

30. Do you know that the Maoris, when they want a laxative medicine, boil flax-root?—Yes. I have done it myself.

31. Would you think that drinking the water would have any bad effect on stock in that way?—I do not think it would.

32. If any harm were done in this direction, would you not be likely to hear of it?—I should think I would hear of it.

33. You know of no case?—No.

34. *Mr. Baldwin.*] If a flax-mill is properly worked none of the fibre should be allowed to get into a running stream, should it?—I should not think so. An odd strand might get away.

35. But you say that it pays the flax-millers better to put the pulp direct into the stream?—I do not see that they can do anything else with it.

36. Supposing it could be proved conclusively that putting that pulp into the water in considerable quantities renders the water unfit for human consumption—dangerous for human use—would you still say that no method could be arrived at for keeping it out?—I would not go that far; but up to the present there has not been any method brought into use that would keep it out.

37. Have you yourself gone to any pains to keep it out?—I have had no occasion to do so.

38. It is a question in every case as to the quantity of polluted water as compared with the volume of the stream, is it not? If a sufficient number of mills drain into a big river, even the big river will become polluted: is not that so?—I would not say so, because at Foxton, where you have all the mills together in a bunch, there is some of the finest whitebait-fishing.

39. *The Chairman.*] Supposing you have near your mill wire-netting enclosures, quarter-inch mesh, and the mill is of sufficient elevation to discharge the water over the top of the wire netting, and these enclosures are of sufficient size to produce absolutely dead water; as the water with the pulp in it poured into each enclosure, gradually the water would overflow through the meshes, and as the pulp accumulated the discharging water would be always running out from the top. When the pulp had accumulated to a sufficient extent in one enclosure you would divert the pulp-water to another enclosure. The first enclosure would drain dry in a few days, and the stuff be eligible for carting away, if necessary, or you could simply pull down the wire netting and make another enclosure, and so on indefinitely. Thus you would stop all pulp, no matter how fine, in these successive enclosures, and nothing would get into the stream but the dyed water. What would you as a practical miller think of that scheme?—I have never seen it tried. Would not that water, after it had been lying there for a week, get stagnant, and if put into a clear running river poison all the trout?

40. Would not the water minus the pulp be less likely to kill the trout than the water plus the pulp?—You are leaving your water there to get stagnant.

41. No: as the water poured into the enclosure an equivalent overflow would pass out continuously?—It might be worth trying, but I have never seen it worked out.

42. Will you give the Committee your opinion as to how you think that would act?—At Waikaka we have not got any grating or anything of that, but the tussock acts as a sort of filter, like your wire netting. That has been going on for a number of years, but the green water finds its way down to the creek just the same.

43. *Mr. Broad.*] As soon as the water comes away from the mill does the pulp matter sink to the bottom or float?—It floats. That is why you have to leave the tanks till the stuff will sink, and then it is stagnant.

44. *Mr. Buick.*] How long does the pulp take to sink?—I have seen it floating on the stream for miles.

45. *Mr. Baldwin.*] Could not that be prevented by having a finer mesh on top? Could not the enclosure be continued at the top by a finer mesh, so as to confine the pulp in the enclosure? There would then be upward filtration through the fine mesh. That would prevent it, would it not?—It is quite possible.

46. *The Chairman.*] You say that the pulp floats. What you mean by that is that the stream is able to carry it down, and it floats along?—Yes.

47. If you put 20 gallons of your pulp-water as it comes from the mill into a vessel, will you say that in a given time—say, twenty minutes—the pulp would not settle to the bottom?—A proportion of it would sink, but a proportion would still float.

48. What reason have you for thinking so?—It is much lighter than water.

49. I want to know what your observation is?—I can only go by what I have seen on the streams, coming away from the mills. If you run into a lake, you can see the stuff on the surface of the lake—I mean, the leaf of the flax.

50. Would not that be scum?—No.

#### EDWARD STONE PARKER examined. (No. 8.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your occupation?—I have a flax-mill at Blenheim.

2. *Mr. Broad.*] How long have you been flax-milling there?—About eight years.

3. On what river are you milling?—On the banks of the Omaka, just on the borough boundary.

4. Are there any trout in the Omaka River?—Yes; it is supposed to be pretty full.

5. Are there any below the mill?—Yes.

6. Where is the best fishing?—Anglers fish right round the mill—both above and below.

7. Have you had any complaint from the acclimatization society or fishermen about trout or other fish suffering from the effects of the refuse from the flax-mill?—No, I have never heard of it.

8. Do you catch your stripper-slips?—We are doing that this year.

9. What method do you adopt?—We have a grating. We run the water over a grating, and catch the strips on it. We have only just commenced that. We have put in a Suttie washer within the last month.