

Subsequently witness stated: I have here a copy of Mr. E. Crow's report as to the quantity and values of our oils per ton of *pukau* as taken by him from our Wairoa property, known as Wydur's. These values work out at £9 7s. 6d. per ton of *pukau* for oil, and the samples were taken from a bank of 7,000 tons awaiting treatment. The report reads:—

“Wanganui, 13th December, 1918.

“Mr. G. E. Alderton, Chairman of Directors, Parenga Gumfields (Limited), Auckland.

“DEAR SIR,—

“The following is the result of my investigations into the oil value of the sample of *pukau* collected from the heaps on Mr. Wydur's property at Red Hill, near Te Kopuru.

“The heaps from which the sample was collected represent a good average sample of the *pukau* which is being excavated from the property during gum-digging operations.

“Before commencing my tests I studied the methods adopted and results obtained by previous investigators, who apparently had spent much time in distilling, to destruction, the peat collected from the gum areas.

“In the first place it was apparent that the results to be expected from the treatment of peat would be much poorer than those from the selected gum-chip material known as *pukau*. Secondly, this dry distillation produced large volumes of incondensable gases accompanied by a small flow of oil.

“The process from which the following average yield was obtained is that known to you as the ‘wet process’; by this method of treatment only a very small proportion of the vapours liberated is incapable of being condensed, therefore in the flow from the worn-mouth oil predominates.

“Six different samples averaged a yield of crude oil equivalent to 75 gallons per ton of dehydrated *pukau*. This crude oil was redistilled and collected in three fractions at the following temperatures: Fraction 1, up to 100° C., 22 per cent. collected; fraction 2, 100° to 135° C., 38 per cent. collected; fraction 3, 135° to 175° C., 20 per cent. collected; residue liquid pitch, 20 per cent. collected.

“Fraction No. 1 is a clear, light, highly volatile spirit possessing powerful solvent qualities, and would find a ready market in numerous industries. I estimate its value at 3s. per gallon. No. 2 fraction is an oil possessing good body, and would be absorbed chiefly by manufacturers of paints, varnishes, and kindred trades; my estimate of its value is 2s. 6d. per gallon. No. 3 fraction is a heavy greasy oil, and with a little further treatment would be quite suitable for lubrication; its estimated value is 4s. per gallon. The estimated value of the pitch residue is 6d. per gallon.

“Including distilling, refining, packages, transit to ship's side, interest, depreciation, and wages, my estimate of cost of producing the oil ready for the consumer is 6d. per gallon.

“Yours faithfully,

“E. Crow, Engineer and Chemist.”

J. B. PARKINSON, representing New Zealand Marble Company, examined.

I think the Committee had some evidence submitted to it at Nelson in regard to the marble-deposit at Takaka. It must be obvious to the Committee that there is a scarcity of durable building-material in the Dominion. We have in the Takaka Valley a very fine deposit of a very high grade. There is an exhibition or sample of our marble at the entrance to the new Parliamentary Buildings, Wellington. The particular class of marble which we are trying to develop—the class of marble to which we are devoting our energies—is building-marble. We want to be able to put it on the market at a reasonable rate, so that public bodies and private people may be able to use the marble. The marble that we are using is dove-grey in colour. Our trouble seems to be like that of many others starting new industries—we are trying to develop this industry, but we are short of capital. We want to be able to put this marble on the market so that it will be universally used. We hope as time goes on and as facilities improve to be able to produce the marble at a marketable rate. I suggest that the Committee recommend that a bonus be offered, so as to help us to put this natural product on the market. As members of the Committee know, the cost of timber has gone up and is still going up, and timber is getting scarcer, whereas this marble is there in huge quantities for us to put on the market. I have no hesitation in saying that the texture of the stone is as fine as that of any imported marble that has come into this country. Up to the present time this deposit of marble has remained unutilized, and nobody has taken an interest in developing it. It is a new thing, and we have to work against the imported article. Our marble is one of the finest working marbles. It is “out on its own” as a stone for working-quality. We have some twenty men employed at the quarry and engaged in the industry. We are not a company; we are only a few private individuals. We have not floated the concern into a company. We have expended about £10,000 in connection with the industry. We are hoping to get a big output. We wish the Committee to use its influence to have the material specified for use in some of the new Government buildings. We would very much like to get Government tests made of this marble. I suggest that the Committee should recommend that the Government offer a bonus of 1s. per cubic foot to enable us to put this marble on the market to cope with all the requirements, so that the marble may be universally used as being one of the best things of the sort New Zealand could possibly have. The adoption of this marble for building purposes would mean doing away with the cost of maintenance. The stone practically lasts for all time. Aberdeen is built of granite. I do not see any reason why New Zealand, having this deposit of marble, should not be built of marble so far as its buildings are concerned.

To Mr. Hudson: If the industry were assisted by a bonus, or if some similar form of assistance were given, I have no doubt that this marble would come into general use for private build-