

92. *Mr. Houston.*] Suppose you have this oil-engine that costs £500, and a steam-engine complete that costs £150 or £200, which takes up the most room?—Of course, the steam machinery.

93. Then, if a vessel whose chief motor-power is sails gets an oil-engine, the space saved will more than counterbalance the cost of steam-machinery?—I am not prepared to say that.

94. *The Chairman.*] But there would be the cargo-space?—Yes, it would.

95. *Mr. Houston.*] As to the inspection: you are aware that the Government have an Inspector of Machinery in Auckland?—They have two.

96. What are their names?—Blackwood and Jobson.

97. Mr. Jobson examines all the machinery north of Auckland?—Not all.

98. Has he ever examined machinery at Whangaroa?—Yes.

99. Has he ever examined the oil-launches?—Yes, I believe so.

100. Have you ever heard of a launch called the "Midge"?—I do not remember.

101. Has the Inspector ever inspected that?—He has inspected one or two launches there.

102. What do you mean by launch?—An open boat with an engine in it.

103. Of any particular size?—No.

104. A dingy would be called a launch then?—Yes.

105. Are you aware whether Mr. Jobson examined a small boat called the "Midge"?—I could not tell you from memory.

106. You do not know the size of the boat?—If she has been surveyed, we have the size in our books.

107. In examining an engine like that, would he take the machinery to pieces?—He would.

108. And it is his duty to put it together again?—Certainly not.

109. Do you mean to say an Inspector can take an engine to pieces and leave it without putting it together again?—The "Mararoa" takes a whole week for survey and employs fifty men per day for the purpose.

110. Then an Inspector can take the machinery to pieces and leave it lying about?—He does not take anything to pieces. He can stand by and order every part to be cleaned for examination. He must see everything to satisfy himself.

111. You would not think it was incapacity on the part of an Inspector if he took one of the engines to pieces and could not put it together again?—It is not our duty to do anything of that sort.

112. *The Chairman.*] He does not take anything to pieces?—No; he looks on while it is being done. The Act specially provides for that.

113. *Mr. Houston.*] Do you know anything about the cost of examining a small oil-engine?—No; but where there is not a mechanical man employed in taking down machinery, it adds to the expense. Where you have not got a competent mechanical man as engineer, it costs six times more; because he does not mark all the parts carefully, and a competent man would.

114. What would be the cost of inspecting the machinery of a boat 14 ft. 6 in. long, and 4 ft. 6 in. beam?—If a vessel like that stopped to-day, and an engineer could not take it to pieces and put it together again by the next morning, he would not be fit to be there.

115. What would you think would be a proper amount for an Inspector to charge for inspecting a boat of that size?—It is defined by law. It is £1 10s. for one survey.

116. No matter what size of engine?—It depends upon the tonnage; it has nothing to do with the horse-power.

117. What would be the cost of inspecting a boat 14 ft. 6 in. long, and 4 ft. 6 in. beam?—It would be by tonnage.

118. What would be its tonnage?—It might be 4 or 5 tons.

119. Anybody that would allow much more than 500 cwt. in that boat should be prosecuted. What would be the tonnage of a boat 14 ft. 6 in. over all in length and 4 ft. 6 in. beam: you say she could carry 4 or 5 tons?—I suppose she could.

120. *The Chairman.*] Can you work it out?—What is the depth of her?

121. *Mr. Houston.*] About 2 ft. 6 in.—That is very shallow for the engine; there would be no draught at all. [Witness here figured it out.] Four tons.

122. You know what is called a watermen's boat: is there any watermen's boat at the wharf here that would carry 4 tons?—I do not think there is for a single man. It depends upon how many men she is built for. Some would be twice the size of others.

123. I mean an ordinary watermen's boat at the wharf?—No.

124. There are no watermen's boats larger than those?—Yes there are, plenty of them.

125. Clause 2 of the prayer in the petition says, "That all oil-engines of a larger power be run by men who have passed a sufficient examination on the working of oil-engines alone, irrespective of steam-power." You say, "Examination alone will never make a tradesman." Would experience make a tradesman?—Experience neither comes by years nor by examination; it depends upon servitude greatly.

126. Would experience make a tradesman?—The manipulating of tools would make a tradesman.

127. Supposing a person had been engaged driving an oil-engine for eighteen months or two years, would you not consider him qualified to drive it?—The law allows that, but he must get his experience somewhere. That seems to me to be a very fair law for service.

128. You say here that examination alone will never make a tradesman, and you go on to say, "and I consider where vessels are employed outside restricted limits, that, for public safety, a man should have at least three years' mechanical experience at the making and repairing of engines, not necessarily steam-engines, or at work of a similar nature." Then, any person engaged in a mechanical shop where there were oil-engines made and repaired would be qualified after