

these young men be in a position to bend new ones in the middle of a tempest?—Perhaps not.

85. Nothing but practical experience will do to make these lads qualified sailors; but, at the same time, do you not think that they will be most useful?—You can go far to make them qualified sailors if you have a vessel sailing about.

86. *The Chairman.*] You have made some reference to the class of people taken on board vessels at Home. Do you not think, taking the case of your own Company, which is colonially owned, it would not be better to have a crew composed of men born and bred in the colony?—I am strongly in favor of utilising everything we can from the colony.

87. Provided the conditions were reasonable, and a law were passed making it compulsory to carry a certain number of lads on every vessel leaving the colony, do you think your Company would have much cause to complain?—I do not think we should complain, but we would rather do this voluntarily than be coerced.

FRIDAY, 21ST JULY, 1882. (Mr. J. SHEEHAN, Chairman.)

Captain J. F. FAIRCHILD, examined.

*Captain Fairchild.*

21st July, 1882.

88. *The Chairman.*] You understand the nature of the inquiry the Committee is making. I will simply ask you two or three general questions and leave you to make any further statement. In the first place, have you had any experience of lads who have been in the Naval Training School at Auckland?—I have had about ten of them.

89. What was the result, so far as these lads were concerned?—Not very good. I think a good deal of this was caused by their being lads of bad character before they went to the school.

90. One question before us is this. Is it desirable to have one stationary hulk moored in a harbour, or to have two or three smaller vessels at different ports in the colony—live vessels, as they have been called—in which the boys could sail about?—The boys will be a great deal more use if they go about in these small vessels a little, while they belong to the Training School.

91. You know the position of the Kohimarama School?—Yes.

92. Will it not be well to have a stationary vessel there?—The boys will learn a great deal more on board a vessel sailing about than on board one at anchor. If they are trained on a stationary vessel, they do not learn to steer, and when they go to sea they are sure to be sick. The boys I had from the Kohimarama training ship were no better than boys I might have picked up in any town. They had no knowledge of steering, and they were sick directly they went to sea. I do not think the Kohimarama ship was much use to the boys, as far as I am aware the Southern Cross never went to sea, and therefore it could not be of much use to the boys who were on board.

93. If it were decided to go in for two or three live vessels, what would you suggest in respect to tonnage?—I should say something about 60, 80, or 100 tons. I think the one you had before was rather small. It was only 34 tons, and there is not room for many boys on a boat of that size. I do not think she was ever used.

94. What do you think about rig?—A topsail schooner or brigantine.

95. What do you think would be the cost of a vessel of the kind you describe. What could a schooner or brigantine of one hundred tons be got for?—About £2,000. I had one of seventy-seven tons built, and it cost me £1,600. I think a hundred-ton vessel would cost about £2,000. It was four years ago when I had my vessel built, but that will be something to go by.

96. There is another proposal before the Committee of this kind. As to whether or not it will be desirable to make it compulsory on vessels sailing out of the colony to carry a certain number of apprentices, according to the size of the vessels. Do you think this will be desirable?—I think it would be a good thing, but no one would agree to it if they could help it. Boys are a great nuisance, especially upon coasters. Of course you cannot get sailors unless you have apprentices, but shipowners would not like what you suggest. These boys are an awful nuisance on board ship. I do not think it would be well to make it compulsory on shipowners to carry too many of these lads.

97. What do you think would be a reasonable proposal?—Well, vessels of one hundred tons might carry one. Vessels like the Rotomahana, Te Anau, and Manapouri might carry about six, I should think.

98. What length of service do you think would be required, providing a lad goes through the naval training in the way I have mentioned to you with live vessels?—I should think about three years. The lad ought to be of some use then, and able to earn wages and do for himself.

99. Do you think he should be allowed wages during the three years' time, beyond his keep and clothing?—I think he should be allowed something. Some masters might not clothe them properly, or the boys might think so. I have found it best to allow the boys wages, and then see that they lay the money out upon themselves. That is far better than simply clothing them. They take better care of their clothes, and are much better satisfied. You should not let the owners of the vessels clothe them. Some would clothe them well, and others would clothe them badly, and the boys would think that they were never well clothed.

100. You think it would be better to encourage habits of self-reliance in the boys by giving them a small wage?—I have found this best with the boys I have had. I give them their wages, and then go to the clothing shop with them, or send the steward with them.

101. You think the proposal to compel vessels trading out of the colony to carry a certain number of boys would be beneficial?—As I said before, no owner will agree to it, if he can help it.

102. I suppose every man who is a seaman has had to start by doing this work at some time in his life?—If he wants to make a seaman, that is the way to learn, but shipowners will go against the proposal you suggest. If you pass a law to make them carry what they consider too many of these lads, they will register their vessels out of the colony, and get over it in that manner. If you only try to make it compulsory for them to carry a small number, they may not fight against it.

103. Do you think it would be a desirable thing to have growing up in the colony a sufficient number of young men to man the vessels sailing out of our ports?—I think it would be a great thing.