

offer something in return for their new needs. I see no more reason to assume the Maoris were blind to the prospect of economic and social betterment and the need of remunerative work to achieve it than to assume that during these years they did not require flour, tobacco, or clothing.

Mr. Rufus Oxley, a member of the Ngatipoumoana tribe, who was called by Mr. Spratt deposed that he remembered that a lot of younger men did not want to leave the area and that they were more or less compelled to go out by the older people. They made them go out. They wanted them to go and work because there was no living on the river for them. He also said that as time went on the Maori was gradually dropping his fern-root food and getting used to European foods—flour, sugar, tea, and so forth—and they found out that unless they had the money to buy these things they simply went without. This made the younger people go out to work.

Mr. T. W. Downes in his paper (*sup. cit.*) of the 17th December, 1919, said :

To-day on several of the upper Wanganui rapids there are the remains of old patuna though the huts of the adjoining villages have long since been obliterated by time.

The abandonment of the villages, the consequential excursions of the Maoris, are, I think, only consistent with the breaking in and progress of the district. Non-remunerative pursuits were inevitably and naturally abandoned for those sufficiently remunerative to support changing habits, deeds, and requirements. The Maori change to economic labour in place of uneconomic labour was to the benefit and advantage of the race, and the economic advantage, in my opinion, far outweighed any loss. I see no cause for compensation for a change over from an uneconomic way of life to an economic one or for a change of diet to a great extent voluntary. Nor can I attribute to their fishing any assessable potential value in 1903. Actual damages caused to their eel-weirs might, if claimed at the time the steam service was inaugurated, have been recoverable, but it is now too late for such claims and in any event, on the representations of Mr. Ballance, then Prime Minister, the Maoris agreed to this service as being of advantage to them and some disturbance of eel-weirs may well have been contemplated as necessary for a clear passage.

The loss of gravel is quite a different question and for this loss I think compensation is due to the Maori owners.

This second ground for compensation, does not, according to Mr. Spratt, present the difficulty he experienced in finding a money value for alleged loss on the first ground. He asks for compensation under two headings : first, for gravel taken over past years ; second, for future royalties. If, however, this claim has been brought immediately after the passing of the Coal-mines Act, the claim would have been for the potential value of the gravel in the bed of the river as a marketable asset. Compensation must be assessed as at the time of taking—that is, the date of the passing of the Coal-mines Act, 1903—and if at that time no gravel had been taken from the river and marketed or sold on a royalty basis, it would have been difficult to assess the value of the asset save on a very speculative basis.

A statement extracted from the books of the Wanganui River Trust shows that the amount received by the Trust from royalties for gravel taken from 1918 to November, 1940, came to £1,383 14s. The actual royalty per yard is given only in three or four cases and varies from 3d. to 6d. and 1s. The minute-books of the Trust between 1924 to 1940 refer to rates of royalty in 1924 as 1s. per cubic yard, in 1925 and 1926 as 6d. per cubic yard to local bodies and at 1s. per cubic yard to others.

From the minute-book it appears that the Taumarunui Borough Council were allowed to take road metal free up to a royalty of £250 and in 1927 took 2,000 yards free for use on the Te Maire Road. In 1930, 4d. per cubic yard was charged to local bodies, 6d. per cubic yard to others, and no charge was made for metal supplied to the