Prices of Stores charged on Gumfields and at Auckland.

	Waihopo.	Waiharera.	Auckland.
Flour	8/6 (50 lb.)	8/6 (50 lb.)	6/0 (50 lb.)
Tea	2/0 per lb.	2/4 per lb.	1/3 per lb.
Sugar	0/3 ,, ,,	0/4 ,, ,,	0/2½ ,, tin.
Milk	0/9 ,, tin	0/10 ,, tin	0/6 ,, ,,
Candles	0/9 ,, lb.	0/10 ,, lb.	0/6 ,, lb.
Onions	0/3½ ,, ,,	0/3½ ,, ,,	0/1½ ,, ,,
Jam	0/6 ,, tin	0/6 ,, tin	0/5 ,, tin.
Potatoes	14/0 ,, cwt.	15/0 ,, cwt.	8/0 ,, cwt.
Bacon	0/11 ,, lb.	1/0 ,, lb.	0/9½ ,, lb.
Tinned beef ..	1/4 ,, tin	1/3 ,, tin	1/0 ,, tin.
Currants	0/10 ,, lb.	0/7 ,, lb.	0/5 ,, lb.
Hops	3/0 ,, ,,	2/0 ,, ,,	1/6 ,, ,,
Rice	0/4 ,, ,,	0/3½ ,, ,,	0/2½ ,, ,,
Cocoa	2/6 ,, ½ lb.	2/2 ,, ½ lb.	1/8 ,, ½ lb.
Sago	0/4 ,, lb.	0/3½ ,, lb.	0/2½ ,, lb.
Raisins	0/10 ,, ,,	0/8 ,, ,,	0/5 ,, ,,
Salt	0/2 ,, ,,	0/2 ,, ,,	1/0 ,, 20 lb.
Kerosene	5/6 ,, tin	5/6 ,, tin	4/8 ,, tin.
C. biscuits	0/6 ,, lb.	0/6 ,, lb.	0/3½ ,, lb.
Soap	1/0 ,, bar	1/0 ,, bar	0/6 ,, bar.
Baking-powder ..	2/6 ,, lb.	3/0 ,, lb.	1/9 ,, lb.
Sunlight soap ..	1/6 ,, box	1/4 ,, box	0/11 ,, box.

R. Hebden,
J. McAuley,
Secretaries, Auckland Gum-diggers' Union of Workers.

Information asked for by Storekeepers and Diggers as to the Commercial Aspects of the Gum Industry.

The following questions were submitted to me by the gum-buyers and representatives of the diggers:—

(1.) Who are the actual consumers of kauri-gum in Great Britain, United States of America, and Canada?
(2.) For what purposes do these consumers use kauri-gum?
(3.) Could we obtain samples of the kauri-gum as these consumers buy it for their particular purposes?
(4.) What prices are these consumers prepared to pay for the particular kind of kauri-gum they use?

I was not in a position to answer these questions, as, to enable one to do so, a representative would be required to travel through these countries to secure samples and gather the necessary information in a satisfactory manner on the spot.

I pointed out to the diggers that the matter of obtaining the information desired would involve a large outlay on the part of the Department in connection with the salary and travelling-expenses of such a representative. In reply the diggers stated that they were quite agreeable to pay an export duty of £1 per ton on all gums exported; and, as the yearly export exceeded some 8,000 tons, the revenue therefrom should not only provide for the expenses of such a representative, but should be more than ample to pay for a grading staff for this industry.

Mr. Rosse Trevor's Process of extracting Valuable Products from Kauri-swamp Peat.

While in Auckland Mr. Rosse Trevor, a chemist of that city, called on me with reference to his process for extracting valuable products from kauri-swamp peats. Mr. Trevor informed me that he had been experimenting at this process for some twelve years. He wished the Government to give him an opportunity of demonstrating the high commercial value of his invention.

I attach hereto Mr. Trevor's description of his process.

Auckland, 19th October, 1908.

Process for extracting Oils, Tar, and Gas from Kauri-swamp Peat.

The plant I have used is so constructed that it is continuous—that is to say, the peat put in from time to time, and the exhausted material drawn away. Also, as the peat sank down it came in contact with the greater heat, until the maximum heat was reached. When the peat was first placed in the extractor it was in a compact mass, and gradually as it approached the greater heats it separated, until at the last heat only a thin layer of peat was brought in contact with the heat. This is necessary because the whole of the component parts of the products must be brought off separately at their different temperatures — that is, at their respective boiling-points. All moisture (aqueous) must be driven off at or under 212° Fahr. Ordinary destructive distillation of kauri-peat will not give my products.

The chamber in which the soil is placed is connected with an expansion-chamber (which will keep warm during the process) by a suitable pipe (the tar separates out here), and from there to a second chamber which is used as a condenser, and which condenses most of the gas into oil. The uncondensed gas is then run through a condensing-worm, the oil drawn off, and the uncondensable gas collected if necessary. The gases coming over from the soil must be first introduced into an expansion-chamber as above, and not straight through a condensing-coil.