

came to get information from me. I did not blame them for that. They have not had the opportunity of getting the information of that class of fruit I am engaged in growing.

97. Do not you think that if the Government went to the expense of getting one of the best men on the face of the earth that the Auckland people would know more?—No. I believe the Government could get the class of man I refer to from Victoria. The Victorian Government have paid a great deal of attention to the matter, and if application were made to them such a man would be recommended.

98. Do not you think that the first time he trod on their corns that they would say they knew more than he did?—Perhaps they are a little pig-headed in their own way, but they are always eager to get information. If they meet a man who can give them any information they are only too pleased to get it.

99. Such an expert would hardly be a fit man to go into the back-blocks and instruct "cockatoos."?—The present men are very suitable for that. They can instruct settlers how to graft, bud, and plant. In the initial stages they can be very useful. Of course, I do not blame the experts for not being able to perform duties for which they are not qualified. If the department puts them to perform duties they are not capable of performing it is the department's fault.

100. *Mr. J. W. Thomson.*] Is it not just as necessary to have first-class Inspectors in districts that have been newly started as in districts started in years past?—I alluded to the expert knowledge required for canning and preserving. In the old fruit districts the great trouble is the waste that the market cannot absorb as fresh fruit. We are wanting in that knowledge to enable us to establish preserving-places.

101. *Mr. Ritchie* (Secretary for Agriculture).] About two years ago, when the first Bill came into operation, so far as he knew, only four or five places were affected with phylloxera—one at Whangarei, two in Auckland, and one at the North Shore. A recommendation was made that the department should clear these places free of cost to the owner. Only when we had completed the eradication at Whangarei we discovered other places affected. When these were discovered I immediately sent one of the men to inspect every vineyard in Whangarei. He has discovered forty or fifty. There is a recommendation before the Committee dealing with these. To clear them it will cost, say, £800. What we propose to do is to treat the resistant vines with bi-sulphide of carbon. Where we can save any of the vines by sulphide of carbon, which is perfectly efficacious, —that is, in the early stages—we will do so. If we find that the insect is destroyed we will not touch the vines at all. Many of the Whangarei vines are growing wild: these should be eradicated. We have secured the bi-sulphide, and so soon as the weather clears up we will put on the men. The proposal before the Committee is that the Government bear the cost of treatment. When we started we thought we had our fingers on the whole spots of infection.

102. *Hon. the Chairman* (to *Mr. Ritchie*).] What is the process of destruction?—The vineyard at Whangarei was very low-lying. It was an old glass house, which had been neglected, being overgrown with weeds, and the vine-roots growing 4 ft. or 5 ft. underground. There was another place higher up the hill where the vines had been allowed to run wild. We had to trench the whole over, and it was a very big job. Thinking it was the only source of infection we thought it advisable to go to the expense. By the injection of bi-sulphide the insect can pretty well be got rid of.

Mr. H. A. FIELD, examined.

*Mr. Field*: I may say that I am not interested from a pecuniary point of view in fruit-growing: as an occupation it is a hobby with me. I have got an orchard of 4 or 5 acres on the West Coast, between here and Otaki, which is kept in fair order. Next door my neighbour has an orchard of half a dozen acres, which is infested with blight of half a dozen descriptions, and I notice that the side of my orchard which adjoins his requires a great deal more attention than the rest.

103. *Hon. the Chairman.*] How far away?—A fence only divides us. I may say that I have had no experience of codlin-moth, but, so far as other pests are concerned, I am perfectly certain from my own knowledge that ordinary and intelligent application will keep you perfectly free from them. I use a sulphur-wash and Bordeaux mixture; sometimes kerosene emulsion. In the summer time I use Paris-green for pear-slug. If the trees are badly affected I find wood-ash is effective. It can be thrown on with the hand, or for large trees it can be put in a scrim bag and the bag shaken over the tops of the trees. I live close to the sea-shore, and I burn firewood off the beach, which contains a lot of salt. I notice that the ash from this wood not only kills the insects, but in some cases it scorches the young leaves and tender shoots. One thing I have noticed is the objectionable distribution of diseased fruit: I have frequently seen apples affected with codlin-moth sent about my district, and I regard it as a very great source of danger. *Mr. Grapes* emphasized the fact that there is a danger in the use of second-hand cases, and I indorse cordially everything he said upon that point. Stress has been laid on the question of cultivation or non-cultivation of orchards. I may say, speaking from my own experience, that it pays handsomely to cultivate. Occasionally in my orchard I grow a little clover, but it is cultivated nevertheless. You get from the cultivated orchard more fruit, and the fruit that you get is of better quality. Further, from my own observations in my travels I am satisfied that a persistent and intelligent grapple with the codlin-moth will keep it within bounds, if it does not eradicate it. It is my opinion that where fruit-growers have grappled with it, it is not so prevalent as it used to be. In Auckland I can quite understand its prevalence: they have a very difficult climate to deal with. A humid climate induces the spread of the disease. I feel satisfied that when the fruit-growing industry becomes the established industry it should be that Auckland fruit-growers will discover that it is no longer profitable to grow apples at all, and will then turn their attention to the growth of fruits more suited to their climate. The southern part of our colony, and some of the southern parts of the North Island, are better adapted for apple-culture than Auckland is. I have seen the