

219. Then, as a refuge in time of storm we must look to the company?—We try to be the refuge. We do not want to put the men out in the storm unjustly

220. You said you would agree to it if the manager had the power of veto?—That appears to me to come back to the present day

221. It would nullify it, would it not?—No, except that it would act as a ventilation.

222. With reference to the car report-book: do you remember the case of Lowe, who was prosecuted for furious driving?—Yes.

223. The offence happened a day before Christmas in 1907. You remember being served with a subpoena to produce a car-defect book?—Yes.

224. That book was produced, was it not?—Yes.

225. And was it shown whether the car had been booked up a number of times for being unreliable?—I could not say what the reports were, but there was no necessity for the subpoena, because I was not asked for the book until I received the subpoena.

226. You are aware that I took the report of the car in question from that book?—No, I do not recollect.

227. Do you remember Motorman Veart being called up for a slight bump he had on the corner of Pitt Street?—Yes.

228. Do you remember getting a letter from me, of which this is a press copy, dealing with the circumstances [produced]?—Yes.

229. Turn over two pages and see there a list: do you remember getting a copy of that showing the report of one car?—Yes.

230. That was taken from the car-defect book. You admit getting this letter making an appeal on behalf of Motorman Veart? From this is dated the withdrawal of the bound book?—I remember those letters.

231. This is a copy of the letter of February 17, 1908. Motorman W. Bright reported the condition of the brakes. "Condition of brakes on car No. 73, as shown by entries in report-book at Ponsonby Depot:—1908: Feb. 17 (Motorman W. Bright), brakes heavy; Feb. 20 (F. Clarke), ratchet brake stiff, Feb. 21 (F. Clarke), ratchet brake stiff; Feb. 22 (F. Clarke), ratchet brake stiff; Feb. 23 (H. Straker), brake-rods catching on motor, cases on curves hard to brake; Feb. 26 (C. Gutry), ratchet brake bad, Nos. 1 and 2 ends; Feb. 26 (F. Clarke), ratchet brake stiff, Feb. 28 (R. Meiklejohn), ratchet brakes jamming; Mar. 1 (C. Gutry), ratchet brake bad, No. 1 and 2; Mar. 2 (F. Clarke), ratchet brake stiff, both ends; Mar. 3 (F. Clarke), ratchet brake stiff; Mar. 4 (C. Gutry), brakes bad on No. 1 and 2 ends; Mar. 4 (F. Clarke), ratchet brake stiff, both ends; Mar. 9 (C. Gutry), ratchet brake bad on No. 1 and 2 ends, and grates on No. 1 and 2 ends; Mar. 11 (F. Clarke), ratchet brake very bad, both ends; Mar. 11 (C. Gutry), ratchet brake on No. 1 end bad; Mar. 12 (F. Clarke), track brake stiff, No. 2 end." [Press copy put in]?—Might I say that that does not contain the shedman's record of what was done. It is an entirely one-sided report, and does not contain their views.

232. Would you say that the car had been looked after by the car-examiner, and the defects remedied?—Certainly I would.

233. Then, how do you account for the same defect showing day after day for practically three weeks?—That was the time when we were having the difficulty with continual repetition of reports, notwithstanding the shedmen's evidence and statements that the brakes were adjusted and tested and were all right.

234. Is it not a fact that you will get one car that is very much easier kept in order than another?—Yes.

235. Was it shortly after this that the report-book was withdrawn?—I could not fix the date when the book was withdrawn. I would not deny that it was shortly after, but I could not fix it.

236. Is that merely a coincidence, or is it a consequence of those two events I have put on record?—So far as that particular case of Veart's is concerned, a coincidence; but in regard to the repetition of the reports, that was one reason why we did away with the books. We wanted to get, as we have now, an independent report of what happened to the car.

237. Would you have any objection to an officer or secretary of the union inspecting the record of a car in the event of a bump such as Veart's was?—It would depend upon the circumstances. We should have no objection to the men inspecting it, but there is always a question as to whether there may be claims in the Court pending.

238. It would depend upon whether it was a "fishing" expedition?—Rather when there is a definite reason why we should not—that is, when a case is pending.

239. Then, you would not say you would give the secretary of the union the same facilities as the Wellington City Council gives to the secretary of the union here?—I do not know what that is.

240. The secretary of the union is allowed to see the record-book if there is an inquiry?—Is he a motorman?

241. No, he is an outsider?—I do not say we should. It would depend upon the circumstances of the particular case.

242. *Mr. Poole.*] You have instituted a good many reforms since you took charge of the service?—Yes.

243. Do you believe the introduction of those reforms has brought about the satisfactory state that exists to-day in the Auckland service?—Yes, to some extent.

244. Is it your opinion that the reforms you have introduced during the last three years have anticipated the proposed clauses in this Bill?—I am in the dark; I do not know what reforms you are referring to, and therefore I cannot connect them with the Bill.

245. For instance, the provision made for a car report-book. You are carrying on a system at the present time that is in keeping with the requirements of this proposed clause; therefore