

9. Are you prepared to swear that these flax-mills being on the river has been the cause of your losing so many cattle?—Yes, I am positive.

10. How do you know?—I know from over twenty years' experience.

11. Did you have any veterinary surgeon there to examine them when they were ill?—I have not passed as a veterinary surgeon, but I have often been called out as one. I was rearing stud stock for the shows when I was fifteen years old.

12. You have not got any diploma, have you?—No.

13. *The Chairman.*] You have read the Bill that is before the Committee?—Yes.

14. If that Bill were made law, would you have more power to prevent these flax-millers from putting so much refuse in the river as they have been doing in the past?—There are lots of ways of looking at the question. It depends on whether there is a possibility of bringing bribery in. That has been the case with our witnesses, I am sorry to say, both in this case and in the case before. I think the Bill does not give us power enough, but I think it is far better than the old system, anyhow.

15. You are aware, are you not, that the fault found with the existing law is that it gives too much power to a man to put a stop to any mill—to get an injunction against any mill that is doing damage?—I think it is the other way round—that it does not give half enough power.

16. You know that you have power to put an injunction into force if you choose to apply to the Court to do so?—I did not feel satisfied that I had without the others helping me or my helping them. I would not try it, anyhow.

17. Do you mean to say that you got that injunction and that you felt yourself unable to go any further with it?—If you knew the class of men that are round flax-mills, and you had property there that was valuable, I think you would do the same. I have insured my house since, and I never insured it before.

18. Did you not give it in evidence, or hear it given, that the reason why that injunction was not given effect to was because of consideration for the flax industry—a reluctance to stop the flax industry?—Yes. Well, in Mr. Tennant's case it was.

19. But, speaking generally—as to the flax-mills generally—you had an injunction, and you did not put it into force because, as you told us here, you were reluctant to put a stop to an important industry?—Yes, I am very reluctant to do it. It brings a lot of money into our district. It would almost ruin some of my smaller neighbours.

20. If the Bill that was suggested by Mr. Baldwin was put into force, do you mean to say that that Bill would give more power than the injunction you now have in your hand if you choose to enforce it?—Yes, I think so.

21. In what way?—If the men appointed to go there were firm, they would get things done. On the other hand, we could not stop the millers; if we went to Court they would all swear they were keeping the stuff out. They all told you here that they have improved their methods, but they have not done it. We cannot watch them night and day. Why, I had trouble to get the photographer near the mill. We went there on Sunday.

22. Are the Committee, then, to understand that one of the reasons for not putting the injunction into force was the fear of disturbance?—That, and to give them a chance to improve matters. Mr. Tennant has done what he could. He is putting none back. He has cut off the water after using it.

23. Do you mean to tell the Committee deliberately that Mr. Baldwin's Bill, if made law, would give you more power by injunction or damages than the law that we have at present?—Certainly. I think the evidence of the experts would be worth double our evidence, and ours would be in direct contradiction of the flax-millers' evidence. Whatever we said, they would say the opposite.

24. *Mr. Field.*] You say that Mr. Tennant is the only miller who is endeavouring to take reasonable precautions to prevent the nuisance?—The only one.

25. You say also that this drain of Mr. Tennant's, in which his partially filtered refuse was running, caused no nuisance—it was not foul-smelling?—There was no smell in it whatever. The water had a slight brown colour where it was standing still.

26. Had the outpourings of the mill been partially filtered before they reached that drain?—No, just run through the drain.

27. But prior to getting into the water at all, the stripped leaves were cleaned of their vegetation and so forth?—Yes, of the stripper-slips and everything. Five tons a day of this was taken out.

28. The leaf, stripped of the vegetation, went into the washing-tank as practically pure fibre?—Into a drum, yes.

29. I suppose there was some refuse?—Yes. The photograph shows the little that had collected in the drain.

30. You do not suggest that flax-refuse in any quantity does not create a stench in hot weather, particularly if it is allowed to accumulate in drains?—I say it does. In this case it had been there a month in cold weather, and had not started to ferment.

31. Did you in your previous evidence give the Committee a description of the stench which arises from a badly polluted drain?—The smell from the river itself last summer was such that we had our doors and windows barricaded against it, and if the wind had not changed we should have had to shift from the house. That was five or six months prior to the case being brought.

32. You state positively that a dwellinghouse situated within 50 ft. or 100 ft. of a badly polluted drain is unfit to live in in hot weather?—Certainly. I have heard a dairy-factory manager complain that it was not safe to cart his stuff across a bridge from one factory to another.

33. *Mr. Sykes.*] You said that you were afraid to go near the mill on Sunday?—I was not. The photographer was.