

23. Can you point out to the Committee any parts of that Bill with regard to which you would like to make any suggestions?—I think on the whole the Bill is a very good one. I got a copy of it, and I called a meeting of the fruit-growers in the district on last Saturday to get their opinion, as I was to come here and give evidence. We considered the Bill very carefully, and all the members of the association expressed themselves as satisfied with the Bill as a whole. They regretted, however, that Auckland could not be brought in under it with us. They all thought that if that district was not brought under the Act it might become the hotbed of disease, and that it might be spread all over the country, as they could send fruit to any place beyond their own boundaries. Another thing that the members of the association took exception to was to subsection (3) of clause 8, which gives the Inspectors power supposing they find any disease of any sort in your orchard, American blight, or apple scab, or codlin-moth, to say that your orchard shall be put under quarantine, and to prevent you sending to market any fruit at all even supposing it should be clean. We think that the Inspector might take extreme measures under that clause, and the fruit-growers in my district do not think it would be quite right to give an Inspector such power, for certainly the codlin-moth would not affect apricots, peaches, and plums.

24. You mean that if the provisions of that clause were strictly enforced it would press too hardly on fruit-growers?—Yes; it might ruin a fruit-grower if put into force too strictly. He might have apricots and peaches and plums ready to pick, and before the quarantine could be taken off they might be half destroyed. They are fruit which must go when they are ready to send, and you cannot keep them back for a week or two. We are all very much in favour of not being allowed to send out anything which shows any sign of disease such as are mentioned in this Bill; but we think it would be very hard that we should not be allowed to send out clean fruit. Even if there were disease in a garden it would not affect much of the fruit, and we think it would be hard that we should not be allowed to send out that fruit. We might be ruined under that clause as it stands if the Inspector chose, and we should like to see the clause altered in the way I have indicated. Then there is another clause, No. 17, which provides that no person shall be entitled to any compensation for anything done by an Inspector in the discharge of his duties. No doubt in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred it would not be right that they should receive anything, but we think that if a grower could prove that an Inspector caused valuable trees to be dug up, and if the grower could prove that there was no disease in those trees, it would be very hard on him that they should be destroyed without any chance of compensation. We think that if an Inspector caused any great damage to be done to a garden or orchard, and that it was done wrongly, we should be entitled to claim some kind of compensation.

25. What about vines, do you grow them?—We do grow them, but we have no disease in them except the mealy-bug, and we keep that down very well with sulphur.

26. Have you any phylloxera?—No.

27. Are these all the points you would like to call attention to?—Those are the only points in which we would like very much to have the Bill amended. Of course we should like the Auckland growers to be brought in if possible, but if they cannot we shall have to put up with it. I may say that the Association at Mosgiel asked me to speak for them. They could not very well send a man to represent them, and they asked me to say that they were very much in favour of the Bill, with the exception of the clauses I have mentioned.

28. And you think that generally this Bill, with the amendments you have pointed out, would be acceptable in the south?—Yes; in our part of the country and throughout the south, as far as I am aware. I can, of course, only speak for the Teviot and Mosgiel districts, and I think those are the principal fruit-growing districts in the south.

29. *Mr. Flatman.* I understood the witness to say that in his opinion the oyster-shell scale should be included in the schedule, is it so?—I think it is included in the schedule, but if it is not in the Bill it is very necessary that it should be there. Then there is another pest that it would be almost necessary to have in the schedule, because it is imported from other places, although it is not very strong as yet, but it would be very troublesome if it got a footing, and that is the black aphid, or peach-aphid. I think that should be well looked after, because if it got into a garden and was not taken notice of, in a couple of years it would be very difficult to get rid of.

30. Would ordinary spraying eradicate it?—Yes; spraying with soft-soap and kerosene. We find that very effective.

31. *Mr. Kirk.* Have you tried mixing carbolic acid with the spray, because it is very effective?—No.

32. *Mr. Massey.* You told us that before bandaging you practically lost the whole of your fruit; what varieties of fruit?—Apples and pears, or most kinds of pears.

33. You told us that you and the other settlers cut down a lot of your apple-trees when they were affected with the codlin-moth; do you think that cutting down the trees had anything to do with getting rid of the pest?—I do not think so. Of course, we got rid of the pest when we got rid of the fruit; but cutting down trees would not take it from the trees that were left.

34. How many trees did you allow to remain?—I had an acre of young apple trees by themselves, and I have a few of the old trees, of good varieties, which I allowed to stand, and I have succeeded in saving most of the fruit from them which I formerly lost.

35. How many trees did you cut down?—About as many trees as would cover 3 acres.

36. Do you find that the moth is worse on some varieties of apples than on others?—Well, the probability is that they are to be found in every variety. You might save a few of the French crab, but very few.

37. *Mr. Kirk.* Do you think that with spraying and bandaging you would not have to cut down the trees?—If we had known of those remedies before we should not have cut down the trees.

38. You are satisfied that it would not have been necessary to cut them down?—Yes.