

165. *Mr. Lang.*] How many fatal accidents have there been since you have been manager of the company?—I am afraid I have not got that information.

166. I think there were thirty in six years?—Yes.

167. And what was the largest number in one year?—Somewhere about eight. The figures given to me by the Minister were four for 1907 and four during 1908.

168. About four on an average during four years?—Yes, about that.

169. Can you tell me how many accidents were through defective brakes?—I am afraid I could not admit that any were through defective brakes.

170. You do not know of any that were caused through defective brakes?—No.

171. Speaking of the number of accidents in Auckland compared with other cities, have you any idea of the percentage—that is, to the number of passengers that travel?—I have not, because I have not got the figures.

172. You do not know how it would compare with the other cities?—No.

173. Do you know how many travel in the other cities?—Not without looking up the figures.

174. In connection with any fatal accidents you are liable for damages?—Of course, that depends.

175. There was a case lately in which heavy damages were claimed?—Yes.

176. It would be to your interests to avoid damages?—Yes. It is to our interests from a pecuniary point of view to avoid all accidents, because they generally cost money.

177. *Mr. Colvin.*] How long have you had charge of this tramway?—Since about the middle of May, 1907.

178. And you say that you prefer the air brake to the magnetic brake?—Yes.

179. What is the reason?—Because, in the first place, as I have said previously, the magnetic brake is impracticable for our cars; and, secondly, if it was practicable to fit the cars, I think the magnetic brake is not reliable. There have been a number of serious accidents owing to the magnetic brake failing, and, being such a powerful brake, it is liable to give the motorman over-confidence, and when it does fail suddenly he has worse results than at other times.

180. The other experts said that they preferred the magnetic brake, and that it is more suitable?—That may be.

181. Can you say if all the cars were new, and built expressly for the Auckland tramway, when it commenced?—With the exception of four cars, I believe all were new. There were four red cars about which I might explain. When I landed in Auckland there was pretty serious trouble between the company and the City Council owing to the alleged scarcity of cars, and before I came out to Auckland I made inquiries all over the United Kingdom as to where I could get cars; and I could not get any. After I left, the company in London managed to get four cars that had just been put into use on the Metropolitan Tramway-line. They had been in use two or three months, and they shipped them out bodily.

182. You said that you carry 100,000 passengers a day?—Yes.

183. And you said you carry the whole population of Auckland every day?—Yes.

184. *Mr. Poole.*] When you arrived in Auckland did you not find things in a pretty unsatisfactory state in the tramway company?—In some respects.

185. And they are very much better now?—Well, I think so. It depends. There are so many aspects.

186. But they are admittedly better than they were?—Our relations with the employees are very much better than they were.

187. Were all the original cars new when they were put on the lines—the first cars that were imported?—So far as I am aware, they were.

188. I am asking the question because I want to discover the age of the brakes that were attached to them?—Yes.

189. What was the state of the rolling-stock, to your mind, when the Commission sat in Auckland?—I do not think there was much the matter with it. As a matter of fact, the findings of the Commission were rather to the effect that they suggested there had been neglect, but apparently that the neglect had disappeared, and that things were very much better. I do not think they made any statement that anything was defective.

190. Is it not a fact that there were contributory causes in regard to the unsatisfactory state of the cars at the time? For instance, you had not sufficient power at the power-house to carry on your system?—That had no effect on the state of the cars—it affected the running, of course. We did have trouble with the power-house.

191. The four red cars were constantly giving trouble on the Rise?—That was because they were too slow. The motors were not powerful enough. The only trouble was they were slower than the other cars.

192. But not less powerful?—No, not in proportion to their size.

193. Have you had many motormen damaged in handling the hand brake during the year?—No. I have heard of one or two cases where it has been suggested the trouble was due to the hand-brake, but I do not know of any case that is definite. There have been men injured through getting their heads bumped through leaning over the sides of the cars.

194. That would be their own fault?—Yes, through striking one of the poles.

195. But you have been aware of ruptures that have taken place in the service?—Well, I cannot call to mind any case that is definitely proved to have been caused by the brakes. Are you referring to a man named Christmas?

196. I do not know the name?—A man recently?

197. Yes?—There is a man who has within the last week or fortnight put in a claim alleging rupture due to the use of the hand-brake; but our report—of course, these matters are all dealt with by the insurance company—our report from the insurance doctor and the hospital doctor is