

211. If Mr Alexander says he has to keep tallies over a considerable period of time, and has to carefully scrutinize the traffic all the time, and to continually watch and change the time-tables to suit the requirements of the traffic, would you consider the Minister could in Auckland, without duplicating the staff, pass regulations to meet the reasonable requirements of the traffic?—I think Mr Alexander would be trying to make the tramways pay, and would not regard the requirements of the public.

212. Do you think the ratepayers of that system are going to allow it to be run so as not to conform with the reasonable requirements of the ratepayers?—They overcrowd their cars, I am told.

213. Could the Minister meet the reasonable requirements of the traffic without going there himself or having a fitting officer there with the same experience and with the same assistance as Mr. Alexander has?—I answered Mr. Myers to the effect that the Minister and the local bodies should have the same say, and that the Minister should have the power of veto.

214. Do you think the Minister would be in a position to exercise that without having the same information, he being absorbed every day with other business?—I am unable to answer that.

215. As to overcrowding, do you think the by-laws are reasonable?—No.

216. What are the by-laws?—I am not able to quote the phraseology

217. Strap-hangers are allowed to a certain extent?—As many as fourteen are the highest on one car

218. How many is that car licensed to carry?—I think it is fifty-six, and fourteen standing

219. You consider that fourteen strap-hangers in a car licensed to carry fifty-six constitutes overcrowding?—Yes, taking into consideration the construction of the car.

220. What sort of car does that refer to?—A close car with an exit at each end. They are boxed cars.

221. And you think that with fourteen strap-hangers they are overcrowded?—Yes.

222. Have you seen a box car running in Wellington?—Yes.

223. You have seen them in rush hours?—Yes.

224. There is more overcrowding here than in Auckland?—I cannot say that, but I saw a car the other evening with about fifty people standing.

225. Do you think they ought to be allowed to carry as many in Auckland as they do in Wellington?—No.

226. If I told you that if our conditions of carrying passengers were altered in Wellington we should either have to lower the men's wages, increase the fares, or strike a rate, would you be astonished?—Yes.

227. Do you know whether our fares in Wellington are cheaper than yours in Auckland?—I could not say.

228. You do not go into the financial side except with regard to the men's wages?—Slightly

229. You are not interested in the financial matters?—Very much so. I have a banking account. I read the balance-sheet of the company, and see what they pay

230. Have you ever considered what the position of the City Council would be in the hands of the Minister, having the same views as you have?—He would not be Minister if he were the same as me.

231. Have you considered the financial effect on the tramway authorities and the men?—Yes. I hold that overcrowding does not pay, and Mr Walklate says so.

232. You did not trust Mr Walklate in connection with Neate and others?—Mr Walklate has to trust his subordinates.

233. You mean to say he is not competent to supervise his own tramway?—I did not say he was not competent. I said he agreed with me.

234. You doubt Mr. Walklate's honesty in regard to the running-sheets?—In regard to the book.

235. If it is given in evidence here that with the book there are instances in Wellington where the men frequently copy the observations of others, and mark up "OK," "OK," "OK," can you say if that happened in Auckland, or can you express an opinion?—I could not say definitely, because you would ask me to state a case; but generally they may have done so. As a rule they generally book up the car as they find it.

236. If Mr. Cable has sworn here that men have continually booked up their cars as "OK," and not put in their defects, will you agree with him?—Then I would say he does not train the motormen properly, if he thinks that.

237. If Mr Cable says our system of repairs has been immensely improved since our system of booking was altered to the single-sheet system, would you be astonished?—I would say he has altered the management of his depot.

238. And if all the managers in New Zealand attribute the improvement to the same cause?—I would say that they had talked together and arrived at that conclusion.

239. With regard to the car running to Herne Bay: You said you had sixteen minutes to run two miles and a half—that is, sixty-four minutes to run over ten miles?—That will be right.

240. Is that a fair average time-table for an electric tramway?—No.

241. It is not a fair thing?—No.

242. You say you have to go at the rate of twenty-five to forty miles an hour in order to keep up that speed?—I say from twenty to forty miles, and Mr Walklate has said that he has seen cars going at twenty-five miles an hour down College Hill.

243. Do you wish to be tied to your figures when you say, forty miles?—Yes.

244. When I tell you that in the days of the horse-trams they used to run three miles in half an hour, and stopped where the passengers wanted them to stop, do you still maintain that the electric tramways should not go so fast?—That is less than coaching speed.