

7. You say that in walking along the bank of the Oroua the other day you saw flax floating in the stream?—Yes, flax and fibre; and in the Manawatu.

8. Was it in an undressed condition?—It seemed to be the tails. It had gone through the stripper, no doubt.

9. It was more than the ordinary pulp?—Yes. The pulp is always going down. In the centre of the river I do not think the pulp would hurt at all; it is when it washes over and gets in the pools that it does the damage.

10. You infer, then, that the flax-millers are not even now taking the necessary precautions to collect their refuse?—No, they are not. I was very much surprised to see it in the Manawatu. Just at the back of the willows there was a heap of flax and stuff.

11. *Mr. J. Bollard.*] What is the width of the Oroua River?—I suppose the water would not be more than about 30 ft.

12. And the depth?—I suppose it would take it all its time to go 3 ft. right through, and about 2 ft. in the summer-time. I have walked across in the summer-time with watertight boots on without getting wet.

13. How do you account for the cattle drinking from these pools that are supposed to be poisonous?—Very often there is quicksand further out in the river, especially where they have been drinking, and they would rather drink from the pools than go out in the quicksand.

14. They can get to the middle of the water if they want to?—In places they can, but not in all.

15. We have had it in evidence here that trout like to be below a mill where they get the vegetation to feed on—that fishermen get more fish there than anywhere else on the river. How do you account for that?—If they get it just below the mill it does not hurt, because the stuff has not had time to ferment. It is almost pure water, I suppose, just below the mill. But in the Oroua River I have never seen any trout when the mills have been working.

16. Did you ever see any dead trout in the river?—No.

17. *Mr. Field.*] Is there any stench arising from this polluted water?—Yes, in the summer-time.

18. Is it a bad smell?—It is a bad smell.

19. Supposing there was a small stream badly polluted by flax-refuse, would it be fit to live alongside of?—I should not think so.

20. You have seen the Bill?—Yes. I do not think it is a fair thing for a dairyman, because what chance would he have to go into the Supreme Court for the sake of one or two cows?

21. Speaking for dairymen generally, you are satisfied that they are not prepared to accept damages without having the right to an injunction? This takes away the right of injunction?—You have to go to the Supreme Court to prove the damage.

22. Is that satisfactory to dairymen?—No, it is not. A cow is valued perhaps at £6 or £8, and it might cost you £200 to get that amount in damages.

23. The fact that you have not seen dead trout—is that explainable in this way, that the moment the trout find the water polluted they clear out to pure water?—Yes.

24. *Mr. Pearce.*] Are not the quicksands much worse directly after the river has subsided than when there has been a spell of dry weather?—Yes.

25. And it is impossible then for the cattle to get water?—Yes. They can go right down on to the beach in summer-time, but they cannot after a flood.

26. *The Chairman.*] Where the settlers front on to the Oroua River, is the river frontage not fenced at all?—No.

27. How are cattle prevented from straying away then?—Occasionally they cross the river, but it is not very often.

28. Speaking generally, have the settlers in that locality any water available except the Oroua?—Yes, we get it by sinking artesian; but when you lease a property fronting on the river you lease it with the right of using the water.

29. When the Veterinary Surgeon visited these cows of yours that died, why could he not come to a conclusion as to what had poisoned them—were they too far decomposed?—Yes. He was away in Taihape, and we had to wait to get him.

30. How did he conclude that the cows had been poisoned, if their condition was such as you state?—I told him how they were lying, and that they died pretty suddenly. I saw one just kicking its last, and I told him how it was, and he examined it and said, "I think it is a case of poisoning." We went down there to look at a drain, and he said he thought the river was all right; but it had come up that morning. Mr. Scott, the veterinary chemist, reckoned the cow had died from eating cleanings, but Mr. Plimmer would not listen to that. He said it was a case of poison.

31. Do you know of any other case where cows were supposed to have been poisoned?—I was speaking to Mr. Plimmer, and he said there were some cases at, I think, Moutoa, but he did not tell me exactly. I asked if there were flax-mills working there, and he said Yes, and the flax was going into the drains, and they were dying very suddenly; he would not say they were dying from it, but he gave me to understand they died from drinking bad water.

32. Are you satisfied yourself that your cows died from flax poisoning?—I am in my own mind. It might have been poisoning brought on by drinking flax-water.

33. Are your cows getting water in any other way now than they were at the time these died?—They are drinking now out of a drain. In the summer-time all the grass on the Manawatu is practically bare, yet on the Oroua River side you see the grass up high. The cattle mostly stay where the water is—on the Manawatu side.

34. Do you mean to say that the grass grows long because it is too far for the cows to travel to water?—Yes.