

3. What reasons have you for that?—The reason I have is that it would enable a purchaser of manure to know the exact value of each manurial constituent in the manure. For instance, there is a value given to each of the manurial constituents—nitrogen, phosphoric acid, and potash—and if a buyer gets a quotation of so much per unit it enables him to figure out exactly the real value of the manure, providing the manufacturer sells the manure at its unit-value, which should be its real selling-price and not at a fictitious value.

4. You think a farmer could make the calculations so as to know the value of the manure?—It is quite a simple matter. For instance, we will suppose that the value of soluble nitrogen is 13s. per unit. If a farmer is making a bargain for 7 per cent. of nitrogen it is only a matter of multiplying 13s. by seven to get the value of it; the same thing applies to the other constituents, and the total of those unit-values is the value of the manure to the farmer.

5. Who is the authority for defining the unit-value of manure in the colony?—The unit-value depends upon the market value. Of course, the market value of a great many of these manurial constituents fluctuates from time to time. I do not know about this colony, but in the Old Country they publish in the agricultural papers from week to week or month to month the value per unit of all these manurial constituents, and a farmer can tell by that somewhere near whether he is paying the market value for the stuff.

6. Is that done in the colony?—I do not know.

7. Is there not a considerable difference in the value of soluble and insoluble manure?—There is a great difference.

8. I mean as regards unit-value?—In the value of soluble nitrogen and insoluble nitrogen there is a great difference.

9. Supposing that a manure-vendor gave a considerable amount of, say, insoluble nitrogen as manure: would there not be some difficulty, from a farmer's point of view, in ascertaining whether that was of any value or not?—A certain difficulty crops up there, but that is a difficulty which, I think, we cannot enter into.

10. For instance, supposing that old leather was ground, it would show a certain amount of insoluble nitrogen?—Yes.

11. Would it be of any use whatever to the farmer?—No.

12. So that if a vendor wishes to be dishonest that opens a considerable field?—Yes.

13. The farmer would be paying for articles which would be of no value whatever to him as manure?—Yes.

14. Does the English Act provide for unit-values?—Yes, I think it does to a certain extent, inasmuch as the analyst can only base his value of the manure on the unit-value.

15. Mr. Pond, as far as I can ascertain, was of opinion that the English Act of 1893 would be a greater protection to the farmers than this Bill?—Well, the English Act is based upon a different principle altogether. The idea of the English Act is this: that the farmer makes his own arrangements as to price and the percentages of the manurial constituents. It is a matter between the buyer and the vendor. But the law steps in to protect the farmer—to see that he gets what he is bargaining for. This Bill that we have before us at the present time appears to me to be based upon the idea that manufacturers shall keep standard brands of manures, and this Bill will see that the standard is kept up to the proper percentages.

16. Could you give us an instance with regard to, say, blood manure—that is a very good class of manure?—That is one of the best classes of insoluble nitrogenous manures.

17. What do you consider the unit-value of that?—I have not had much experience of the unit-values in this colony, and I would not say for certain, but I believe it would be about 7s.

18. Do you not think that the English Act would be a very good Act to apply to this colony?—I do think so, providing you do not obliterate the unit-values. I think that when a vendor is selling a manure he should state on the invoice or a certificate the percentages of soluble and insoluble nitrogen, phosphoric acid, and potash, and he should state the value that he attaches to each constituent—the unit-value—and the value should be the lowest price that he should sell at. That should be the basis of the bargain between the buyer and the seller.

19. Take, for instance, the process under the English Act. The vendor has to state in his invoice to the buyer the quantity, say, of soluble and insoluble nitrogen, phosphoric acid, and potash, and the percentages contained in that manure. The English Act, I understand, makes that a warranty, and if on analysis the manure does not contain those quantities, then the buyer has an action against the vendor. Would that not satisfy the conditions the farmers ask for?—Well, I think that is where the unit-values would be most useful. Suppose there was a deficiency of 1 per cent. of nitrogen: if that was worth 13s. a unit the purchaser would see at a glance the value of the manure, less the 13s., the value of the 1 per cent. He would know exactly the extent of the deficiency in the money value.

20. *Hon. Mr. Pitt.*] If a farmer contracts for certain unit-values, how is he to be assured that he gets what he contracts for? Has he to analyse the manure afterwards?—The English Act provides that he can get it analysed within ten days of delivery—delivery of the manure or the invoice, whichever is latest.

21. That is his mode of ascertaining whether the contract has been carried out?—Yes.

22. *Mr. Kidd.*] Of course, he would have to do that at his own expense?—The English Act gives him the means of having it done through the counties, and it is done, I think, for a merely nominal fee of about 5s. or 10s. If a purchaser thinks that his manure may not be up to the guarantee he gets it analysed for a nominal fee, and, of course, he can see then whether it is a case for action being taken or not.

23. There is no provision in the Bill by which the Agricultural Department would do that for the farmer, is there?—No.

24. *Mr. Bollard.*] You are of opinion that the manure merchant or manufacturer should supply an analysis with the manure he sells, giving a full description of it, and the unit-value of each manurial constituent?—Of each manurial constituent, and the unit-value that he attaches to it should be the selling-value, not a fictitious value.