

221. Are you aware of the existence in the Cook and other Islands Government Act of last year of the following clause: "The Governor may from time to time, by Order in Council, prohibit absolutely, or except in accordance with regulations under this Act, the introduction into New Zealand proper from the Cook or other islands of any plant, fruit, fungus, parasite, or any other thing which in his opinion is likely to introduce insect pests or disease"?—Yes.

Mr. Ritchie: May I be allowed to answer that question? We are not able to get a Proclamation issued under that clause. The Law Officers advise that it is bad. If this present Bill is passed we shall have full power, because it is embodied in the present Bill.

Mr. Massey: This was a clause taken out of your Bill of last year and inserted in the Cook and other Islands Bill.

Mr. Ritchie: That may be, but that is what the Law Officers say.

APPENDIX.

OTAHUHU DEMONSTRATION ORCHARD, SEASON 1902-3.

<i>Expenditure.</i>			£ s. d.	<i>Receipts.</i>			£ s. d.
Rent*	..	..	15 0 0	By Sales of apples..	..	..	65 6 3
Labour†	..	..	25 16 0	Twenty cases for exhibits, &c.	..	..	5 0 0
Fruit-cases, cartage, freight, &c.	..	..	9 11 11	Tools and appliances on hand, less 5 per cent.‡	..	..	13 16 10
Horse-hire, ploughing	..	..	4 5 9				
Spraying-materials	..	..	1 2 9				
Tools, appliances, &c.	..	..	14 11 5				
			<u>£70 7 10</u>				<u>£84 3 1</u>

* The above rent would certainly not be paid under ordinary circumstances for 2½ acres of orchard in apples, the agreement for this amount being made because the orchard was offered as, and admitted to be, a fair type of the worst class of orchard to be found in the colony. The owner intended utilising the land for other purposes, which would have given far better returns than the crops of apples from the existing trees.

† In any orchard that had been well looked after from the time of planting, and with expert assistance for packing, the cost of labour would be about one-half of the above.

‡ The depreciation of value of tools as set down much exceeds the actual depreciation, as the implements are really very little the worse for wear.

Auckland, 31st July, 1903.

SIR,—

Re *Orchard and Garden Pests Bill*.

I am directed by the Auckland Fruit-growers' Union to forward you the following resolution adopted at a meeting of the Executive Committee held this day:—

"(1) That the Department of Agriculture has not yet demonstrated that the codlin-moth can be suppressed on commercial lines; and (2) that the Orchard and Garden Pests Bill now before the House, if passed into law, will prove an unjust and harassing enactment to a very large number of fruit-growers in the North Island who are earning their livelihood in the industry."

I have, &c.,

J. H. MACKIE,

General Secretary.

The Hon. the Minister for Agriculture, Wellington.

SIR,—

Pinegrove Orchard, Port Albert, 22nd August, 1903.

There is already a stir against the proposed legislation on fruit-culture, but if it comes from all places as from here, such noise need not be considered. As a matter of fact, growers who represent nine-tenths of fruit-exporters from this district favour legislation.

We do not approve of clause 22, making special provisions for the Auckland Province. It spells ruin to us. All the colony should be included in the Act. And we fear that County Councils will be incompetent to administer the Act thoroughly or fairly. The present pomological staff could be the Chief Inspectors under the Agricultural Departments of each centre.

Yours, &c.,

L. P. BECROFT.

T. Y. Duncan, Esq., Wellington.

Auckland Fruit-growers' Union, Auckland, 27th August, 1903.

SIR,—

Re *Orchard and Garden Pests Bill*.

I have the honour to inform you that at a meeting of Auckland fruit-growers held under the auspices of the union the following resolutions were unanimously adopted, with instructions that they be communicated to the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture:—

"Although this meeting of Auckland fruit-growers deems it unadvisable to pass any repressive orchard legislation until the commercial success of the experiments now being conducted for the repression of insect and fungoid pests has been amply demonstrated, it would urge upon the Government, should such legislation be enacted, the following alterations in the Bill as at present drafted: (1.) That a 10-per-cent. allowance be made upon fruit transhipped from one part of the colony to another which is presumed to be clean when shipped and found to be infected at the port of arrival. (2.) That infected fruit used for pulp-making be allowed to be moved from orchards to any jam-factory within its own provincial district. (3.) Provision for compensation to be made where orchards yielding an income are wholly or partially destroyed when extreme action is taken by the authorities."

I have, &c.,

J. H. MACKIE,

General Secretary.

The Hon. the Minister for Agriculture, Wellington.