

same varieties exposed there for sale that I grow myself, and I am satisfied mine are of very much better quality. I attribute that to the fact that my climate is better suited to the growth of apples than their climate is. And I think, therefore, that, as far as actual quality is concerned, the South Island apples are very much better than the ones we grow here. There is this to be said: that different varieties are better suited to different localities. I started by planting 250 varieties—approved varieties grown in various parts of the world—and I have discovered that there are only about fifty varieties that do particularly well with me—in fact, I might reduce the list to twenty. Further than that, I can grow apples that will not grow so well a few miles from my place. That is a question that must be always left to the intelligence of the individual. Still, I think that the Government might wisely establish experiment stations in various parts of the colony, because it is only by experiment that a man can tell what his situation and soil are suited for. No expert in the world could go into my orchard and tell me the varieties of apple better suited for it than the ones I am now growing. With reference to fruit-growing and grazing, I think if a grazier devotes the same amount of attention to his orchard as he does to his stock that he will be equally successful. Mr. Monk says that a Canadian recommended the leaving of the pests to take their natural course, and leaving them to their natural enemies and he made this allusion more particularly in connection with the codlin-moth. I would remind the Committee that it is only in part of Canada that apples will grow at all, and only a few varieties thrive there, and it is in the adjoining States of America that the apple has its home. Even in the favoured districts of California they go in more for stone-fruits and pear-culture than for apple-culture. I think it was Mr. Thompson who emphasized the fact that if an orchardist were allowed to send to market fruit that was not affected, even though it came from an infected district, that he should be allowed to do so, and should not be restricted; and he advocated that no oppressive measure should be enacted which would affect any one who was not a seller of fruit. It is the man who is not a seller of fruit who is the chief source of danger. He has not the inducement to take the necessary precautions, and he may, therefore, keep a few pest-infected trees to the danger of his neighbours, and the result may be a grave injury to his neighbourhood. Mr. Thompson also referred to the system of inspection, and that the present Inspectors would have charge of the inspection. We are not justified in supposing that will be the case. If we are to have Inspectors to go round and show people what to do with their trees, they must certainly be men who understand the chemical action of the various remedies. It does not necessarily follow that a man who is an expert nurseryman knows anything about chemical action. I have seen numberless instances of men having no idea of the chemical formulas. I have seen a man dissolving his blue-stone in an iron vessel. It is not the fault of the thing itself, it is the fault of the user. I do not think anything can be ascribed to the fact that past efforts have not always been successful. I recollect the time when men in New Zealand said we could not eradicate the scab from our flocks, but it was done. There is no reason that we should not do the same thing with the pests that infect our gardens. Judging from our climatic position, our country is eminently suited to the growth of fruit. And not only should we do away with our present imports, but be large exporters ourselves. I have referred to the fact that I think there should be experimental stations established in various parts of the colony, and in connection with this they might have experimental nurseries. We get fresh fruits from outside every year, and, further than that, I think in the future we will find there are new varieties which we have established which will do better than those from elsewhere. Speaking of apples, my experience has led me to believe that the American varieties are better suited to our climate than English ones. The finest varieties I have growing are American, and I have the best English varieties. The Ribstone Pippin does not thrive. I find it is too tender. And Cox's Orange is very good, but is not to be compared, as far as quality is concerned, with three or four American varieties. Jonathan is most valuable, and Adam's Birthday is one of the best grown, and American Golden Russet is good. These are medium to late varieties. With reference to preserving fruit, my own impression is that we can do the preserving all right, but I do not think that we can ever desiccate fruits in New Zealand. Our climate is such that it is not suited for the growth of fruits suitable for that purpose. We should, however, be able to preserve anywhere. I think it is essentially necessary that we should take every precaution we can in the establishment of new nurseries in a clean state. If you are certain that your trees are clean when you put them in, and exercise ordinary care, you need have no fear of infection. When I get new trees I always wash them in kerosene emulsion or lime and sulphur. Kerosene is a certain cure for the American blight, and one application at this time of the year will absolutely destroy every trace of it. In the case of a young tree, we prefer to take it up and wash it with kerosene emulsion, used hot and strong. It is an absolutely certain cure. I use a pound of common household soap to a quart of kerosene, and dilute with two quarts of water. That is in the winter-time. You can wash them in it and plant them without doing any harm in the world. You must use it warm or it becomes of the consistency of soft-soap. When you are dressing trees you have to carry it about with something under it to keep it warm. In the warm state it is more effective and spreads more evenly. My experience leads me to believe that, if we grapple with this subject intelligently and energetically, there is nothing to prevent us from eradicating these diseases from the colony, as we have eradicated the scab. I think the fruit industry should become a very valuable one. To do so you must have legislation, and to some extent that legislation must be of a drastic nature.

104. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Are there any remedial steps being taken on the west coast of the North Island?—By a few only.

105. Would the Bill be well received?—I think so. I think every one thinks a measure of this kind is necessary.