

to load, the time was counted as proof of service in order to get the permit. The time they give is considerably more when it suits the purpose of the present owners. If the time is properly taken when running, none of these men are entitled to this permit—not legally.

153. Do you mean to say that a man in charge of an oil-engine, if he got a certificate for twelve months' service, that would be only current for the actual number of hours he was driving?—If you go by your remarks, experience makes a man. He has been allowed to pass, and I have no doubt he is qualified enough.

154. Say that a vessel is going from Auckland to Mangonui, and that its engine is worked five hours, do you think it would be a fair remuneration for a certificated engineer if he was only paid for five hours?—That is a question between master and servant. If you employ a cabman, and want to go to the wharf, say, from here, and you keep him waiting two hours, you do not pay him for the run, but for the time occupied.

155. In the latter part of clause 4 of your report you say, "I do not think that a separate examination is necessary, as engineers with present certificates under the Shipping and Seamen's Act are quite capable of taking charge, and I think that a special certificate for this class of vessel will not ensure more trustworthy or efficient men for this special class of power." Are you not aware that on certain vessels propelled by oil-engines, to meet the requirements of the regulations, certificated engineers were taken on board, who could not work these engines?—I have no doubt there were some who could not work them, but my surveyors in Auckland say there was no difficulty in the matter so far as they knew. I know there was one man who was a gaol-bird, and a low-down dog, who was employed.

156. Was he a certificated engineer?—Yes, he was ———. He was one of them so employed. That was not the man who went on board the "Medora." Morally, he was not a man that should be taken as a proof of what engineers could do.

157. *Mr. Houston.*] Moral qualification is one of the qualifications for an engineer?—Yes; but when you bait me about these men, I say you should not refer to a man who has lost his brains by drink.

158. Are you not aware that the owner of the "Medora" put an advertisement in the paper requiring a certificated engineer to work his engine?—I am aware of some advertisement. I know myself that an advertisement—perhaps more than one—went into the papers bearing on that.

159. And are you not aware that, in answer to that advertisement, seven men applied for the position, and could not start the engine?—I am not aware of that. I know of engineers who have been in vessels with oil-engines and have had no trouble. The "Thistle" is 105 indicated horse-power, and the largest oil-engined vessel in Australasia, and they have had no trouble. It is not a financial success, and if she had steam she would be a greater success.

160. Is the fact of the great opposition to use of oil-engines on board vessels as an auxiliary propelling-power not due altogether to the opposition raised by the engineers of this colony who are engaged in driving steam-engines?—No. I will qualify that by saying it is a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence. There is nothing else in it.

161. Then, the engineers of our steamers are not opposed to oil-engines?—Not at all.

162. Of course, you are answering for the whole body of men who are employed driving steam-engines?—No; I am answering as one of the servants of the Government—as a servant of yours.

163. How do you arrive at that as the opinion of the engineers of the colony?—Simply because if you pay a man properly you get qualified men to go on board, but I know that several owners—Messrs. J. W. Briskie and others—think it is a great hardship to pay an engineer when they can only keep him going a few hours. They want handy men who can be got to pull a rope and so on. It is not a matter of mechanical men, but a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence on the part of the owners.

164. You say, "Finally, I would point out with reference to the alleged benefit to the colony the advent of these oil-powered vessels are claimed to have given that the petitioners have only brought forward one phase of the question." You say it is a question of pounds, shillings, and pence as regards the owners. These petitioners claim that it has been a benefit to the settlers in the different rivers and estuaries gained by the advent of these oil-engines?—I admit that.

165. And now you say it is simply a question of pounds, shillings, and pence, so far as the owners are concerned, who do not wish to be obliged to employ certificated engineers?—I think so. If you approach the men, I dare say you could come to some amicable arrangement.

166. Are you not aware that a certificated engineer belonging to the union would not do anything but attend to the engine?—That is what he is paid for.

167. And he would be employed for five hours and do nothing else. You know that the oil-engine is not the motor-power—the sails are the motor-power?—They would use the engine when it became necessary in a calm. The engineer would be there to take charge of the machinery, and would start and stop when wanted by the master. It is the same with a steam-vessel.

168. One of the reasons you give for objecting to these oil-engines is that if they were in general use it would prevent the employment of men engaged in building steam-engines and throw a great number of young men out of employment. Are you not aware that those engaged in building vessels in order that they may be fitted up with auxiliary oil-engines also employ a large number of men?—Yes, a few.

169. Do you know Messrs. Lane and Brown?—Yes, I expect you have every name of their employés in the petition.

170. Do you know how many men they employ?—Perhaps fifty.

171. Indirectly they employ a great many men in the timber-trade?—The timber would come down in any case.