

134. Has it got over it now, or is it still affecting the industry to a certain extent?—I do not know. I have heard no mention of it lately.

135. *Mr. Myers.*] When did you establish your freezing-works?—Nearly two years ago.

136. And when did the other firm establish its freezing-works?—About six or eight years ago.

137. And may we take it that your own business has increased of late years?—Yes.

138. I hope that with your business your profits increase according to your statement?—I expect they do.

139. So that you have nothing to complain of personally?—Of course I have the interest of the fishing industry at heart.

140. I suppose you will act upon the principle of live and let live?—Yes, certainly.

141. Then why should you, who have been increasing your business and profits, and catching more fish and selling more fish, complain, or what do you complain of?—If I can see a way to do it much better still, and I am impeded, why should I not?

142. But you have already said that a larger quantity of fish is caught now than ever before?—Yes.

143. Would you mind telling me what was the best fishing-ground in this neighbourhood, say, ten years ago?—The Thames River for three months in the summer.

144. And at other times?—Different parts of the flats, according to the weather.

145. And I suppose it is fair to assume that a fishing-ground would vary?—More or less.

146. What is your best fishing-ground now?—I do not know, as I am not fishing at present.

147. But you have a pretty good general knowledge: you make inquiries amongst your men?—Yes.

148. Are there any particular fishing-grounds at the present time which are better than the same fishing-grounds were some years ago?—There is none but the Thames River I see any difference in.

149. The number of fishermen and of boats have increased since seventeen years ago: has there been an increase in the last five or six years?—Yes.

150. And there is no reason to believe that they are not all making a living?—No.

151. And some of them doing very much better?—Yes.

152. You have spoken of the number of dead fish?—Yes.

153. Do you suggest that these fish have died of starvation, or of what?—Of course, it is flounder principally. They are fish that live on the bottom, principally in the mud; and put them into silt instead of sea-mud, and they are lost. It may be starvation then.

154. I suppose fish are like everything else—if they cannot get food in one place they will go to another?—Yes, if it is not too late.

155. Then you would suggest these fish have been killed practically by starvation?—Yes.

156. *The Chairman.*] Are the fish found dead very thin, and do they show signs of emaciation?—No.

157. It is not a slow lingering death, but a sudden death?—Of course, we have not analysed them exactly. They may be blown out with wind and water.

158. *Mr. Moyses.*] Of your own knowledge, you do not know what the conditions are in the Waihou at the present time?—No, not since two years ago.

159. Have you yourself noticed any silt in the river, or what you know as to silt?—I have noticed the difference in the mud.

160. Have you taken any steps to see if there was any on the banks?—I have never taken any up and had it analysed.

161. Do I understand from you that, while fishing is bad in the Waihou, it is good in the Piako?—Yes, while I was fishing there.

162. Do you know Mr. Reddish?—Yes.

163. I think he gave evidence before the Warden a few months ago?—Yes.

164. On that occasion it was stated that your evidence would be the same as his?—Yes.

165. With your consent?—I did not hear his evidence, but I assume it would be practically the same thing.

166. Mr. Reddish in the evidence says, "There are more fish caught now than were caught five years ago. Occasionally catch fish in Piako. Not much fishing done there"?—Well, I agree that it is occasional.

167. But he says there is not much fishing done in the Piako?—It depends on the time of the year.

168. You have given the Commission to understand that the fishing has not fallen off in the Piako, and that there is a plentiful supply of fish there; but that it has fallen off in the Waihou?—Yes, in the season.

169. Do they not only occasionally fish in the Piako, and there is not much fishing done there at all?—Only in the season.

170. You admit there is not much fishing done in the Piako?—Not at this time of the year.

171. Do you think the evidence given by Mr. Reddish in respect to the Piako is pretty correct?—Yes.

172. You estimate the value of boat and gear at £500?—About that.

173. Is that an average value?—Hardly the average. It is rather overestimated, taken right through.

174. Do you not think that half would be nearer the mark?—No, nearly £400.

175. Mr. Reddish says, "I should think £300 fair value to put down for each boat, including fishing-tackle": do you agree with that?—Perhaps you will call Mr. Reddish for yourself. I have not gone into the figures exactly—it is merely a rough estimate.

176. I think the class of anchors used are mud anchors?—Yes; we have specially large flukes to hold the mud.