69. *Mr. Tripp.*] Would the effluent from a flax-mill affect fish-life?—Undoubtedly. There again it is a question of concentration. But there is no doubt at all that it has a very injurious effect upon fish.

70. *The Chairman.*] What would you say if evidence were brought before you that eels seem to enjoy the flax-water?—The eel is very much like the maggot: he will thrive under conditions where no other animal seems to get on at all. But for the purposes of my discussion the eel is not a fish.

71. *Mr. Bollard.*] Suppose we had it in evidence that trout were very fond of keeping about the flax-mills and were more plentiful there than elsewhere on the river, and that the fishermen went there to get them?—I should say the fish were very stupid.

72. *Mr. Broad.*] I gave evidence that we catch whitebait plentifully every season below our flax-mills?—You would not catch them above.

73. Yes; there are numbers of flax-mills on the Manawatu River, and the whitebait go right on to the top mill?—They must have gone up the other side.

74. They are on the mill side. We catch them plentifully every season, and the whitebait are perfectly healthy. What have you to say to that?—All I can say is that that particular brand of whitebait must have a different kind of economy from the other, and he has acquired a very bad taste.

Dr. CAHILL examined. (No. 18.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Do you wish to make a statement?—Yes, sir. There can be no question or difference of opinion about this matter. It is a matter of common observation to any man—even the farmers themselves—that all animals require perfectly fresh and pure food and drink. When any vegetable debris or other organic matter gets into water it must undergo fermentation and putrefaction; if the products of putrefaction get into drinking-water the injury it will do very largely depends on the degree of concentration. You, sir, know perfectly well that animals are not allowed to drink lough-water or pool-water, because it injures their health. In recent medical literature attention is called to the fact that cows drinking from stagnant pools are able to convey disease-germs into their blood, and thence through their milk to human beings. Take well-water—ordinary well-water. It may be beautifully clear and crystal in appearance and yet be most injurious, as the result of decomposing animal or vegetable matter getting into it. That is the reason why the medical profession is so much against the use of well-water where there is possibility of surface water getting into it. Water may be polluted from two sources. First, there is the chemical pollution, the result of decomposing animal or vegetable matter. It may be perfectly clear, and give no taste to the water; yet it is most dangerous for people to take; or it may be so tainted as to give an unpleasant flavour to the milk of animals. Then there is pollution of the water from the organisms that grow in it. Everybody must know that if you feed your milk-cattle on mangel-wurzel or turnips, the milk is tainted and the butter is tainted. Cabbage is a proper thing to feed a milk-cow on, as long as you do not give it too much. That is how you are able to get a month's more butter from your cattle at the end of the season. All these are matters of practical farming, and I cannot understand practical men suggesting that dead vegetable matter getting into a stream is going to do no harm. I do not care twopence for the fish, although I am a fisherman.

2. *Mr. Bollard.*] I know of a case where a cat got into a 400-gallon tank at a dwellinghouse; it was drowned, of course, and the man and his family drank all the water from around that cat without suffering any bad effects. What do you say to that?—If we were to be destroyed by the disease-germs that we take every day we should be decimated. Sometimes your health is maintained above par and you are able to throw off the poison. At other times it is below par, and you are not able to throw them off; then you have to suffer.

3. *Mr. Sykes.*] In your opinion would the effluent which comes from a flax-mill be conducive to typhoid fever?—No, unless there were typhoid-germs in it.

4. How would they be conveyed?—You get careless men who have typhoid, and they are typhoid-carriers. They do not get rid of the disease; they carry it about for years, and they make stools all over the place, which are swept into the water, and you get the germs there. That is one of the ways typhoid is carried. They can be traced. Sometimes an epidemic is brought about by one of those typhoid-carriers. They do not suffer very much, apparently, from it, but in their stools there are the typhoid-germs; and many epidemics brought into a new village or township can be traced to the typhoid-carrier. The stools of men are now analysed both chemically and pathologically.

5. *The Chairman.*] Do you happen to know the Oroua River?—No.

6. You express your belief to the Committee that an undue quantity of flax-pulp—the material stripped off from the leaf by the machinery—poured into a stream of comparatively small dimensions would be injurious to health?—Injurious to the health of men and animals who touched that water.

7. Do you know anything of the action of flax-impregnated water? What is the effect?—I should think it would bring about chronic indigestion and ill health.

8. We have had it in evidence that it produces laxity—acts as a dose of salts?—I do not know the therapeutic effects of flax. I am talking of the general principle of vegetable matters getting into water.

9. In the case of dairy factories, dairy-factory managers, in spite of every precaution they have tried, are threatened with injunctions if they do not stop the smell that arises in the drains or creeks that convey away the washings from these dairy factories. Has anything of that sort come under your notice?—Yes, and I do not think they ought to be allowed to pollute the streams.

10. Could you suggest any method which would help the dairy factories to get over the difficulty?—Yes, sterilization. It is a little expensive.