

256. Do you know any reason why they should be inspected?—No.
257. Do you think it necessary?—No, not a bit.
258. Did you tell us you were capable of driving one of those engines which were in the vessels when the Governor and the Premier were driven round?—Yes, perfectly.
259. Do you consider that oil-engines ought to be inspected?—Not by a marine engineer.
260. Do you consider a marine engineer is less capable?—I do, for the reason I have given, that his scientific knowledge of steam directs his mind only in that direction.
261. And you think he is less capable than any other man you could pick up?—I have proved that in my own boat. I have had a certificated engineer dozens of times, trying to instruct him to drive my steam-launch, and he cannot do it now.
262. Do you go out to sea with this engine?—I just confine myself to harbour-work.
263. Some go out to sea?—Yes.
264. And in the event of anything happening, such as the boat being dismasted and the engine breaking down?—That would be a pretty bad case.
265. Do you admit it to be a possible case?—It might be.
266. And do you think that a man who did not know anything about an engine would be able to fit it up?—He has nothing to fix up, supposing it is broken.
267. But every steamer carries nuts and bolts?—Yes, but does not carry a new shaft.
268. The engineers might be able to repair it, the same as they did on the “Perthshire”?—They do not carry connecting-rods.
269. Do you think a qualified engineer would be of more use?—I said he would be more useful in the way of making or mending.
270. How long would it take a practical, ordinary, intelligent man or lad to work one of those oil-engines?—It just depends. An ordinary, intelligent lad, with no preconceived notions of steam, might learn in a week. My experience is that marine engineers have their minds biassed in the direction of steam.
271. I want to know how long an ordinary, intelligent man or lad would require to learn how to start and run an engine?—Any of my children are capable of doing anything with an oil-engine.
272. How long would it take an ordinary intelligent man or lad to start and run one?—I do not really know how long it would take. One man might learn in a week, and another not in three weeks.
273. Do you think the fact of a man being a mechanic makes him less capable?—No. I do not.
274. Is it a fact that a mechanic would more easily pick up anything in connection with mechanics than a man who is not a mechanic?—If you refer to constructing anything, he would be more capable of mending a broken part of a machine; but I do not think he would be more capable of working an oil-engine.
275. I ask you whether, in your opinion, a mechanic would pick up more about a machine in less time than a man who is not a mechanic?—I do not think he would unless he understood the science of an oil-engine.
276. *Mr. Lawry.*] You do not object to the drivers being subjected to the most rigid examination?—Not in the science of driving oil-engines.
277. *Mr. McKenzie.*] Do you think Parliament should pass a measure to provide for another grade of engineering, and give a certificate for this particular class of man?—I think there should be another grade entirely independent of marine engineers, but be careful who is appointed examiner.

HENRY LANE, examined.

278. *The Chairman.*] Where is your home?—Bay of Islands.
279. Are you partner with your brother, who gave evidence here the other day?—No; I was.
280. How long have you been living at the Bay of Islands?—Twenty-six years.
281. Are you a shipbuilder?—I served my time to it.
282. Have you built any vessels which have oil-engines?—No.
283. Are you a farmer now?—No, a saw-miller.
284. Do you own any vessels or have you any interest in them?—Not oil-engined vessels.
285. What information can you give us about oil-engines?—The information I can give you is on behalf of the fishing industry. There are two factories, employing a large number of men in tinning fish up there, and the fishing-boats have to go thirty or forty miles away to bring in the fish.
286. What is the size of the boats?—About 8 ft. beam and 25 ft. long.
287. Decked?—Half-decked.
288. How many men do they carry?—Two men in a boat.
289. Are there any with oil-engines?—No. They all want them, but are frightened of the restrictions.
290. Do you know anything about oil-engines?—Yes; I have started and stopped them, and know the theory.
291. Where?—Wanganui, at my brother's place.
292. Which vessels—the launches?—Yes. I have been on oil-engined vessels, and know how they are constructed and worked.
293. Is there any difficulty in an ordinary intelligent person driving one?—I can only tell by myself. I have an engineer's certificate for steam. I went on board and could start the engine in five minutes the first time I had anything to do with it by just looking over the works. I got hold of the batteries and started working them straight off the reel.
294. Then it was in consequence of your knowledge as a mechanic that you were able to grasp the whole thing?—I could see the whole thing much quicker.