

19. Is there any other information? The Committee is appointed to consider the necessities of trade, the advisability or otherwise, and the probable cost?—I should recommend that the place be surveyed, as I said at first, and a report made on it. Then there would be something to go upon.

20. Is this survey shown on this plan [produced], dated five years ago, the most recent?—Yes.

21. Do you recollect that at the time the lighthouse was established here there was a feeling that it might be injurious to the harbour by tempting vessels to approach it at night?—No; I do not recollect that.

22. There was a pretty strong feeling that it might lead vessels into dangers at night. I wanted to know whether the light proved beneficial or otherwise?—No doubt it is beneficial. The only difference I remember was as to the position of the light. There was no difference of opinion; all agreed that it would be useful.

Captain FAIRCHILD, examined.

23. *The Chairman.*] What position do you hold at present in the Government service?—In command of one of the Government steamers—the “Hinemoa” or “Stella,” as occasion requires.

24. I think you have had a very long experience in entering Manukau Harbour?—For twenty-three years pretty regularly. The first four years in sailing-vessels, and since in steamers.

25. A feeling has got abroad that it might be of service to the harbour if guiding lights were established, so as to enable steamers to go in and out at high-water at night. What is your opinion?—I think it should have been done many years ago.

26. Would the establishing of these lights in any way tend to lead to risk by encouraging vessels to enter?—No; I do not think any stranger would enter; and the lights being there could not possibly lead any one into danger who had ever been there before.

27. Generally speaking, you think the lights almost as serviceable at night as beacons in the day?—Yes; and just as safe. I may state that we have thirteen or fourteen harbours in New Zealand lit in this way. Some of them have been lit for twenty years, and have worked to advantage.

28. Are any of those harbours so intricate in navigation as the Manukau?—Far more so.

29. Would you state any?—I could mention the names of the whole thirteen which are much worse to work at night than Manukau. For instance, there are Wanganui and Patea.

30. Are they just as intricate as this?—Much more so; and Waitara also.

31. Would you favour the Committee by telling us what system of lighting they have in these harbours to enable vessels to come in?—Two lights to come in over the bar; you do not want lights after that. At Wanganui the channel is as crooked as possible, and there is only one set of lights.

32. Do steamers go in and out there at night?—Yes, always. I have crossed the bar there at night scores of times when the tide answered. That could not possibly be done without the lights. I may say that when I go up to Manukau the masters of the vessels are continually at me about the lights, which they want the Government to erect.

33. The masters of the Union boats?—No; the northern boats chiefly. It is of great importance to them, carrying cattle.

34. Has there been any demand on the part of the Union masters?—Not yet; but Mr. Mills said in Auckland two months ago that he was going to ask the Government for it on account of this fast steamer the company are getting out. I do not know whether he has asked for it yet or not; but the Manager of the Northern Company has applied several times, I think.

35. Would you state to the Committee, from your knowledge of the Manukau, what guiding lights in your opinion ought to be established for vessels to get in?—Two beacons on the South Head. The two beacons already built, with places in them for lights, is where the lights should be. The lighthouse-keeper, who is paid for keeping the lighthouse alongside, could see to these lights at no extra expense at all. There is a feeling that when you get in a certain distance you want two more to guide you, but I say that that is quite unnecessary, and it would be a great expense to keep two men living there.

36. Why are the two beacons put on the North Head as a guide in the daytime, if lights are not to be put there at night?—They are quite unnecessary for daytime.

37. Then, do I understand that you consider that it would be a safe thing to erect them, and also that the cost would be insignificant?—Yes. There would be no danger whatever, and the cost of erecting them would be next to nothing.

38. Do you think it necessary to have a survey made of the shoals before placing the lights there?—It is not much use; they are always shifting a little, but not much.

39. Could the lights be placed on the same beacons?—Yes; a place is made in them to receive lights. I believe the Marine Department has some suitable lights on hand. The two lighthouse-keepers living at the place could attend to them. It would be next to no expense. The masters of vessels would only ask for two lights on the South Head.

40. *Mr. Mitchelson.*] The only expense would be the cost of the lanterns and oil?—We have lanterns, I think.

41. *The Chairman.*] Did you know when the beacons were erected that they had provision for having lights in them?—Yes.

42. How is it they have never been lighted since?—The very one who put the windows there for the lights changed his mind afterwards, and has gone against the lights ever since.

43. Suppose you got your vessel inside, can you go up to Onehunga?—Yes; except it was a very dark night. The small steamers go up now.

44. We have had it in evidence that the vessels would have to anchor inside, and the only choice would be whether they would wait inside or outside?—The northern boats go up now. The channel is well buoyed. The danger is in getting into the harbour. Personally, it has nothing to do