

222. He was allowed to act for you?—He could not go into the details of the questions like a lawyer would have done. He said very little.

223. Did he act for you?—He did act, but did not say much. He said it was a lawyer's place and not his, and he did not care about having anything to do with it.

224. With respect to your employment, did Mr. Ronayne advise you to accept any other employment down South?—Yes, he told me at the time of the inquiry. I wrote then, and the reply was that I had left it too long, and the other man suited very well, and they had changed managers, and did not care about parting with the man they had.

225. With respect to the grease on the block, I understood you to say the grease accumulates on the outside?—On the tire; not on the metal.

226. In driving anything, that ought to make you a little more careful in pulling up?—I was prepared for it had my brake acted.

227. With respect to brakes, you say no instructions were given how to work the brakes?—No.

228. Will you describe to the Committee how they are worked? Is it very complicated?—Yes.

229. Will you explain what is necessary for you to do to put on the brake?—Just turn the brake round. It is like winding a watch up; still people do not understand the interior of a watch without it is all explained beforehand.

230. Any boy could work that brake?—To put it on.

231. Or take it off?—He would not know where a failure might take place.

232. Still you say there is nothing required, bar learning that, to be able to work the brake to a driver of ordinary intelligence?—It is like a pump-handle. You can work it easily, but if you do not know as to how the valve works you cannot tell what is going round.

233. Do you consider all drivers should know the brakes as a feature?—Every driver should know the interior of those brakes and valves. Those valves want taking out and cleaning. They get grease on them.

234. Are the brakes only cleaned by the driver?—No.

235. Anybody, unless the driver reports the brakes want cleaning?—I have never seen it.

236. How long were you working this locomotive before the accident happened?—About three months.

237. Then, it was not strange to you at all?—I did not know the interior of the brake.

238. You felt yourself quite competent to work the brake?—Yes.

239. And to this day you do not know anything about the interior of the brake?—Not much. I do not.

240. You would not consider yourself competent to take a job in dealing with a brake of this sort without posting yourself up in the matter?—If I took charge of any engine it would be quite different. I would not have any accident occur through not knowing the exact points.

241. Supposing the Manawatu Company were to offer you a job to-morrow you would feel that you were incompetent to take that job?—I am competent.

242. You understand all about the brake, and could take charge of one of them to-morrow?—I do not know what that company's brakes are.

243. You would feel you were not competent to take charge of them?—If I had a job offered me I would get books and ask.

244. If you were offered a job to go and take charge of one of those brakes would you take it?—No.

245. You would feel you were not competent to work it?—It is hardly likely that I would take it without knowing the ins and outs.

246. Then you would refuse a job if it were offered to you?—No, I would not. I would ask for instructions as to the brake first.

247. You say you were three months working that locomotive?—I could not say as to the exact time. Of course, the engine was in the shop a little over a week between that time.

248. With respect to these brake-blocks, you say the brake-blocks have not been the cause of the accident. It has been the air-portion?—No, I thought it was the brake-blocks at first.

249. Speaking of drivers generally, you said "if we acted to the rules and regulations we would have been off long ago." Will you tell us what rules and regulations are regularly kept?—The stationmasters in bad weather are supposed to sand the rails at their stations. There is a rule that has never been acted up to.

250. Well, are there any more?—Well, I could not tell without seeing the rule-book, but could explain a lot there that is not acted up to.

251. Will you be able to let us have a list of the rules and regulations that are not acted up to?—I think all you want to do is to go and take your rule-book and ride in the trains.

252. Yes, but I am not an expert. I am asking you with respect to the question before the Committee. You said rules are broken and disregarded. I want you to give the Committee a list?—We are supposed not to make up time.

253. Are there any more?—I could not say without going through the rules and regulations. I know the rules and regulations are never carried out.

254. You have been driving some twenty-three years. Can you give us any more?—Well, I cannot bring them to mind. I know it is an old saying amongst all hands, that if the rules and regulations were carried out things would be very different to what they are now.

255. Then you mentioned something about bringing round an old locomotive, and you mentioned there is some rule about reporting these locomotives when they do not do their work right: will you explain it? Then you mentioned some locomotive that you had been in charge of, in which you said the faces of the valves were bad?—Well, this engine was a spare engine, not my own