you know whether you get those reports written up as you receive them, or simply depend upon those loose leaves?—The practice in Auckland at the present time is that each motorman when he takes a car out is given a sheet, and that sheet goes with the car for the day's work, and it is handed into the shed-foreman at night. The sheets for each particular car-number are then bound up in a sort of Shannon file, each file being practically a book of car No. So-and-so. The record of that particular car is absolutely there as a book, and, of course, is ready for production in case of accident.

3. But the men are not allowed to see them?—In the case of a fatal accident the men are able to see them.