

86. With regard to other pests?—With regard to other pests I have probably had as much experience as any person in the Australasian Colonies. I find that there are no pests which may not be easily controlled with the efficient remedies that are recommended by the Department of Agriculture. As one of the Instructors appointed by the Government, I have taken my spray-pump through the country, and visited various orchards and given instruction and object-lessons in spraying; and I can say that in all cases where the various remedies recommended by the department have been properly applied they have given the most satisfactory results.

87. Your district is the South Island?—Yes; but during the past season I have done a considerable amount of work in the North Island. I have visited the greater portion of the North of Auckland districts.

88. Do the orchardists generally spray and bandage, or do they not?—To speak honestly, on the whole the Auckland orchards are very much neglected. Very few orchardists carry out any systematic spraying, but those who have done so have derived very good results. Unfortunately, in the Auckland districts there is a tendency to depend upon the aid of the friendly insect-destroyers. In all cases where you can show me that the friendly insect is capable of coping with the encroachment of the pest, and of keeping it in control, I should endeavour to have its assistance; but I say that the natural antagonists are not capable of coping with this pest, and the best way is to use spraying.

89. You have read this Bill; probably you have had something to do with preparing it?—I have read the Bill and I thoroughly endorse its provisions. In fact, I think that if such a Bill passes, and its provisions are carried out in a proper spirit, it will be the means of ultimately building up a very prosperous industry in the colony. The difficulty I find at the present time in visiting the various districts of the colony is that where one man will spray and do all that is necessary to keep his orchard clean, he has neighbours who will do nothing. Probably it is a large grower, who has spent a great deal of money in establishing an orchard, and who is constantly endeavouring to keep it clean, and there are men just outside his boundary-fence who have a few trees, and who are not growing fruit for profit, and these people do nothing to prevent the spread of disease. Something is required to compel such men as these to do something necessary to keep their fruits free from pests. They are now infested with pests, and it is they who spread the pests throughout the country.

90. You believe that this Bill will do something in the direction of preventing that?—I believe that it will be a very great aid to the fruit-grower, and at the same time it will be the chief means of building up a very important industry in the colony.

91. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Can you give the Committee any particular reasons why the Auckland fruit-growers seem to have such strong objection to compulsion in this matter?—I think the reason is simply this, that the growers in Auckland have an idea that all people had to do was to buy a piece of land, dig some holes in it, plant trees in them, and leave the rest to Nature. They do not seem inclined to work.

92. But in contradiction to that, some of the Auckland fruit-growers have told the Committee that they have used bandages, and have used spraying, and they would be only too glad to carry the provisions of the Act into force if the department was able to show them any specific that would keep this pest down?—As regards the codlin-moth, does it not seem strange that they would not succeed if they only took and used Paris green? It has been found most efficient in every part of the world except Auckland. I have visited the Auckland districts during the past season, and I had great difficulty in finding an orchard where systematic spraying was carried on. I will go further and say that it was with great difficulty that I could find a proper spray-pump in the northern districts.

93. Could you say whether the difference in climate between the Auckland Provincial District and the colder districts of the south would result in greater difficulty in keeping this pest down?—I do not think so. Of course, there is a greater rainfall in the northern districts, but I speak from my own experience in the Auckland district as to combating the codlin-moth. Some years ago I was in charge of the estate of the late Hon. James Williamson at the Pah. At the time I took charge the proprietor told me that fully 95 per cent. of the fruit was destroyed by the codlin-moth. I undertook a systematic system of spraying and bandaging. I did not delegate the work to others, but I did it myself, and I did it thoroughly. First of all I got proper materials. We had a good spray-pump, and the work was done most thoroughly. Two years afterwards it was almost an impossibility to find an apple in that orchard infested with the codlin-moth. It was an isolated orchard. There was not a dirty neighbour to reinfest the orchard. Therefore I say what I did in Auckland, and did successfully, others can do if they go the right way about it. In further reply to your question, I may say, in reference to the damage done to the trees by spraying, that there is no doubt there are instances in the Auckland district where slight damage has been done to the foliage, but in all the cases that I found it arose from using inferior grades of Paris green that contained soluble arsenic. On the other hand, Blundell, Spence, and Co.'s mixture with 48 per cent. of insoluble arsenic does no damage; but where an inferior grade of Paris green has been used damage has been done to the foliage. It was the fault of the growers in having procured a cheap and unreliable grade of Paris green.

94. Could you give the Committee any idea from a commercial point of view of the cost of doing what you claim to have done with this particular orchard, at per acre, or in some way?—Of course, I have not an exact account of the cost, but I can give you some idea. Of course, the difference in cost would depend upon the appliances with which you worked. I found in the northern district very few people have a proper spray-pump, which is necessary to do the work efficiently and quickly. There is as much difference between the pumps used as there is between putting two men into two 500-acre fields of wheat, one with an old-fashioned scythe and the other with a modern reaper-and-binder. The pump that I advocate is one with a large air-