

17 Do you remember giving evidence before the Select Committee that was appointed by Parliament last year to consider the Tramways Bill then before the House?—Yes.

18. Did you not then inform the Committee of what your company was and for some time had been prepared to do?—Yes.

19 Did you make it clear then that you had been for some time willing and desirous of installing the air brake?—That is so.

20. And did you explain that you had been prevented from doing so because you could not obtain the approval of the proper officers of the Department?—Yes.

21 And did you then offer again to install the air brake, and give an undertaking that you would do so as soon as you could get the approval?—Yes.

22. Did you, immediately after the sitting of that Select Committee, make an application in writing for the approval of the Department of the installation of the air brake on your system?—Yes, we did.

23. Did you get the approval?—No.

24. Instead of the approval, was not a Royal Commission set up, consisting of Professor Scott and Mr Beattie?—Yes.

25. That Commission took voluminous evidence, and made exhaustive tests?—That is so.

26. And in order to help it in its investigations I think you have gone to the expense of hundreds of pounds?—We have.

27 Now, has not that Commission reported that the proper brakes to install on the Auckland system are the brakes you have been prepared to install upon it for the last two years?—That is so.

28. After the Commission made its report were you called upon by the Under-Secretary of the Department to comply with the recommendations?—We were.

29. In accordance with that requisition did you submit plans to the Department of the brakes you proposed to install?—We did.

30. Have you been informed that, so far as the plans are concerned, the plans are all right, and that the air brake as a brake is thoroughly satisfactory?—I have been informed that the air brake is satisfactory, and that, subject to slight modifications, the plans of the slipper brake are satisfactory

31 And are you prepared to make those modifications?—Yes.

32 Have you got the absolute approval yet of the Department?—No, we have not.

33. Is it not a fact that you have made all arrangements with your head office in England so that you can cable to England so soon as you obtain the departmental approval, and that as soon as you get that approval the order will be placed?—Yes.

34. Do you consider, therefore, that for any time during the last two years your company has been in any way to blame for the delay that has taken place in the installation of those brakes?—They have not.

35. On the contrary, have not your company done everything they possibly could to meet the views of both the motormen and of the Minister?—We have.

36. It has been suggested to a number of different witnesses that your car No. 75 in Auckland weighs 36,736 lb. and is only braked up to 24,080 lb.: now, is that true?—No. The car weighs about 16 tons empty, and the brakes were put on it for that weight, but, owing to taking the manufacturers' weights and an allowance not having been made for additions, the weight was given to the Commission as 12 tons. It was a mistake in the weighing of the car, but not a question of the brakes.

37 You say that the brake is put on for the weight of the car?—The brake was put on for the car, the car weighing 16 tons, and the brake was passed by the Public Works Department as satisfactorily operating the car

38. I think I heard you give this morning rather a good illustration by way of parallel, about the 17-hands horse: would you mind giving it now?—A parallel case is that if one bought a horse and harness, and the horseman said it was 17 hands, and it was found that the horse was only 16 hands, it would be about the same as saying that the harness was not sufficient for the horse as to say that the brakes were not sufficient for the car. The mistake in the weight of the car would be the same as the height of the horse.

39 You say that the brakes were made for the car, and are sufficient?—Yes.

40. You do not suggest, although you regard the present Auckland brakes as sufficient, that the installation of the air brake will not be further advantageous?—It will mean less labour for the motorman operating the car, and quicker application of the brake.

41 I will come now to the Bill: You have carefully considered, have you not, the provisions of the present Tramway Amendment Bill?—I have.

42. I think some of the provisions you do not object to very much, while others you strongly object to?—That is so.

43 Before we deal with section 2, which is the first important question, would you mind indicating to the Committee the precautions you took, or that your company takes, and yours and the company's tests, before a man is allowed to work as a motorman on your service?—In the first place, the motormen are selected almost invariably from the ranks of the conductors. When a conductor joins the service he must first undergo a rigorous medical examination by the company's doctor. Then he is taught the routes and peculiarities of the grades and stops by going over the road in charge of a regular conductor. He has also to run for twenty-four hours with a regular motorman, during which time he is taught to drive a car, so that in case of an emergency, such as the motorman being taken suddenly ill, or an accident, he is able to drive the car to the depot so as not to block the traffic. He then goes on as a conductor, and later if he is likely to make a good motorman, he is trained as a motorman. That training consists of a further two or more weeks, according to his efficiency, of driving with a regular motorman. Then he has to pass an examination in the equipment of the car, conducted by the superintendent of