

175. If we had it in evidence from the Town Clerk and one of the Councillors that those demands have been acceded to in reasonable cases, would you dispute that?—No, I would not.

176. I suppose the motormen in Auckland, taking them all round, are a pretty good and efficient lot of men?—Yes, I think they are very efficient.

177. All round?—Yes.

178. So that it cannot be suggested that licenses have been issued in Auckland to incompetent men?—No, I would not say that. What I did contend was, that there were several men entitled to licenses who were not permitted to get them.

179. Not permitted by the company or the City Council?—By the company.

180. You mean to say that the company were not satisfied, or said they were not satisfied, that a particular man or men were good enough?—That is the point.

181. Do you suggest that the power should be taken out of the hands of the owners of a tramway of saying whether or not a person is efficient or competent to drive as a motorman?—Yes, if they are going to act contrary to the advice given to them by the teacher of a student. I have men repeatedly put on with me to gain knowledge of a tram-car, and I am practically the sole person in charge of that man. Once he has completed his time with me I sign his form to the effect that he has put in the prescribed number of hours with me. Well, I do not see why, when in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred they take my advice, they do not do so the hundredth time, we will say. When I give the same advice they will act contrary to it.

182. In other words, you say the motorman who has had the person under his charge is the right person to say that the man is competent?—I say so.

183. Do you mean to suggest, therefore, that the owners of a tramway should not have the right to make their own inquiries and their own investigation, and their own examination in order to test a man before he is put on as a motorman?—I do not think an officer—we will say an officer—who is just practically one grade higher should have the right to trip a man, and deliberately trap him.

184. Would you agree to this: that a man should not be certificated within the meaning of clause 2 unless he first had some sort of a certificate of competency from the owners of a tramway?—I think he should have some sort of certificate of competency—that is, he might have a reference to show he had had twelve months' service as a motorman.

185. So far as future motormen are concerned, would you agree that before a person could be entitled to a certificate he should produce a certificate of competency and training from the owners of a tramway?—I should imagine that would be the natural course.

186. If that is so, what is the use of the Government certificate at all?—The point is this: that he would have to be trained by a motorman, and I should say that a motorman would have to certify that he had been trained.

187. What you want to do, then, is to make the motorman who trained the person the judge, and not the people who employ that man?—No, I do not want to do that. That is the course which is adopted. The motorman is the judge.

188. But there is some other test?—The other test is the driving of a car. A special car is taken out, and the man is given a knowledge of the route, of the automatic switch, and of the emergency brakes. That is the only test the company give after he has left the trainer's hands.

189. Do you think a person who has been a motorman in, say, Christchurch is necessarily a competent man to be a motorman in Auckland?—Yes, I think a man who drove a car in Christchurch could drive one in Auckland.

190. And the same with regard to Wellington—the man could drive in Auckland?—Yes.

191. Do you think a person who had driven a car in Dunedin, where they have the magnetic brake, would be competent as one of your men in Auckland?—Under Auckland's conditions, yes.

192. Do you not think that there, again, the matter is one where the owners of the tramways themselves ought to decide without any supervision or interference? Have they not the right of employment?—They have the right of employment unquestionably.

193. You spoke about the time-tables: do you know that the time-tables have to be approved by the City Council?—I do.

194. Have you ever brought the question of time-tables before the City Council?—Yes. We had a deputation selected by the Tramways Union to go before the management, in the first instance, to see if some particular routes that we considered had a very fast time-table could not have the time extended. We were told by the management to refer the matter to the City Council. We took that explanation given by the management before the union, and I was one of the deputation that was sent by the union to interview the City Council relative to increasing the time on these very fast routes. But neither deputation had any good effect; we did not have any extension at all.

195. That is to say, the City Council, rightly or wrongly, took a different view from the union?—That is so.

196. With regard to the car report-books: in Auckland you have the loose sheets?—Yes.

197. And you have those loose leaves for each car?—Yes.

198. That is satisfactory, is it not?—In a sense it is satisfactory.

199. Now, if the employers have an objection to car report-books, but are prepared to adopt the Auckland system, would you not say that, if only as a matter of compromise, you would be prepared to agree to the Auckland system being adopted?—No, not the present system. While I contend the system is reasonably good, I also contend that a man should have the right, in the event of a serious accident which might involve a charge of manslaughter, to follow up the record of the car for a month before if he thinks fit.

200. Before making his own report of the accident, or after?—I think, before. My reason for that is, in all probability his report in the first instance might be at variance with the one he