

197 Will you look through the clauses to see if there is any inspection after that unless there is an accident?—I take it from this that there is no inspection except when the service is about to be opened. I hold that inspection is more necessary after the service is under way.

198. Do you consider that the power of inspection taken under clause 3 of this Bill is given so that the Government may inspect at any time?—Yes, that is what I understand the clause provides for in the Bill.

199. Do you think that will provide a further margin of public safety?—Yes, decidedly.

200. Coming to your merit-and-demerit system, Mr Crowley, what do you think of the system generally?—Not much, sir

201 Can you describe the effect of it in a few words?—In its administration by the officers, prejudice and favour play very big parts. For instance, supposing a motorman or conductor got five demerit marks for something, there might be another man who committed a similar offence and he would get twenty-five.

202. Could it be described as a system of bribery and corruption?—I do not know that we should put it in that way, but they might be some relation to them. I think it would be better not to describe it that way. Both men and officers have likes and dislikes.

203. Do you think you would be much better off as a service without it?—Yes; I have very little time for that system.

204. Can you keep your time-table with the speed laid down in clause 34 of the Order in Council?—Yes, but with the way in which the scheduled time-tables are carried out we cannot keep them. The mileage time is, of course, greatly exceeded.

205. I suppose you consider the management in Christchurch is not too satisfactory?—There are some things we do not like, and which we should like an improvement on.

206. Mr O'Shea got you to read what the Commissioners say on page 12 of their report: you might read again the paragraph referred to down to the word "maintained" in the fourth line?—The Commissioners have also considered the working of the existing law, and the necessity or expediency of any new legislation in respect thereto. They have found that in Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin a high standard of upkeep and efficiency of equipment is maintained.

207 There is nothing there about the management or any reference to it?—No, I do not see any reference to it.

208. Will you read the next paragraphs?—In these circumstances, the Commissioners are of opinion that if further legislation, necessitating closer inspection, be introduced, it is desirable that any inspector appointed should be an electrical engineer of high qualification and extended experience of tramway working, whose professional status should be such that his assistance would be welcomed by executive tramway engineers. The Commissioners also consider it to be desirable for the Government to take powers to be able, if necessary, to insist on any tramway system being equipped and worked with due regard to the safety and convenience of the public.

209 If the Commissioners had found everything satisfactory in Christchurch and the other places, do you think they would have said that?—I do not think it would have been necessary if they meant in the first case that everything was satisfactory

210. You think it would be contradictory?—Yes.

211 And in that paragraph you have just read the Commissioners recommend the Government to bring the various systems under closer inspection?—Yes.

212. Do you mind turning to page 3 of the report, starting at the second last paragraph, under the heading "Cars weighed"?—"In order that the mass dealt with might be accurately known, the Commissioners had decided not to accept manufacturers' weights, but to accurately weigh all cars experimented on, and on car No. 75 being placed on the scales it was found to weigh no less than 52 per cent. in excess of the previously stated weight."

213. Do you know car No. 75 in Auckland?—I do not remember the car. It is too long since I was there.

214. Read the next paragraph?—"Further, it was found that with the hardest possible application it was not possible to carry more than 26 per cent. of the weight of the loaded car upon the slippers of the track brake. The combined errors of underestimation of the weight of the cars and overestimation of the mechanical advantage of the brake-gear (the efficiency of which, according to the drawings supplied, had been taken at unity) had resulted in the cars upon the Auckland system being distinctly underbraked, and much of the trouble which has arisen in connection with the brakes was immediately accounted for. It was decided that before further trials were made the brake-leverages on car No. 75 should, as a temporary expedient, be increased to an extent which would give block-pressure more comparable with the weight of the car. This was done, and, although the full benefit which should have been derived therefrom was not, on account of the structural weakness of the gear, obtained, a vastly improved control resulted."

215 You will find on page 6 a reference to car No. 75, under the heading "Weighing of Cars": Read the second paragraph?—"At Auckland, car No. 75 was found to weigh, when empty, 36,736 lb., as against 24,080 lb., its reputed weight, an excess of 52 per cent."

216. Read on and see how you stand at Christchurch?—"At Christchurch, car No. 9 weighed, when empty, 33,992 lb., as against a reputed weight of 26,096 lb., an excess of 30 per cent."

217 Do you know car No. 9 in Christchurch?—Yes.

218. Do you think it is sufficiently braked?—I think it is up to the average there.

219 Suppose the average is bad?—The average is not too bad

220. Do you think a car braked for 26,096 lb. and which weighs 33,992 lb. is sufficiently braked?—Certainly not. The extra weight should be provided for

221 Supposing you had that car out with two trailers and with an overcrowd of 75 per cent., and had to apply your emergency brakes, do you think the car would skid?—You take an instance where there are two trailers behind that car No. 9?