

22. Is it not a fact that, so far as Auckland is concerned, the moth is disappearing—is gradually becoming less?—Well, name a special district.

23. Take the Auckland District as a whole?—No; it is not so—the province as a whole.

24. Would you be surprised to know that it is the general opinion of the Auckland fruit-growers that the moth is going?—I should be surprised if their hopes were realised.

25. Well it is so?—It is my opinion that in the Auckland Province as a whole the moth is as plentiful as ever.

26. What districts have you visited?—All over.

27. Waikumete?—Yes; and the officers have been all over it.

28. And you think the moth is as plentiful as ever?—Taking it altogether, Yes. I do not think there is any reduction in the moth. The moth varies so much according to the season. If it is a very wet season the moth is not so bad. Its prevalence varies according to the season.

29. With regard to the Otahuhu Orchard, do you know the age of the trees when they were taken over by the Department?—No, I do not; but I understand fifteen or sixteen years old.

30. And therefore they ought to be just about in full bearing at that time?—They ought to be if looked after.

31. How long has the orchard been abandoned?—Some years. I do not know exactly.

32. You are not able to give us an estimate of the actual cost of spraying operations?—Yes; you have the actual cost of spraying stated in the memorandum read and in last year's report.

33. You have not made it quite clear: when you say 10s. 8½d. per acre, is that per acre per season, or is it only the cost for this particular article?—For this particular article per application.

34. Perhaps the cost of the spraying would probably amount to £2 per acre?—That would depend upon the condition of your orchard.

35. Would it average 10s. per acre each time?—If you had a whole acre of that kind to do, under the same conditions.

36. Do you know, as far as the moth is concerned, that it may now be found in other trees besides fruit-trees—in the karaka berry?—No.

37. You have not seen it in any other native fruits?—No.

38. Are you certain?—I say I have never seen it. I should like to see specimens.

39. Nothing of the sort has been reported to you?—I have seen it reported in the newspapers, but have never yet been able to get any one to send me a specimen.

40. *Mr. Rhodes.*] Have you any knowledge of how long these trees remained unpruned before the Government took them over?—I do not know. Some were 20 ft. and 25 ft. high; very neglected and misshapen.

41. *Mr. Massey.*] Are you aware that the owner of the orchard, instead of spraying with the ordinary instrument, sprayed with the strawsonizer?—I know that; but it is not suitable, and is too expensive.

42. *Mr. Rhodes.*] Have you any evidence as to the size of the apples before the Government took them over?—I cannot say. I was informed that they got a total of about £15 for their crop. I would not like to state that positively. The people who bought the crops before we took it over refused to buy our first crop as they had lost so much previously.

43. How many acres would you say there are?—Between two and three acres.

44. After the Government took over the orchard were they getting a good price?—Oh, yes. In fact, we were getting such a very much better price for the fruit in Wellington than we were sending it down here. The price in Auckland is, I understand, regulated by an association of buyers. The producers have no such association.

45. The fruit is ripe sooner in Auckland than it is in the South, is it not?—Yes.

46. Do you think that Mr. Lippiatt considered that it was more profitable to root out these old trees and plant new ones rather than to take old ones in hand?—I understand that he had commenced to root up the old ones, but not to plant new ones. I understand the present owner of the orchard is remarkably pleased with the results.

47. You consider that these were good varieties to experiment with?—Yes; they were very fair varieties as grown in Auckland.

48. I do not mean so much as regards the codlin-moth, but as regards other blights?—Oh, yes.

49. You cultivated the land: did you apply manure?—Not yet. The trees received no help, except cultivation on one part of the orchard. We are going to apply it now.

50. *Mr. Lethbridge.*] What about the natural enemies to the codlin-moth, do you know of any in New Zealand?—Yes.

51. But you do not think they are likely to make much impression on the moth?—There was a good deal of talk about a small enemy some time ago. It was found that it does not come out sufficiently early in the season to save the early apples. I might mention that it is an American insect, and the American Government has spent thousands of pounds on seeking and experimenting with the natural enemies of the codlin-moth, but so far without success, and they have given up expecting natural enemies to obviate the necessity for the use of mechanical control.

52. I know of an orchard which was brought under the notice of the Department which contained the codlin-moth. I was told that absolutely nothing was done to it, and the moth had disappeared. A peculiar thing about this orchard was that it was a very old one, and it was not until it was cultivated that it was found that the moth had gone. Did the Department hear of that?—One of the officers was told to go and see that orchard.

53. I was told that of the officers of the Department had been to the orchard with the microscope, and could find no sign of any insects?—I do not remember to have seen the report.

54. *Hon. Mr. A. Lee Smith.*] Have you in your experiments disregarded the fact of the orchard being a commercial success, and looked upon it purely as a demonstrative character?—The demonstration was the principal object we had in view, and we also tried to get as much out of the orchard as we could.