

666. Is the holding-ground within the limits of the harbour good?—It is very rocky, with the exception of a small piece near the landing-place. The anchorage is not good.

667 *Mr. Weston.*] You say it would be difficult in westerly weather for vessels to lie at full length there, on account of the "range"; how often do you suppose that would happen?—Perhaps not half a dozen times in the year.

668. Would a vessel, then, be compelled to pass the port?—No; she could manage it, by slacking off from the wharf.

669. So that in the heaviest weather vessels could remain under the lee of the breakwater?—Yes.

670. If the works were continued to the lighthouse, would the price be very much increased?—I do not think it would be affected much, either one way or the other.

671. In the event of this work not being carried beyond the first jetty, as shown by the dotted lines, what class of vessel could come with safety alongside it?—Only a very small vessel; a vessel like the "Hawea" could not do so, beyond the innermost jetty.

672. What class of vessels will be able to use this breakwater, that will be able to call at *Y Y*?—Vessels drawing about 13 feet.

673. Could the "Wakatipu" call there?—No; but she might at high water.

674. What is the draft of the "Wakatipu"?—Seventeen feet.

675. How much water under her bottom would she require?—About 5 feet at high water.

676. *Mr. Pitt.*] At low water could the "Wakatipu," when loaded, lie alongside the jetty at front of mole, *Y Y*?—No; I do not think it would be safe for her to do so.

677 *Mr. Weston.*] How many vessels could lie alongside this wharf, the "Hawea" being one of them?—That would be simply a matter of calculation, depending on length and draught.

678. *Mr. Fulton.*] Supposing there was heavy westerly weather, and this harbour was spoken of as a harbour of refuge, and a vessel was caught in a heavy westerly gale: would it be safe for a vessel to run into this port?—Yes; I think it would be quite safe, supposing that the breakwater was extended to *Y Y*.

679. Then, in your opinion, would there be enough room for a vessel, without local knowledge on the part of the captain, to swing round and haul out under the shelter of the jetty?—No; there would not be much room; she would require to anchor close under the breakwater.

680. *Mr. Montgomery.*] If a vessel ran in in a gale, and swung round, would she be safe at low water if she dropped her anchor?—Yes, for vessels drawing 15 feet it would be safe, under such circumstances; 60 fathoms of chain would be enough; 30 would not do.

681. Would you depend on the chance, of a vessel running in there and dropping her anchor in a gale of wind; would you depend on the anchor holding firm?—Yes.

682. *Mr. Barron.*] I think you would consider yourself safer at sea?—Yes.

683. It would be impossible for a vessel like the "Wakatipu," or any drawing more than 12½ feet, to be absolutely safe?—Yes; in heavy weather. A vessel under that draught would be safe in any weather. My remarks apply chiefly to sailing vessels; steamers of suitable draught could always get in and out.

Captain JOHN FAIRCHILD, examined.

684. *The Chairman.*] You are in command of the steamer "Stella"?—Yes; I have been twenty-one years on the New Zealand coast. I am pretty well acquainted with the site of the proposed works at New Plymouth.

685. If you will refer to the plan "M.D. 404," indicating the extent of the works which the New Plymouth Harbour Board are authorized to construct, you will see what proportion the limit of the work now authorized bears to the original design of Sir John Coode?—I do not think that unless Sir John Coode's work is carried out entire there will be much shelter.

686. When you speak of Sir John Coode's entire plan, do you mean to refer both to the eastern and western arms?—The western arm, as being carried out by the Harbour Board, is not so long as Sir John Coode's original proposal, but I think the whole will have to be done before it will be safe for a ship to lie under.

687. Would captains of vessels, approaching from the westward, be inclined to run for shelter to that harbour or to Blind Bay?—They could not possibly get into New Plymouth in stormy weather; no vessel could do so without danger of going ashore. Even if Sir John Coode's plans were carried out, ships running for refuge would go to Blind Bay.

688. Then, even as a harbour of refuge, it would be useful only for small vessels?—Yes.

689. You think the captain of a vessel not acquainted with the locality would not run for it?—I do not think that even one, who was acquainted with the harbour, would run for it in bad weather; I mean the captain of a sailing vessel. I think a vessel drawing about 11 or 12 feet could lie at the extremity in fine weather.

690. What draft of vessel would be able to moor alongside that breakwater?—About 11 feet, or, possibly, 12 feet.

691. Then you think 4 or 5 feet is the necessary margin between the ground and the vessel's bottom?—Yes.

692. What is the nature of the bottom?—Pretty hard; but you do not go far before you come to rock. As far as I know the rocks are covered. We have found some portions of rock sticking up above the mud. The points of the rocks could be easily smoothed off.

693. Do you consider the holding ground good?—Yes; but a vessel would not hold there to her anchor. The holding would be to the breakwater, by rings and bolts.

694. In the absence of any jetty at the end of the breakwater, would the "range" be likely to cause any damage to vessels moored to the breakwater?—There would have to be wood-work to rest against. The work would not afford that protection if made to *Y Y*, as it is proposed now, which would be given if Sir John Coode's plans were carried out. No vessel could lie there except in the very mildest weather.

695. *Mr. Montgomery.*] If it was to be allowed to be constructed as far as *Y Y*, what would be the