

154. Do you recommend that that should be taken away?—It is practically *non est*. The Sanitary Department is so content that they do not interfere.

155. They have sometimes?—They have. They let us into a nasty hole at one time.

156. Would you be in favour of that restriction being removed?—On the principle of local government I do hold that many of those functions should be left to the local body

157. Do you know anything of the operations of the London County Council?—Only generally

158. Do you think they have improved the City of London since that Council was brought into existence?—I have heard opinions for and against.

159. Let us revert to your objections to the certificate?—On the certificate question the Council would not raise an objection if it were limited to the certificate only

160. I am dealing with the motorman's certificate: Do you object to your engineer holding a certificate under the Inspection of Machinery Act?—No.

161. If your tramways were run by steam motors instead of electric motors, would not the tram-drivers have to hold certificates?—Yes.

162. What is the distinction?—The distinction is this, as I pointed out that you are taking away from the local bodies the power of licensing the men

163. Is there provision made to prove that he had had previous experience and must be competent before he can go to the Board to apply for his certificate?—Yes, there is provision for that.

164. Take paragraph (e) of clause 5: "Providing for the use of proper appliances and furnishings on carriages to insure the safety and convenience of passengers, of the tramway employees, and of the general public." Would you mind stating what your objection is to that?—The clause is so general, and there is danger in a general clause. If it were to apply only to the construction of the cars, the Government has at present to see that they are properly constructed, because the plans have to be submitted. But once the cars are approved by the Government, then the City Council as the local body sees that they are kept up to that standard. We are daily sending in cars, and we say that we are the best able to look after that business.

165. I think, in reply to Mr O'Shea, you stated that it was not possible for the Government to look after the safety of the public so well as the City Council?—I think so, because we are daily sending in cars.

166. Do you think the Wellington City Council look after the public safety so well as it is possible for the Government to do?—I can only judge by the short visits I have made. I do not know the details of the Wellington City Council's management.

167. Take Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin together: do you think those City Councils are looking after the safety of the public so well as the Government could possibly do?—I have sufficient confidence in them to think so. I have had thirty-two years' experience of local bodies, and I have not a bad opinion of them.

168. And you think the Auckland City Council can look after the public safety better than anybody else?—We do, as far as we possibly can

169. Do you know how many people you have killed on the Auckland tramways since they were started?—I do not remember

170. Do you know how many were killed in Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin during the same period?—No.

171. Do you know how many were injured in Auckland?—No.

172. Would you be surprised to learn that there were more injuries on the Auckland tramways than in the whole of those cities altogether?—No.

173. And yet you still say that you look after the interests of the public safety in Auckland as well as the Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin Councils?—Yes. The causes are not due to negligence on our part.

174. Do you think the Auckland City Council are looking after the safety of the public more carefully than it can be done by the Government or by the other City Councils?—Yes, because, as I said, the circumstances of the accidents have to be taken into consideration. Speaking from memory, the accidents have mostly happened through people in the streets, not on the cars; they have not been due to any defect in the cars.

175. Would it be owing to the defective brakes, through the cars not being able to stop quickly enough?—Not always.

176. Would some of them be because the brakes are inefficient, and cannot stop the cars quickly enough?—Speaking from memory, at the inquest in some cases the motormen have given evidence that they could not pull up the car so quickly as they would have liked.

177. Do you know of any cases in which the Coroner's jury gave a verdict that people have been killed through the brakes being inefficient on the Auckland system?—There might have been one.

178. What action did you take in dealing with that matter?—That car would be inspected by the Inspector and not sent out again until it was in perfect working-order

179. Were you allowed to run that car with the same brakes afterwards?—Yes, because we always look upon it that the Government is looking after the brakes.

180. You do admit their right to come in?—They are in at the beginning. They pass the construction of the car, and therefore the brakes are not our fault.

181. How long is it after the Government has passed the car that these accidents have occurred?—I cannot say that.

182. You assume that the equipment of the brakes and so on of a car when first built should run for ever?—No, I have said that we are daily sending in cars.

183. You have about one-third of the cars in New Zealand in use on the Auckland system?—We have ninety-two licensed and there are eight more built, so that in a few days we shall have a hundred on the road.