

21. Would you be surprised to hear that Mr. Piper said that he was requested by the president to come here?—Not at all. He may call himself president to the association, but that office does not exist any more than that of secretary.

22. You are not connected with the association?—No, unless in this way: that I did belong to it ten years ago or something like that.

23. Then you do not represent any association here?—No.

24. And you speak for yourself only?—Yes; but I have been through every orchard in the district, as it is my business to go to them.

25. What size is your orchard?—I have an acre of land at Nelson, and I have another acre at Blenheim, where I grow apricots.

26. Have you made it pay?—It paid at Blenheim.

27. Not in Nelson?—Well, the boys stole the apples.

28. Who asked you to come here and give evidence?—No person. I wrote to Mr. Ritchie and offered to come.

29. Are the Nelson fruit-growers generally in favour of this Bill?—They think it is too stringent.

30. You do not think so?—Yes; I have said I think it is a little too stringent to begin with. The Nelson District is shaped in this way: that up along the railway-line to Wakefield and Foxhill is not the largest fruit-growing district of Nelson, but in the direction of Takaka, Riwaka, Motueka, and up the river to Ngatimote fruit is grown for commercial purposes. Every man there is growing fruit to make a living out of it, and there is not one of them who belongs to the Nelson Fruit-growers' Association. It is from that district that we get most of our fruit, and the people there are growing their fruit and cultivating it properly.

31. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Then you speak for them when you say that this Bill is too severe?—I think only one or two of them have seen a copy of the Bill.

32. *Mr. Massey.*] What particular provisions do you object to?—That with regard to infected districts, I think, should not be so strict. When this Nelson Fruit-growers' Association was in existence they met and discussed one of these Bills, and the only thing they could agree to was this: that the importation of fruit from outside of New Zealand should be prohibited on account of the danger of the fruit in the district being blighted; but the Nelson fruit-growers were to be at liberty to send their infected fruit wherever they liked.

33. How long ago was that?—About eight years. That was the only result after twelve months' or two years' talking over the matter. At that time there was no blight in the Wairarapa district, and we were sending infected fruit up there to stock it with blight.

34. Am I to understand that the Nelson fruit-growers succeeded in stocking the Wairarapa with codlin-moth and other pests?—I think so.

35. You have used remedies in your orchard for all these pests?—Yes.

36. Will you kindly tell the Committee the remedy you use for the codlin-moth?—Some people want to get rid of it in one act, but there are three or four things you must do if you start out to get rid of it. You must bandage your trees. By doing that you catch a lot of the grubs. Then you must syringe the trees when the apple is formed and the blight is on the tree, and you then kill the young grub. You use the lime and salt and sulphur mixture on the trees in the winter time. This is not recognised as the remedy, but it helps to kill the pest. If a new hand uses this mixture and any of it gets on his hands he will find that it will burn the skin off. When the codlin-moth comes out of the apple it spins a thread, and with that it lowers itself to the ground. If it does not strike the branches of the tree, it goes right down to the ground. It next crawls back up the stem, and is then caught in the bandages. In coming down the tree, if it happens to strike a branch it may crawl down that branch and get caught in the fork, or under a loose piece of bark. Then, when you are using this mixture which is recommended for the scale-blight, if it touches any of the cocoons which the grub spins it burns them up and kills the grub. With the bandaging of the trees when the fruit is formed you will kill a very large percentage of the grubs. But there is no use one man doing it, or half a dozen, if there is one man in the neighbourhood with two or three trees who will do nothing.

37. How often do you remove the bandages?—About a couple of times in the year.

38. Do you say twice a year?—Once or twice.

39. Have you many apple-trees?—About twenty.

40. When you talk of these remedies do you speak from your own experience?—No, not from what I have used myself, but from what I have seen in other orchards, and also in California, where I have been fruit-preserving.

41. You say that you bandage twice a year; how often do you spray?—You keep your bandages on all the time and kill the grub.

42. But how often do you spray for codlin-moth?—It depends a deal upon the weather. If you spray the trees and it comes on heavy rain it will very probably wash off all the spray, and then you want to go in for fresh spraying, but if the bandaging is well carried out you will catch nearly all the grubs, and, of course, every grub would have been a moth.

43. Am I to understand that bandaging would be effectual without spraying?—You must use both.

44. Do you often spray in the season?—I fancy about twice.

45. *Mr. Brown.*] That is in the Nelson District?—Yes. Different climates require different usages.

46. *Mr. Lang.*] You say that the difference of climate in different parts of the colony affects the moths?—Of course it does; they would breed more in some climates than in others.

47. In a warmer climate you would have greater difficulty in dealing with them?—Yes; you would have to spray more often.

48. They would breed more quickly?—Yes.