

177. Do these anchors hold on hard ground?—Equally as well.
 178. *Mr. Flatman.*] Where do you find most dead fish?—In the Thames River only.
 179. There has not been the same result in the Piako with the fishing there?—No.
 180. To what do you attribute that difference?—I can only attribute it to the bottom changing. If it were the nets doing it, we should get them equally in the Piako as in the Thames River.
 181. The bottom has not changed in the Piako in the same manner as in the Thames?—No.
 182. *The Chairman.*] Does the Harbour Board charge wharfage on all fish going out of the Thames by sea?—Wharfage on fish has only been charged in the last twelve months.

WILLIAM REDDISH examined. (No. 44.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Did you give this evidence before the Warden's Court on the 30th September, 1909: "William Reddish, on his oath, saith: Fisherman residing at Thames. I have been fishing all my life. There has been a marked difference in the fishing in the river during the last few years. The river used to support six or seven boats, and now a boat or two just go there occasionally. No fish there to catch. I think the fish are deprived of the food they used to get in the river. Something hard has formed on the bottom of the river in place of mud. Used principally to catch flatfish in the river. We get flounder both in deep water and on the flats. Flounders in the river get their food amongst the sea-worms and crabs which they get on the mud. The coating of the mud with this hard substance prevents the fish getting their food. The weather has an effect on the fishing—bad weather prevents us fishing. In summer-time we could formerly fish on the river when we could not fish outside. In summer-time we fish in shallow water. Formerly we used to get a good deal of fishing in the river—it is not so at the present time. We used generally to set our nets with long poles. We cannot do that now because the bottom is hard. This is between Opani Point and Kopu. About five hundred people dependent on fishing. About forty or fifty boats engaged in fishing. The fisherman after his expenses are paid should make £4 per week. His gross returns should be about £6 per week. The average is about three men in a boat—perhaps not quite that. I think it would be fair to say that after paying expenses about £20,000 a year is made at Thames by fishermen. The market price for flounders is 7d. per dozen for small and 1s. 9d. per dozen for large. In summer-time the retail price would be about double that. There are two freezing-works established at Thames in connection with the fishing industry. I should think £300 fair value to put down for each boat—including fishing-tackle. *Cross-examined:* During last five years fishing-boats and men have increased. Have noticed decrease of fish in river for perhaps last five years. Fish as a rule never go out of a river that is a spawning-bed. This river is a spawning-place. Only catch a few there now. There are more fish caught now than were caught five years ago. Occasionally catch fish at Piako. Not much fishing done there. *Re-examined:* A few years ago fishing was done by sailing-boats; it is all done now by oil-launches. That is the sole reason why there are more men employed in fishing and why more fish are caught"?
 —Yes.

2. Is that evidence correct?—Yes.
 3. Do you wish to add anything to it or take anything away from that evidence?—I do not think so. I may say that £300 only included the launch—it did not include the tackle. My boat cost £300 without the tackle.
 4. What did your tackle cost?—I could not say exactly. Something under £100.
 5. Your tackle wears out very considerably?—Yes.
 6. *Mr. McVeagh.*] How long has the fishing industry been established at the Thames?—Something like thirty years.
 7. During that time have any steps been taken by the Government to establish protected or breeding areas?—Not that I know of.

CECIL HAYWARD examined. (No. 45.)

1. *Mr. Bruce.*] You are a fisherman?—Yes.
 2. *The Chairman.*] You have heard the evidence of the previous witness, and confirm it in every particular?—Yes.

JAMES MONTEITH McLAREN examined. (No. 46.)

1. *Mr. Bruce.*] Up to two months ago you have been Engineer to the Thames County Council for a number of years?—Yes, for about twenty years.
 2. You were also at one time District Engineer for the Auckland Provincial Government?—Yes, in the early days.
 3. The area of your district at that time would take in Ohinemuri?—Yes.
 4. In September last did you have any samples taken out of the drains at Cryer's Landing, Wharepoa, and Omaha?—Yes, out of the swamp drains.
 5. And also from the bed of the river near Turua?—Rather above it.
 6. *The Chairman.*] We had evidence that there was a heavy flood in September: was that sample taken before or after that flood?—It was shortly after it.
 7. *Mr. Bruce.*] You took these samples for the purpose of discovering whether fine slimes from the tube mills in operation at Waihi and Karangahake were coming down the river?—Yes. Different statements were being made that they were not reaching there, and I took the samples to prove the point.
 8. What did you do with the samples?—I brought them to the Thames and handed them to Mr. Baker, Director of the School of Mines, to analyse.