

into the Thames, and there are dead carcasses, and yet it is drunk. The whole thing is a question of proportion. Unless the farmers along the side of the river are anxious to pollute the stream and throw their stock in, it would be very difficult for them to contaminate to any great extent a river like the Oroua. The flax-miller is putting something in regularly; the farmer only occasionally throws in his dead stock.

52. Are you acquainted with the working of a flax-mill?—Yes, to some extent.

53. Do you know the quantity of water that would go into an ordinary mill in a minute?—I have not got that data with me just now.

54. You suggested a remedy. Are you acquainted with the quantity of water that would be going in and coming out per minute, showing that it would require such a huge area of land to do as you suggest that it would be quite unworkable?—I do not think it would. I know that one flax-miller, where there was an undoubted nuisance, did plough in all his solid stuff, and the nuisance was greatly mitigated.

55. Where was this?—Up near Levin. I think it was at Ohau. It is a good many years ago.

56. When that was done the industry was not what it is now, and was not turning out the quantity?—No; but I do not think that should advantage you, who, I take it, are looking after the interests of the flax-millers, because while his output increases his methods and his means of disposing of these annoying parts of his industry should increase too.

57. Supposing that all the fibrous matter was kept out, and the vegetable matter only went in, by what percentage would the pollution, to your mind, be reduced?—Very, very greatly.

58. *Mr. Baldwin.*] You will understand that the questions I put to you dealt only with the pulp; they were based on the assumption that there was no fibre went in?—That is so.

59. *Mr. Broad.*] What I was trying to bring out was that at the time this was done that you mention, both were put in, whereas now the fibrous matter is kept out?—Yes.

60. *Mr. Baldwin* said that the Oroua River above the top mill was not good drinking-water, and he said that below the third mill the water was unfit for human consumption. Now, I took those samples. They were taken on the edge of the river-bank. Would not the fact of the samples being taken on the edge of the river-bank, where the stuff just pours in, have the effect of showing the pollution to be much more considerable than would be the case if the samples had been taken in the middle of the stream?—Undoubtedly; the stuff would not have had time to mix with the general stream, I take it. The whole question is one of dilution.

61. A farmer below all these flax-mills gave evidence in the Court at Palmerston that he runs his stock below all these mills, and they drink this water and they have suffered no harm whatever. That would bear out what you say. The cattle usually go into the middle of the stream, and they would not suffer any ill effect?—It might mean that they had got immune to it.

62. *Mr. Buick.*] There is no evidence that the effluent from a flax-mill produces anything in the shape of a typhoid-germ, is there?—Not the slightest; it could not.

63. We have heard it stated that the modern septic tank, such as we have at Palmerston and Feilding, does not destroy typhoid-germs?—It does not entirely, but it is undoubtedly one of the most scientific and useful methods of disposing of sewage in a place that is far from the sea-coast.

64. *The Chairman.*] You have no doubt, in the course of your studies and practice, become aware of the general position of English law on the question of river-pollution; and knowing in a general way the condition of the flax industry and the dairy industry, are you of opinion that our local circumstances here call for a special remedy not provided by English law on the same subject?—If the powers contained within the four corners of the Public Health Act were used, you have already got plenty of power to stop all this sort of thing. It seems to me this is a work of supererogation. As the law now stands any industry may be required to take such steps as the officials consider wise for the stopping of any nuisance.

65. The justification for this Bill is to prevent vexatious applications for injunctions?—I do not quite see how it does, but, of course, that is a matter for a lawyer. It seems to me that you are going by this Bill to make it pretty easy for any one to come along and take action, because under clause 8 if a man is not doing all that you think he ought to do the Court can still interfere with him. This provision for an injunction: there is nothing new in that. Waste product: there is nothing new in that. All these waste products are capable of causing a nuisance, and they are all embraced under the term "nuisance" in the Public Health Act. It seems to me that you are adding an unnecessary brick to the edifice.

66. Do you, from your knowledge of the general conditions regarding such matters in New Zealand, think there is any necessity for an amendment of the law?—No. This apparently is giving the plaintiff right of action. He already has that under common law, and the other authorities have the right, if a nuisance is sufficiently grave to cause them to regard it as a menace to health, to stop it.

67. This sketch here [indicated] represents a flax-mill, with three settling-tanks on the surface of the ground. For two or three days, as the case may be, the flax-water, charged with the pulp, pours into this tank, the walls of which are 6 ft. high. The water pours in in a thin stream, to produce absolutely still water, and the pulp settles to the bottom. The pulp accumulates until there is sufficient in that tank, and the stream is changed to tank No. 2, and so on to tank No. 3. You thus get successive heaps of flax-refuse. Would you think, under such circumstances, the water finally getting back into the stream would be quite innocuous?—It would depend on how far the water had to travel through land. It would have to travel through a considerable area, because it would be quite denatured, so to speak.

68. *Mr. Baldwin.*] Do you consider that a body of farmers, whose only water is water polluted as Dr. Maclaurin suggests the Oroua water was polluted, would be taking a vexatious action if they tried to stop that pollution?—I should not think so. It seems to be the only one left for them.