

51. Did you watch them to see that they did not drink it?—No, I did not.

52. So you could not be positive whether they drank it or not?—I could not.

53. What about cattle?—I have had no cattle in the paddock. The horses were valuable horses, and I took them out. I thought the sheep could take their chance.

54. What did you say to the owner of the flax-mill? Did you do anything?—I told him he would have to do something. He tried and did the best he could. It has never been so bad since the embankment was put up, but we have not had a dry season since then. I think the water is all right as it is now, but if we get a dry season it will be bad.

55. *Mr. Buick.*] You say you never saw your sheep drinking that water?—No.

56. Had they any other source of water?—No.

57. They would have to either drink that or go without water?—Yes.

58. *Mr. Field.*] The object of this Bill is to substitute a claim for damages in place of the present right of applying for an injunction?—Yes.

59. That means to say that you must submit to the pollution in most cases, as it is entirely dependent on a claim for damages. What does the farmer want—pure water or the right to damages?—Pure water. We do not want damages.

60. But supposing this Bill passes, and the pollution of this stream and other streams is allowed, what steps would the farmer take to prevent the pollution of the stream: would he destroy his flax and close down the mill, or what steps would he take?—He would destroy his flax.

61. His idea would be to close the mill rather than let the pollution continue?—At least, that would be my idea.

GEORGE WATSON, Farm-manager, examined. (No. 31.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Your address?—Waikanae.

2. Would you prefer to make a statement?—I have not very much to say as to what the damage that flax-mill pollution would do to a river, but I do know a little bit about what it would do to a small stream of a similar nature to the one referred to by Mr. Campion. As an instance of what happened about twelve years ago, a residence was built on this particular creek, about 56 ft. away from it. The creek was then a pure fresh-water stream. In fact, the reason the house was put there was for the purpose of using the water for household purposes. It was used for a long time for cooking purposes, and drinking as well. About seven years ago the flax-mill was shifted from Waikanae to where it is at present, and it is using this stream. Now, in the summer-time in a dry summer the stock will not drink that water from that creek if they can get water anywhere else. Of course, I am not one of those who say that the stock would not drink it, because I think in a dry season they will drink anything. But still, at the same time they will not drink it, and as to the stench from it I can assure you it is not a bed of roses that you smell. As to the water itself and the action it has on the stream, there is no vegetation such as watercress or grass, or anything else. This gummy matter, whatever you like to style it, seems to destroy everything.

3. *Mr. Field.*] When the pollution was at its worst, where were the stock getting their water from?—At that time in that paddock they would have to go about half a mile over the hill and get it out of a lake further down. The stream runs into that lake, and I believe in time it will pollute the lake, which is at present a fine fresh-water lake.

4. Have the cattle in the same paddock now an opportunity of going to this lake?—No; it is now subdivided.

5. And the pollution of the water at the time you speak of would prevent the stock getting water for drinking?—Yes, and that is the only water they will have to rely upon now.

6. This property which you are managing, how is it served for water purposes?—Well, that particular section is, of course, watered by this particular stream.

7. Is this stream the main source of supply for the whole property?—Yes, the whole property.

8. Is it true that at the southern end of the property there is a pure unpolluted stream?—Yes.

9. This Bill provides that you shall not have a right to an injunction if you have pure water either on your property or adjacent to your property. Would this pure-water stream at the southern end of the property be of any use at all?—No. It would mean taking the stock three miles night and morning. It would be a difficult matter to know when they want a drink.

10. It would be hardly worth while bringing the stock up and down all the time?—No; that is exactly what would have to be done.

11. Do you live on the banks of this stream now?—No. I lived in this particular residence about twelve years, and this last season I have had to shift my wife and family away, and take them to Waikanae, away from the place altogether, because at night and morning I can assure you it is very unpleasant. Furthermore, I may add that there is a portion of this property which is maintained by the Horowhenua County Council through an agreement with the various owners, and their employees have to go and clean this drain out every year during the dry season. Well, I cannot say that it actually makes them sick, but they do use very strong language, I can assure you.

12. Can you tell the Committee without reservation that in a dry summer a house on the bank of a stream polluted as this is is quite unfit to live in?—It is absolutely unfit to live in, and I would decline to live in that house again in the summer-time, or allow my wife and family or any one else to go in there.

13. Do you know whether it killed all the fish in the stream?—I could not say. I do not know anything about that. I know there were fish in the stream, but whether there are any now I do not know.

14. Did you notice in the bottom of the stream among the slime any little red worms?—Millions of them. You can see them there when the water is low. There is a slimy mass. You