

omitted. I think the vendor should have the opportunity when he supplies the sample of stating whether the seeds so supplied are either for permanent pasture, temporary pasture, or for surface sowing. We find in the South Island that we often have applications—and I think I am right in stating that these applications are very often from tenants of Crown lands—for seeds of a low grade for surface sowing. Naturally if there is the demand it creates the supply. I think that the vendor for his own protection should be allowed to state what purpose the seed is to be offered for.

24. *Hon. Sir W. J. Steward.*] Where would you put that?—I would put that in the schedule of the Bill. It should be put on the sample packets by the vendor.

25. *Mr. Rutherford.*] You mentioned, Mr. Waters, the “agricultural conscience”: being a farmer myself, I should like to ask you if you think this Bill was introduced to protect the agriculturalist or the city merchant?—I take it that it was introduced to protect the agriculturalist—the country gentleman.

26. The agriculturalist?—Yes.

27. Then, do you think there was a necessity for a Bill of this kind to protect the agriculturalist from inferior seeds?—Well, I do not think there was any great necessity for it, because the competition of the seed trade has led to a very high class of seed being offered. As a rule in New Zealand the standard is a very high one. I have only heard of one or two instances in which the seed has been skilfully adulterated.

28. By the seed-merchants?—Yes.

29. That is the point I wish to make plain. Should not the Bill be amended in the direction of protecting the farmer? If a farmer, you may buy seed from sample, and when you get the seed on your farm you may find it is not the same seed at all, and if you have taken delivery of that seed at a railway-station you have no recourse. You can cart the lot home, but if you remove it from the station it is at your own risk, and this is very inconvenient for the farmer—take my case, thirty-four miles to a railway-station and thirty-six miles to a shipping station. I think, if anything, the Bill should be amended in the direction of protecting the innocent farmer—the man with the elastic conscience—from the seed people?—Well, that brings up a very large subject; but I should say if any farmer finds himself treated in that way he should change his seed-merchant at once. I should like to say that I did not intend to disparage the “agricultural conscience” in any way. All I meant to infer was that in the detection of weeds and in sampling the farmer has not had the training of the seed-merchant.

30. *Hon. Sir W. J. Steward.*] You mentioned, Mr. Waters, that you wished the word “vendor” inserted in section 6?—I would prefer “owner” personally.

31. But the previous witness stated “vendor,” and you said you would accept that?—Yes.

32. Then you point out a difficulty in regard to the seed-merchant who is selling as an agent. Supposing we were to add to the interpretation clause a definition of the word “vendor,” would these words carry out what you wish: “‘Vendor’ shall mean the person from whom the seed is actually sold or offered for sale, unless such person sells as agent for another, in which case the principal shall be deemed the vendor?” Would that be what you want?—Yes, I think so.

*Mr. Ritchie.* In section 6 Mr. Kaye suggested that it should be altered to read “The Secretary for Agriculture, should he have cause to consider the sample submitted shows adulteration or inferior seeds, may from time to time publish in such manner as he thinks fit,” &c. The insertion of these words will limit the publication of examinations to only those seeds showing adulteration, while the vendor of pure seeds would not get the benefit of the publication; and I think that would be a mistake, because we shall issue from time to time a leaflet, and if you limit us by these words we could not publish the names of those who are selling pure seeds.

*Mr. Kaye.* I see what you mean. But our object is, of course, that those who adulterate their seeds should be shown up. We do not want a mistake made by publishing the names of those who have not done anything wrong.

*Mr. Ritchie.* Supposing we got a hundred samples from Christchurch. Mr. Kirk goes through these. He presents his report, and on this we issue a leaflet, showing so-many from your firm and so-many from other people. If we were limited to only those showing adulteration or inferior germination, or with foreign matter in them, your seeds which were absolutely pure would not be mentioned in the report at all. They would be left out.

*Mr. Kaye.* I think you only want to publish the names of those people who are in the wrong.

*Mr. Ritchie.* I think we ought to publish the names of those people who are in the right, too. It is a matter that should be carefully considered.

*Mr. Kirk.* I will not detain the Committee except to make some few remarks with regard to the proposed alteration to subsection (3) of section 4. It has been proposed to strike out the words “together with such further particulars as he thinks desirable.” I would like to say that if these words are taken out it prevents any chance of making any remark at all as to the seed being, say, of bad colour, badly broken, irregular in size, &c., or anything of that kind. For instance, the mixing of last season’s seed with new season’s seed could not be mentioned unless these words were left in. And there have been certain samples of seeds given to me which have undoubtedly been artificially coloured, whether done in the colony or not I will not say.

33. *The Chairman* (to Mr. Kaye).] Do you generally approve of the suggestions made by Mr. Kirk, Mr. Kaye?—That is to say that the words “together with such further particulars as he thinks desirable” should be left in. That is a pretty wide scope. We can rely upon Mr. Kirk’s discretion, but we may not always have Mr. Kirk—

*Mr. Kirk.* I think you can trust the Department.