

that in compiling a balance-sheet something ought to be charged for management or supervision?—I do not think so. I think we ought to consider this orchard just as an ordinary orchard, where a man would supervise his work himself.

121. But it is a fact that in the balance-sheet nothing is charged for management?—There is nothing charged for my supervision.

122. Is it not a fact that there are certain varieties of apples that are to a certain extent proof from the codlin-moth?—Some varieties of apples take the moth less than others.

123. Have you any of them in this orchard?—No. All the varieties there are very much subject to the attack of the moth.

124. Have you got any of the Gravenstein variety?—No.

125. I suppose the Gravenstein is one of the varieties that are to a certain extent free from the moth?—Yes; it frequently happens that the Gravenstein is to a certain extent passed over by the moth, even in orchards which are badly infested.

126. To do justice to any orchard, during the fruit season, at what time is it necessary to commence operations in the way of cleaning, and so forth?—I commence operations at about the beginning of November.

127. At what time did you commence at Otahuhu on the first occasion?—On the last day or so of October. Last season we had a very late season—it was almost the middle of November before very much was done.

128. Did I understand you to say that, as far as the moth is concerned, the Auckland Provincial District is as badly infected as others?—I think it is.

129. Have you not heard from orchardists all round that the moth is disappearing?—I hear of occasional instances, which I believe to be authentic; but it is not general by any means.

130. Would you be surprised to hear of an orchard where nothing was done in the way of spraying or bandaging and yet the average percentage of clean fruit there was 90 per cent.?—I should not be surprised if it had been neglected for a number of years. I will explain that. There is a parasite that is working in neglected orchards; but the trouble with the parasite is this: as long as the fruit is left the parasite is on the increase until there is a certain percentage of clean fruit available for market. Directly that percentage is obtained the grower sends his fruit to market, and with his fruit he sends away the parasite, and in a very short time he has reduced it so far that it is of no value in his orchard, which is as bad as ever again with the codlin-moth. That is what has actually occurred at Mr. Parr's place. Last season I saw his orchard, and the fruit was as bad as it could be. Three seasons before his fruit was fairly clean—I believe the percentage of clean fruit was about 75—and he felt it worth while to send it away, and with the fruit he sent away the parasite.

131. This parasite is, then, the natural enemy of the moth?—Yes; but it does not work out satisfactorily, for the reason that I have given. Frequently you get a sufficient percentage of clean fruit, and with the fruit you send away the parasite, leaving the moth behind.

132. Does not spraying destroy the parasite?—No. It is a parasite of the egg, and the egg of the parasite being lodged in the egg of the moth it is beyond the reach of any spray that may be used.

133. Will you describe the parasite as far as you can?—In its mature form the parasite is a very minute fly. The fly lays two and sometimes three eggs in the egg of the codlin-moth. The eggs are hatched, and the larvæ inside of the egg prevent the grub of the codlin-moth itself from developing at all, and emerge as parasitic flies again. It being a parasite of the egg, I am afraid we cannot hope for any really good results from it. If it were a parasite in any other form we might hope for something from it. But, as I have explained, directly you get a sufficient percentage of clean fruit to make it worth your while to export it, you ship the clean fruit, and with it is taken the parasite.

134. The same thing would apply to an orchard where the fruit was eaten by pigs—where the fruit was allowed to drop to the ground?—Yes, largely.

135. How long is it since the parasite made its appearance?—I noticed it, I think, three years ago.

136. Do you not think it is increasing in numbers?—I dare say it is in neglected orchards. It simply means that to derive any benefit from the parasite you have to leave the fruit there—you must not carry it away.

137. Nor allow it to be eaten by pigs?—No.

138. I suppose you are of opinion that, so far as Auckland is concerned, the principal difficulty in the way of pests is the moth?—Yes; as far, at any rate, as this Bill is concerned, that is the one that has been taken up, and I am sorry that it has been taken up so strongly, because it appears to me that it is obscuring other matters that are of really greater importance.

139. I think I heard you raise an objection to exporting fruit to Wellington by saying that it was a pity to pass your best market—Auckland—and ship to Wellington: is it not a fact that there is far more fruit produced in the Auckland District than can possibly be consumed by the people there?—There is no doubt that we should need other markets besides the Auckland market; but what I mean is this: As far as clean fruit is concerned, the Auckland market will not pay for it, on account of the enormous quantity of infected fruit that is always coming in there and bringing down the price of clean fruit to an unprofitable figure; so that for clean fruit you have to pass what should be your best market—the Auckland market. I had to do that last season. I sent the fruit to the Auckland market in the early part of the season, and the prices ruling would not pay the expenses of picking and packing. I commenced to ship to Wellington, and realised better prices, with the result that at the end of the season I was able to show what I consider a fair profit. But I had to pass what should be the best market with every shipment.

140. Do you think that the passing of the Bill before the Committee would be beneficial to the Auckland fruit-growers?—I am quite sure of it.