

JOHN ARTHUR CHEETHAM, Chairman Awahuri Co-operative Dairy Company, examined. (No. 13.)

1. *Mr. Nathan.*] You have had a considerable amount of trouble at your factory with the drainage?—They had trouble some years ago.

2. An injunction against you?—There is an injunction out against us.

3. You drain into a blind creek?—It is not a blind creek. The creek runs, I suppose, for three miles, and then empties into the Tanui Stream.

4. You got over the injunction by providing other water, by means of artesian flows, for the people who complained?—That is so—the two people who were near the factory. We provided artesian flows for them, and for the time that ended the trouble.

5. You have no other means of draining than in this particular direction?—I do not see where we could drain except into that stream. We should be draining uphill if we tried anywhere else.

6. You could not buy a section of 5 or 10 acres of land and run the stuff over that?—I suppose we could buy some land, but it would be a very costly business, and in view of the nature of the land I think it would not act very well.

7. You would possibly create a greater nuisance than now, and to a greater number of people, if you did so?—Unless we carried the drainage a considerable distance away, the nuisance would be felt by the public on the road.

8. You have no objection to meeting any complaints by providing other water for them, by means of artesian or otherwise, if you are polluting their water?—None whatever. I may say that at the present time we are threatened by a man lower down the stream that he will take action against us unless we stop the drainage going down. We are quite prepared to meet him by keeping as much out of the creek as we can, and by finding other water for him.

9. That is to say, you do not want to shirk your responsibilities at all?—No.

10. But if there is an injunction granted against you, the business of your eighty suppliers is stopped?—Yes.

11. You are prepared to pay for damage and provide water and mitigate the nuisance?—Yes.

12. *Mr. Sykes.*] You say you are threatened with Court proceedings by a settler?—A man has threatened that if we do not stop running the drainage from the factory into that stream he will take proceedings against us.

13. He is not a dairyman?—No, he is not interested in the factory.

14. The milk of how many cows comes into your factory?—From twelve hundred to fourteen hundred.

15. All butter?—Yes.

16. No outside creameries?—We have no outside creameries.

17. You say you are threatened with an action if you continue putting your washings into that stream. Have you any other stream than that one into which you could drain?—None whatever.

18. What do you do with your skim-milk?—It is all carted to the suppliers' homes.

19. You have nothing going into this creek except washings?—Just the washings of the floor.

20. How far is the stream from your factory?—We carry the water from the factory in a pipe drain, with concreted joints, across the Rangitikei line, and for perhaps 3 to 5 chains into this stream.

21. How long have you had that drain at work?—As far as I know, since the factory has been in operation.

22. Drains get blocked sometimes: does this one give you any trouble?—We have traps in the drain, and we draw wires through the drain to keep it clean; otherwise it would get stopped up.

23. The nuisance, then, can only be in the creek?—It is in the creek.

24. How far do you find that that nuisance extends along the creek?—It may extend for a matter of about 10 chains from where it discharges.

25. Not farther?—No, so far as I understand.

26. Is there much water in the creek?—During the winter and the spring there is a considerable amount of water. In the summer-time it dries up altogether, except for the overflow from the artesian.

27. And it is then that the trouble arises?—It is in the summer-time when there is no water in the stream that the trouble arises.

28. Supposing you had some cheap system of spreading the water on paddocks attached to the factory, how do you think that would act?—We have no paddocks in connection with the factory. We had to extend our property a little, and we had to pay very dearly for the land, and we should have to pay very dearly for any land that we required for that purpose. Ours is very wet, heavy country, and I am afraid it would cause a lot of trouble unless we carried the effluent a long way from the road.

29. You do not think evaporation would be sufficient?—I do not.

30. There is a factory in Featherston, taking the milk from seven hundred cows, that discharges its washings into a creek half a mile off, not through a pipe, but through two open drains and they use these drains alternately. They are right in the town, and have never had any trouble. Do you think that the smell is largely created in the pipe, through confinement from the air, and is noticeable at the discharge and along the creek?—In the first place, we have to carry the drainage over a public road 2 chains wide. We have no outlet except into this stream, and I do not think we could possibly carry out that system.

31. *Mr. Baldwin.*] You are satisfied with the law as it stands, except with regard to this question of injunction, are you not?—That is so.