

129. *Mr. Millar.*] As a chemist, have you ever heard or known of any process whereby the taste of wood-naphtha can be taken out of methylated spirit?—Yes, there is a process, but it requires distillation.

130. It is such an expensive process that it would not pay?—It would be against the present law to make use of it, because the present law will not allow of spirit-distillation.

131. Assuming that it could be made commercial, is there no other country where it would have been adopted?—Oh yes. It is used in Germany at the present time. They use it—*i.e.*, denatured—in the colour industry. They denature their alcohol, and I think they are allowed—I am speaking from memory—under certain conditions to purify the once-used methylated spirit. They are allowed to denature the spirit there in a great many ways, according to the industry for which they intend the spirit to be used. For instance, in the dye industry they denature with colours.

132. Do you not think there is a fortune in front of the man who can find out a cheap way of distilling methylated spirit so as to make it absolutely free from all taste?—Yes, undoubtedly, if the law would allow him to do it.

133. The law does allow people in certain countries, does it not?—Not to abuse it in that way. If in Germany the law did allow a man to distil methylated spirit, or denature it in any way, they would stop him from making use of it as spirits of wine. He must use any rerectified spirit for the same purposes again. It is only in his own industry that he is allowed to use it. Such a process is always under a proper Excise officer's control.

134. I suppose that, as a chemist, you know how this methylated spirit can be cleaned in the way it is done at the present time?—Yes.

135. It is no secret process?—It is not generally known.

136. You would be surprised, then, if I showed you it stated in the *Scientific American* of six years ago?—No, because I know it has appeared in one or two scientific journals.

137. You know the whole process—it is simply to pass chlorine gas through the methylated spirit?—That will do it to an extent, but there is another process.

138. That is the common process that is known to almost all chemists?—Yes.

139. Then, there is another process whereby the chlorine gas is taken out?—That is so.

140. So that you or any other individual could, if you liked, clear the methylated spirit and manufacture the cheap perfumes that you say are being manufactured by these people?—Yes, if the law allowed us to, but I do not think the law does allow us.

141. The law must allow it, as it is being done now?—I myself think it is debatable. In the first place, we were given methylated spirit to use as methylated spirit, and not to use as uncustomed goods. I should say that any spirit at present in the colony, such as cleaned spirit, is uncustomed goods, and liable to seizure. It has not paid the proper duty. The law says, "You must pay at the rate of 16s. a gallon on all spirits of wine other than spirits of wine which have been methylated or denatured in some other way," and under that law alone I think that any person carrying on such a process would be liable to have to forfeit his goods as uncustomed goods. I think that was fought out on the Continent and in Great Britain. It went from one Court to another, and it was at last decided by the Privy Council that the point was not debatable at all.

142. What is the duty on the cheap perfumes imported now?—£1 10s. a liquid gallon.

143. Are they imported in bottles?—In any way, I believe.

144. (To Mr. Glasgow) Is that the duty, Mr. Glasgow?—Yes, on spirituous perfumes.

145. (To witness) I suppose the bulk of the cheap perfumes—those that you find sold by drapers—and all that sort of thing, are being imported now?—I could not say.

146. Would it do any harm to the colony to embark on an industry that would cut out that importation?—Only to the revenue.

147. The first thing to be considered is, is it to be the revenue or the encouragement of industry in the colony: which, in your opinion, is the more essential?—Such a process as this, I think, should be condemned. If it is intended to allow manufacturers to embark on an industry such as that, the thing ought to be put on a sound footing, so that people could distil perfumery in the way they can in any other country.

148. Supposing that we allowed the Bill to go through as it is at the present time, but struck the word "perfume" out, would there be any harm done, when the people were protected against the manufacture of this stuff for adulteration?—I think so. You cannot get a fairly decent article out of that. It would be only a very common kind of perfume.

149. As a matter of fact, it is only lavender-water and bay-rum that are made out of it?—Yes, I believe so.

150. Then, you mean to say that the manufacture of those two things under this process is going to seriously injure your business?—Yes, I think so.

151. Were you one of those who approached the Customs Department and advised them of this matter?—No, I do not think so. We approached the Customs Department and asked them what the law was on the subject.

152. Were you one of those who went and inquired about it?—We inquired what the law was on the matter.

153. Did you give any information as to this?—No; no definite information.

154. *Mr. Hardy.*] Supposing you thought, as a colonist, that some one was evading the law, would you not think it your duty, whether you were interested or not, to inform the constituted authority?—Certainly; in fact, I think it is an evasion of the tariff, and is not right.

155. You do not think it would be derogatory to any man's honour to tell if any one was doing wrong?—No, certainly not, if I thought it was wrong.

156. Do you think that at the present time there is an evasion of the Act?—I do not think