

57. You mean a double-decker?—And on the platform cars too.

58. You think that in the general interest of the city it would not necessitate an increase in the charges to make the concern a financial success if overcrowding was not allowed?—I do not think it would be necessary.

59. Would it not require more cars to do the work?—Yes.

60. And not require more men?—You have a system already of keeping a number of men in reserve—men who have other employments, but who are also qualified to take out cars when required.

61. Would not that impose a greater charge upon the undertaking?—It might, but not appreciably, I think.

62. Would it not impose a considerable charge?—I do not think so.

63. Where you have to have additional cars equal to 30 per cent., and if you are to increase the number of men to stand by, that would increase the charges?—But if you run additional cars you would carry more passengers. I have often myself refused to ride because of the crowd, and have walked instead.

64. *Mr. G. M. Thomson.*] I should like to know whether the object of this Tramways Amendment Bill is not really to get at the Auckland company?—Oh! I do not think the Bill is simply to get at the Auckland company. The necessity for this Bill has been before the Department for years, but the action of the Auckland company has made it more urgent.

65. Do you think the Department could improve upon the running of the tramway systems in the three other large centres?—The Department does not propose in any way to interfere with the running of the tramway systems. We only propose to interfere to insure public safety, just as is done in the case of certifying steamers and steam-boilers.

66. Can you give me any idea how the proportion of accidents on the tramways in the three other centres compares with the railways?—No, I have not looked into that.

67. You said you thought motormen should be examined by the Government. Can you suggest why no provision is made in this Bill for that?

*Hon. Mr. R. McKenzie.* It was because there are only a few days of the session left, and I only wanted to put in this Bill what was urgently required. The provisions of the present Bill have been copied from the Bill introduced two years ago, which provided for the examination of motormen; but, as I was afraid there would be opposition to it, I postponed that part for the present.

68. *Mr. G. M. Thomson.*] The object of the Bill is mostly to coerce the Auckland Tramway Company?—The attitude of the Auckland company has made it more necessary.

69. *Mr. Davey.*] Have you ever received any complaints as to the running, or working, or equipment of the Christchurch trams?—I do not think we have.

70. Do you know that they are being run efficiently?—I think they are, but I travel on them so little that I really cannot say. I do not think I have been in Christchurch half a dozen times since the electric tramway has been running.

71. Do you think the fact of a Government Inspector looking over the trams would result in more efficient working than obtains at present?—I think it could not possibly lessen the efficiency, and I think the public would be better satisfied if they knew there was Government inspection.

72. Do you think it would increase the efficient working as compared with to-day?—I do not think I can give any other answer than I have already given. It certainly would not lessen the efficiency, and in the event of there being any dereliction in the management the Government inspection would get over it.

73. There has been no dereliction in the management—they have been run properly?—I think they have, but I think the motormen in Christchurch should be certificated in common with motormen all over the Dominion, and it is certainly desirable that the tramway-cars should be licensed. The Christchurch tramway system, like most of the other systems in the Dominion, is new at present, and everything is in fairly good order; but the day will come when some one will have to decide that a certain car shall be scrapped. If that is left entirely to the person who owns the cars there may be an inclination to run the car a little beyond the day of safety. I believe the tramway officials would be very glad to have a Government Inspector to say "This car must now be repaired or retired."

74. Do you not think that in all municipal undertakings, seeing they have been run for the benefit of the people, and being run too by people who are elected by the people, they can be thoroughly trusted to manage their own trams?—In the general business affairs, yes, but not in expert matters.

75. Do you think it is fair to gentlemen representing municipalities, or a Tramway Board, to relegate them to the position of deciding how much the fares should be?—I said, all business management.

76. What would be left for the Christchurch Tramway Board to do if this Bill became law?—Everything that they do now.

77. Then why introduce it?—Simply for the reason that it seems desirable that the Government should have a right to step in where necessary.

78. The whole cross-examination by the Minister was practically in regard to the Auckland trams; nothing has been touched on in regard to Christchurch or Dunedin; not one word has been elicited in regard to the tram systems in the other three cities: and is it necessary to bring in such a Bill to govern the operations of the trams in the other cities?—I think it is necessary. The Bill is not brought in in consequence of any complaint about Christchurch.

79. You say you think it is desirable that all motormen should be licensed?—I think that is desirable.