

427. *Mr. McLean.*] Did you say marine engineers were incompetent without experience of oilers?—They acknowledge that.

428. How do you know that?—I judge it from the six boats that have run with them in charge, and by confessions from individual members of the institute.

429. What are the names of the boats?—The “Torora,” with two different engineers; the “Huia,” in which a man was carried as mate who formerly worked the engines, and his first experience was that he had to manipulate the engines with the engineer on board.

430. Where did you hear that?—From the owners. Then there is the “Waiapu,” and the “Hercules” and “Oban.”

431. All these had certificated engineers?—Yes.

432. *Mr. Duncan.*] You would not be surprised to hear that I have got a telegram from the surveyors in Auckland that all these are going smoothly?—I should be surprised, and am advised the engineers are often stuck.

THURSDAY, 31ST AUGUST, 1899.

HERBERT SUBRITZKY, examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—Master of the “Greyhound.”
2. Is she a schooner?—An auxiliary-powered schooner.
3. An oil-engined vessel?—Yes.
4. What is her registered tonnage?—Eighty-three.
5. What is the power of her oil-engine?—Fifty-horse power.
6. How long have you been master of the vessel?—Since she was built—about two months. I was master of the “Medora.”
7. How long were you in command of her?—About two years and six months. She has an oil-engine. Then I was master of the “Torora” schooner since I had the “Medora.” She has an oil-engine of fifty-horse power on board.
8. When did you first have command of these vessels?—It would be more than five or six years.
9. Do you know anything about the practical management of oil-engines?—I can work them.
10. Have you worked them?—Yes.
11. Where?—On those boats.
12. You have gone down into the engine-room to satisfy yourself that you could work them, and have started them?—Yes, with my brothers. It is my brothers who have been engineers of the vessels I have commanded, and naturally it was my interest to look into them as well as theirs.
13. Has the engine ever broken down on any of these vessels when you happened to be on board?—No, not to stop us.
14. What oil did you use?—At first naphtha, but we use benzine now.
15. Wholly?—Yes, it is the cheapest.
16. Can you say what the cost is per hour?—Yes, the oil-engine of fifty-horse power cost us about 4s. 6d. per hour.
17. What vessel is that?—The “Greyhound.”
18. The one you now command?—Yes.
19. At what speed does the vessel go?—In calm weather about eight miles an hour. When at sea it is of course different.
20. Which vessel was it that went down to Greymouth?—The “Torora.”
21. Did you command that vessel?—Yes. We took her from the stocks for six months, while this last new one was being built.
22. Has the “Torora” the same engine on board that she had when you commanded her?—Yes. It is what they call a Hercules engine.
23. Had either you or your brother any difficulty in working that engine?—My brothers had no difficulty.
24. Did the engine stick you up at all when you were in command of the boat?—No, not for any length of time.
25. She did stick you up?—Some little pin might have gone wrong, but it was nothing to speak of, and the engine could be set going again in a few minutes.
26. Have you heard that they could not start the engine all the way from here to Grey-mouth?—Yes.
27. They have not been started yet, as far as we know?—Yes, but my brothers could start it at short notice.
28. Do you know of your own knowledge the cause of the engine not being worked?—I could go pretty close to it. They do not feed the engine right in the first place. That is the main trouble. They do not regulate the oil and the air properly, or the electric spark, or set the vaporiser right. These are the main things to attend to in working oil-engines.
29. *Mr. Crowther.*] There are several of these fifty-horse-power engines now?—Yes.
30. And you say you and your brothers can work them?—Yes, my brothers more so than I. I was master of the boat and they drove the engines.
31. You have had no trouble with them?—No.
32. How many hours a day on an average did you work the engine?—We might go for several days and not work them; but if we take the round trip it would not amount to an hour a day. That is from Auckland to Auckland. They are meant for river and harbour work. They are very seldom worked at sea.
33. They are not worked on an average for more than an hour a day?—Yes, taking the boat