

139. Is the Committee to understand, then, that quite apart from the flax, the water obtained by artesian wells is unhealthy for stock?—I do not say that iron water is unhealthy. I do not think the stock suffer in that respect, except with bad pizzles.

140. Have you had a veterinary surgeon's opinion as to what is the cause of this pizzle trouble?—I think I know more than enough about it myself. I think there is no doubt about the cause.

141. Do you know what was known as the Oroua Downs Station before it was cut up?—I have known it this last twelve years. I have had stock grazing on a part of it for a time.

142. Did you know anything about it, say, five-and-twenty years ago?—No, except from hearsay.

143. Would you be surprised if you were told that they found it necessary to sell their Shorthorn and Polled Angus calves off the cows—wean them off the cows, and sell them straight away—because they could not rear them owing to the influence of this iron water, or some other influence, that was fatal to them in that district? Would you be surprised to be told that?—No, not the slightest; but I would not put it down to the iron. I should put it down possibly to bad management—not to the iron water.

144. Summed up, are you of opinion that, quite apart from the flax trouble, there was considerable trouble amongst stock from other causes?—You are referring to the other side of the river?

145. I am referring to the district generally?—There is a great difference in the district generally. The Oroua Downs land will carry—

146. I am speaking of this class of land in the neighbourhood of the Oroua River. Are you aware, quite apart from fat stock, that there has been trouble for years from either iron in the water or some other causes?—I should say there have been numerous cases. There may have been bad management of the stock, or bad management of the land.

147. I must keep you to the question?—Yes, there has been trouble; but I say there have been a number of causes.

148. Apart from mismanagement?—Well, I cannot say that the land was well managed.

149. You have told us about pizzle trouble: do you suggest to the Committee that that is caused by mismanagement? Do you suggest that, with your knowledge of stock, this does not arise from a cause peculiar to certain districts?—I should say it would. The principal cause is the iron in the water, I should say.

150. With regard to the stock you have lost, could you get a certificate from a veterinary surgeon that, in his opinion, that stock was lost through flax-pollution of the water?—I think so.

151. Who was the veterinary surgeon you consulted?—Mr. Scott. I think he is a veterinary surgeon as well as a chemist. He has also been to Mr. Morcamb's to attend to his stock.

152. Did the evidence of your losses of stock come before the Supreme Court when the injunction case was tried?—We did not bring that up to any extent, but we did give evidence to that effect. We did not know till a day or two before that the case was coming on.

153. Would the Committee be justified in assuming that your evidence went to show that you had lost hundreds of pounds' worth of stock through bad water caused by flax-pollution?—Yes, certainly.

154. You gave evidence that you had lost stock to a considerable amount owing to this cause?—Yes.

155. And you got £5 damages on the Supreme Court case?—Yes, £5 against each mill.

156. Did you expect more than £5 damages?—Certainly, I did. I expected ten times that amount.

157. And did you not bring evidence to show your losses before the Court?—A great part of the loss was caused through the grass being destroyed in the paddocks. In some places the native grass had grown up again in place of the old English grasses. It was a very hard thing to prove.

158. Were you paid compensation at any time in the Taranaki District for losses of hoggets?—I had a case on in the District Court, and allowed the defendants to confess judgment and to pay £10 each. I lost one hundred and fifty sheep one night.

159. What was the cause of the loss?—I turned eight hundred hoggets into a paddock on the river, and they drank the river-water, and next morning about one hundred and fifty of them were dead. Every one of them had a black patch on the neck or brisket.

160. What was the cause of that?—Blood-poisoning.

161. Had flax anything to do with that?—Yes, the river was in a fearful state.

162. What amount did you claim as damages in the Supreme Court case?—£500, or something like that. £250 from each mill, I think. I would not be certain.

163. *Mr. Baldwin.*] You claimed £250 for damage by the erosion, loss of stock, and the loss of your grass?—Yes.

164. But only pressed your case for an injunction?—Yes, that is right.

*Mr. Baldwin:* I am putting in the evidence in the Supreme Court case, which will show the position.

165. *Mr. Buick.*] I should like to clear up one little matter. You say that you lost stock through drinking artesian water?—That is because I had no other water at that time.

166. Do I understand you to say that you get to gravel some 80 ft. below the surface?—One of the pipes is driven down 76 ft. and the other 80 ft.

167. Do I understand you to say that the water on the gravel below is pregnated by water from the surface?—No; I would not say so with regard to that paddock. I was referring to the artesian water in general.

168. Do you not know that all artesian water in that particular district is impregnated with iron?—Yes, I should say it is. When I came to the district a stranger, that was the only thing