

sent, and, on their return, they were sued by the tradesmen. The old people had nothing but their land to depend on, and as that was insufficient to maintain them they were plunged into debt.

G. P. Mutu stated that before 1870 the people of Kaiapoi cultivated the land, afterwards they took to letting it and left themselves short for other purposes. The collection of money for the Middle Island claims was the cause that first plunged them into monetary difficulties, because of their people drawing their rents in advance to obtain food and to contribute towards the expenditure needed to establish their claims. The result of this was a loss on both sides. They lost in the first place through only getting a reduced amount of rent through drawing it in advance, and they had also lost the amount they had advanced as well. Some of the additional lands they had received were unfit for cultivation. The lands in the Oxford district were unfit for cultivation. As an instance of the poor character of the bush, such portions as were let only brought a rental of 1s. 3d. per acre for the first seven years, 2s. 6d. for the next, and 5s. for the residue. The Rakaia land was better; some portions of it let at 2s. and 2s. 6d. per acre and other parts at Oxford 5s. per acre. It was not under lease at present. Some parties had been occupying it temporarily at 2s. to 3s. per acre, but they had to relinquish it because it did not pay them. The average rental of the Kaiapoi land is £1 per acre. Self and others who receive rent from lands on the West Coast are better off; but those who have to depend on their land in this locality had a very precarious life, and have to eke out a living by fishing for eels and other fish. The most of the fishery easements allotted us by the Court are destroyed. The one at Rotoroa has been drained. Waimaiaia has been rendered useless by sea encroachment, and Houhoupounamu has been drained. We cannot obtain eels from these easements now; formerly we used to get them in quantities. Waimakariri is the only river that fish can be got in, and we are now barred from going there. Shearing and harvesting are the only employments that we can earn wages at, and gathering cocksfoot seed. In former days, when the rate of shearing averaged from £1 to £1 10s. per hundred, a good deal of money was earned; but since the price has been lowered, and the Natives have to compete with shearers from other colonies, not much employment is now obtainable.

Hoani Maaka stated that the only mode of obtaining a livelihood was by hard labour, but owing to want of proper training, the value of it is lowered; whereas if he had been educated at all, possibly he could use his knowledge to a better advantage. The 14 acres at Kaiapoi was all the people had to live on; some had none, and the others had to support them out of their earnings. The only source of livelihood was by labouring for the Europeans, and some through hard work and exposure caught cold and died. We cannot farm our land, for want of room for cultivation and stock as well. Fishing is another source of livelihood, but many get afflicted with illness through exposure to the wet and cold. This creates medical expenses, and accounts are contracted from £10 to £40. The 14 acres would probably be enough land for one person, but is insufficient for himself and family.

Hohepa Huria stated that his *mate* was having nine persons to keep off 14 acres. He had other land elsewhere, but the rent derived from it was very small, altogether insufficient to provide for so many. The Ngaitahu meetings had cost him £20. Receives 4s. 6d. an acre from some land at Rakaia, and that is all he has to depend on to pay all his expenses, the doctor included. We are prevented now from getting fish which afforded us some assistance before. Medical attendance is very expensive. The doctor appointed by the Government is only expected to attend to the old and destitute persons. The young people with growing families are the worst off. Before the union we used to get work from the settlers, but we cannot now. The land we have is altogether inadequate to our wants.

Poihipi te Hua stated that the *mate* commenced with the 14 acres. The rental from a section of that size was about £15 a year. This is insufficient to maintain a number of persons on. I have to go fishing to get a living. Contract debts, and get summoned, and am driven to obtain money in advance on my rent: the result is that there is none left for my maintenance; but I am compelled to follow this course to get free from my liabilities for the time being. I have some land at Little River, for which I receive a rental of 5s. per acre. I am unable to get work now as I am too old to labour. Fishing is the only means available to me to supplement my livelihood. I usually camp near the fishing-place and live there to keep out of debt. The old people are unable to get a living.

Taituha Hape: I consider that the first injustice that was done to the Ngaitahu was the sale by the Ngatitōa of the land north of Kaiapoi. The lands belonging to the Natives other than the Kaiapoi land would only let for small rentals, entirely inadequate to support the people who owned it. In some cases these lands were let on a twenty-one years' lease, varying from 1s. to 1s. 6d. per acre owing to the inferior class of land. The 14 acre farms at Kaiapoi were all the people had to depend on. The supplementary land belonging to them was comparatively useless. The rents of the Kaiapoi lands in most cases had been drawn for several years in advance. The areas owned by the people were too small to crop. Debts were contracted, and tradesmen were urgent for payment; this drove the people to obtain money in advance on their rents, and the result of this is that they have nothing left to live on, consequently they have to go fishing to get food, and trouble arises over it ("*e noho mate nga tangata e moho nei*").

Henare Karetai, who spoke on behalf of his mother, Oriwia Paratene, stated that she did not receive a share of the purchase-money, nor yet any benefit from the promised schools or hospitals. Came to Kaiapoi in 1874; and in 1875 the *kohe moni* for Kemp's purchase commenced. Sold her stock, and obtained money in advance on her rents to enable her to contribute to the fund then being established to prosecute their claims. All the expenditure had been lost. Land provided insufficient.

Hopa Paura stated that his land was insufficient to maintain himself and wife and daughter. He lived at Taumutu, one of the worst places to be found. Tried to get a living by catching and selling fish, but had to abandon the pursuit as it did not pay. Afterwards went harvesting, and