

would be an important means of reducing drunkenness, and certainly be beneficial to the health of the community.

To the Chairman: The Government contemplates settling some returned soldiers on land near Henderson—on land suitable to be taken up by returned soldiers. Our idea is that the Government intended originally to recognize this as a national industry, and it should stand apart from prohibition. Our idea is that locally made wine should not be subject to prohibition. There is a great difference between New-Zealand-made wine and the imported article. New-Zealand-made wine is restricted to 18 per cent. alcohol. That is one of our strong points. Imported wine is not restricted in regard to the amount of alcohol it contains; furthermore, it does not only contain its own natural alcohol, but has added to it a great deal of additional alcohol in the shape of spirits. There is a ready sale for the locally made wine. The firm I represent would be quite prepared to take another 10,000 gallons if they could get it. Wine should be kept for at least three years before it is sold; and we would ask that the Government should pass legislation in that direction, because we wish to bring the wine up to as high a standard as possible. Under a wine license—there are only four in existence in the Dominion—you can sell a bottle or a glass. There is one license issued at Auckland, one at Hawera, and two at Wanganui.

To Mr. Sidey: We want separate legislation; and we think that greater facilities should be provided for the sale of New Zealand wine.

To Mr. Hudson: I certainly think it would be an advantage for us to have home-made wines from other fruits as well.

F. BRAY, representing New Zealand Viticultural Association, examined.

I am chairman of the association, and I live at Swanson, near Auckland. I have 6 acres of grapes there. Part of the soil in the vineyard is ordinary pipeclay soil. There is an area of land in that district that would be suitable, if cut up into say 25-acre blocks, to settle returned soldiers upon. Grape-growing would be a suitable occupation for them.

To the Chairman: It is suggested that the men should be settled on the land to grow grapes for winemaking, and that the New Zealand Government should take action similar to the Australian Government, and exempt wine from prohibition.

To Dr. A. K. Newman: The men would be able to make a living on small areas in the same way as is done in the case of orchards. I am referring to partially disabled men. They have their soldiers' pensions, and they might be assisted to some extent until the vines came into bearing.

To Mr. Forbes: I have been engaged in vine-growing for about five years. The season before last I turned out 4,800 gallons of wine off 6 acres. I can sell as much as I can supply. I make port wine only. I do not fortify it at all. I send wine all over the North Island, and as far away as Dunedin and Christchurch. The lowest price we sell at is 25s. a case.

K. A. CORBAN, representing New Zealand Viticultural Association, examined.

The point I want to lay stress on is this: there has been a very serious handicap placed on the vine-growing industry owing to one effect. What we want is that in cases where the electoral boundaries are altered the no-license restrictions shall not apply so far as depots for the sale of New Zealand wine are concerned. In our case at Henderson the recent alteration of the electoral boundaries has inflicted a great hardship on those interested in the viticultural industry in that district; it depreciates the value of the properties affected.

TUESDAY, 22ND APRIL, 1919.

C. H. SOLOMON, of Riverley Canning Factory, examined.

I have been connected with the fruit-canning industry for about ten years. Naturally growers wish to do the best they can for themselves, and to this end they send their best fruit to the local auctions and their second-quality fruit to the canning-factory. From the canning point of view first-grade fruit pays well, but the second-grade does not pay, as there is too much waste connected with it. Much of the stuff sent to the factories ought to be condemned, and we do condemn much of it. I refer principally to apples that are affected with the codlin-moth. There ought to be a more rigid orchard inspection by the Inspectors. Representations in that direction were made to the present Inspectors some time ago, and as a result the quality of the fruit has been improved considerably. The Government ought to encourage the industry by sending an Inspector to California. I am glad to hear from Mr. Hudson that a man is to be sent there. Ripe-rot is a disease that is very troublesome. I would also like to say that there are large importations from America that ought to be restricted in the interests of the local canneries.

To Mr. Hudson: Up to this year there has not been a great deal of codlin-moth. I made representations to the Department of Agriculture, and the trouble is largely under control now. This year we have been troubled with codlin-moth only slightly. I understand that growers are trying to get the regulations as to black-spot, also the codlin-moth, relaxed. I think the Department ought to get chemicals to combat the ripe-rot. We pay $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per pound for blemished apples, or £7 per ton. We have even paid £9 when they were scarce. For fruit of poorer quality we give $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per pound. For good fruit we give 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per pound. I contend that inspection has been relaxed in the orchards.

To Mr. Sidey: We buy apples, peaches, apricots, plums, and pears. It is only the apple we complain about. We have a difficulty in regard to labour. It would help us if the workers'