

the service, and we should regret to cause friction again by going over that evidence. Now that the position is taken up by the company as already stated, I assume that practically this evidence will be taken as read, because we have to take up a new position to show the difference between the air brake and the magnetic brake. The company have practically told us that they do not propose to contest our position that there is a more effective brake—indeed, they bow to the report of the previous Commission. That modifies our position a great deal.

Mr. Myers said there was no independent evidence taken at that previous Commission. We were in this position: The men made the complaints, and indirectly the condition of the brakes was one of the causes of the last strike; and in putting the proposition to Dr. McArthur's Commission the brakes were referred to, and also the glass fronts, and Dr. McArthur threw those two points out. The result was that the first Commission was appointed, and we were brought forward and made our complaints. Now, I understand that, while we do not alter our position, the union does not propose to call evidence complaining of the hand brakes, but we still hold the position that they are obsolete, and that a more efficient brake should be provided. Now, it is our place to show that the air brake is a more efficient brake, in our opinion, than the magnetic brake. We have men working here who have worked on both systems, and the union proposes to call several of these men as witnesses. We have an argument in favour of the air brake that does not appeal to the company the same as it does to the union—that is, the physical effect on the men. The air brake is used as a service brake. I only know of two systems where the magnetic brake is used for service stops—one is in Dunedin and the other in Wellington. We have men here who have driven in Glasgow for six or eight years, and the magnetic brake is not in use for a service stop there—it is merely used for emergencies, and for coasting down certain grades. We submit that a brake, to be efficient as a service brake, should be constantly in use, because a man flies by instinct to the brake he uses mostly, and if a magnetic brake were not allowed to be used for a service brake the fraction of a second would determine the magnitude of an accident, and we submit that the brake to be installed should be a service brake.

Then, again, the union has taken up this stand in favour of the air brake because it is the most speedy installation. Mr. Myers mentioned this morning that the air brake could be fitted on ninety-two cars in Auckland by next February, but the magnetic brake would take up to three years to install, because there would have to be an entire renewal of the trucks and under-gear. The men want some relief, and the quicker relief will come by the air brake, which is a most effective brake. You are conserving the interests of the general public, and our contention is that those interests are best conserved by the installation of an air brake. We shall bring evidence to show the effectiveness of it. The evils of the present hand-brake system exist to-day as much as they ever did, as since November last we have had four motormen who have been through the hospital for rupture, appendicitis, or abdominal strain. We could not admit that the present circuit is an effective brake. We contend that the air brake is a more effective brake because it is used for service stops, and the magnetic brake, if only used for emergency, merely perpetuates the hand-brake system. I shall be prepared to bring forward evidence in Wellington that the magnetic brake used there is for service stops, but the hand-brake is used to retain the car after it has stopped. It is a strain on the motormen, and they are leaving the service. With the air brake in Christchurch I know of cases similar in that respect.

With these remarks I do not propose to take up the time of the Commission any longer, but I shall be prepared to call evidence from the employees in relation to the working of the air brakes on the cars at present in the Auckland system. Also as to the working of the magnetic and air brakes elsewhere. There are two classes of evidence I propose to bring forward, unless it is proposed to review the present condition of the hand-brakes on the Auckland cars—and I presume the Commission does not propose to go over the ground already traversed by the previous Commission.

*The Chairman.*—I certainly think that at this stage it may be as well for me to state that the efficiency of the existing slipper brake will be called in question. In the first place, the company propose to retain the existing slipper brake; in the second place they contend that the brakes are efficient, and it is an act of grace on their part to substitute an air brake. The question as to the stopping-power of the trams under ordinary service stops, not to stop the cars by hand-brake, I think need hardly be discussed.

I think now we will hear any evidence which Mr. Rosser has to call.

THOMAS TROY duly sworn.

Examined by Mr. Rosser: My name is Thomas Troy. I am a motorman in the employ of the Auckland Tramways Company, and have been in their employ about seven years, all the time as motorman. I drove cars installed with the hand-brake. Air brakes were installed on certain cars, Nos. 48 and 75, last year. I have driven No. 75. Comparing my experience with the old brakes and the air brakes, it is very much in favour of the latter. I have had no experience of the magnetic brake, but I have seen it worked both in Wellington and Sydney. I think the air brake is a good brake for the fast service and the grades in Auckland. They are heavy cars on the Auckland service. I am able to make quick stops with the air brake. I have had occasion to use the air brake quickly because of an impending collision, and I found it reliable. Comparing my work as motorman with the air brake and hand-brake, I have been able to make much better stops with the former. Car No. 75 has the electric emergency brake just the same as an ordinary hand-brake car. When using the air brake I have never had occasion to fall back on the electric brake for any emergency that might arise—I depended solely on the air brake. I have found it equal to every emergency. Comparing the physical effort required by the two brakes, I feel fairly fresh at the end of the shift with the air brake. I have never had any failures with that brake. There is the sand gear on the car. It is intermittent. I could not express an opinion on the relative merits of continuous or intermittent sand gear. The gear is working efficiently on my car at present.