If so, make the necessary provisions. If not, then I admit that you must consider which is the more important to the country—the industries which pollute the streams to the detriment of the fish, or the fish. Now, the industries which affect the fish are the flax-mills and the sawmills, and our main trouble is the sawmills. Cannot some method be devised to stop the refuse from the flax-mills getting into the streams? That, I admit, is a matter for experts. With regard to the sawmills, it is now illegal to put sawdust on the bank of a river or into the stream, or anywhere where it can get into the stream; and, I take it, it is not quite clear, if this Bill is passed, that the law will not be entirely altered. If the effect of the Bill is as I read it, the law will be altered, and the only way you can stop the sawdust getting into the stream will be to apply for an injunction; and, as I pointed out before, the sawdust does not in all cases render the water actually unfit for human beings and animals, and so you will never be able to get an injunction. I know from my own experience—I have fished a great deal in the rivers about here—that actually below the sawmill itself you will find few fish. It may be that you will find a few fish in water polluted by sawdust, but what experience tells is that if a large body of sawdust gets into a stream and a flood comes, it gets to the gills of the fish and smothers them; and, furthermore, certain portions of the sawdust are, I am informed, poisonous. Now take the rivers here about Wellington. At the headwaters of these rivers are sawmills: take the Hutt River, for instance. If you allow sawdust to get into these rivers you will find that right down to the mouth they will become one mass of sawdust; and that will decay, and will become a menace to the public. As regards the damage to fish from allowing the refuse from flax-mills and sawdust to pollute a stream, it depends entirely on the volume of the stream and the amount of refuse that goes into the stream. If a large amount of refuse goes into a small stream, when it starts to decompose it will kill the fish. It is true you will occasionally find fish near a flax-mill. I know you do so in the Ruamahanga. The Ruamahanga River is a river with a large body of water. We say it is unnecessary to alter the law at all; but we suggest that if you find it is necessary, then set up a Commission to decide what rivers in New Zealand are to be polluted and what not.

3. *Mr. Buick.*] Do you know of any instance where refuse from any sawmill has destroyed fish?—Only what has been reported to me.

4. Do you think a sluggish river is not a good fishing-ground, a river like the Oroua, for instance?—Some sluggish rivers are. If it is muddy the fish are not very nice to eat.

5. Would you be surprised to hear that we have had evidence to the effect that the Oroua River, where all this pollution has been going on, is teeming with whitebait?—I would be surprised if there is a large body of refuse going down.

6. In the Oroua there is not a great volume of water, but it is very sluggish?—I think you will find that below the mills there are considerably less fish than above.

7. You would be surprised if you heard it said that there were more?—Yes, more trout, certainly.

8. You spoke about dairy factories being in the greatest danger. Do you think the managers of dairy factories know really what is affecting them, because we have had evidence very much in the opposite direction?—I do not think the dairy factories affect the trout.

9. But you said that flax would affect the dairy factories?—What I suggested was that if there was a certain amount of pollution allowed, and it got into the water that the dairy factories had to use, it might affect them.

10. Would you be surprised to hear that the amending Bill brought down is very much favoured by owners and managers of dairy factories?—Mr. Nathan told me he is supporting it.

11. *Mr. Sykes.*] In connection with water-races, of course, you know that every water-race is at present polluted?—No, not every water-race.

12. Well, stock in large numbers drink the water, and consequently all water-races are polluted?—Yes, in that way; but I know several water-races in Canterbury from which the settlers drink regularly.

13. Then they are drinking polluted water?—Yes, in some cases.

14. I believe it is the intention of this Bill not to interfere with the Fisheries Act?—Is that so?

15. We have expert advice on that point?—Probably it is going to be altered then. Our main trouble is sawdust—there is no doubt about that.

16. And you say that in your experience the waste water from dairy factories has no injurious effect on the fish?—No, it has never been reported to me.

17. *Mr. Bollard.*] Do you know of your own knowledge of any trout being injured from the pollution of rivers by flax-mills?—Not from my own knowledge—only what has been reported to me by our Ranger and other fishermen.

18. Do you know from your own knowledge that trout like dirty polluted water in preference to clean water?—I do not know. It does not follow that the trout are healthy.

19. Do you know that they do better in dirty water than in clean water?—No.

20. Then you have got a lot to learn about trout?—Yes, I admit that.

21. It is a strange fact that we have had it in evidence here that fishermen make a bee-line for a flax-mill near a river in order to get good trout—they go just below the mill and get plenty of them?—I have not heard of it myself. From what has been told me it depends entirely on the amount of refuse that goes into the river, when it starts to decompose, and the volume of water in the stream, as to whether or not fish will be found near the effluent of the mill.

22. It depends whether there are any chemicals in the water that are injurious to the fish. If there are it is a different matter. Do you know of any chemical in connection with the manufacture of flax that is injurious to trout or any other animals?—No, I do not know of any.