

SCOTT AND THE SCALE BUGS.

The Competency of the Horticultural Commissioner.

Not Much of a Showing Made by That Officer's Opponents.

The Supervisors Commence a Thorough Investigation into the Charges That Have Been Brought.

The anticipated attempt to oust Mr. John Scott of the office of county horticultural commissioner was begun before the board of supervisors yesterday morning, and consumed the rest of the day, and will be resumed this morning at 10 o'clock.

The action is brought in the form of a petition from some of the residents of Downey and vicinity, praying that Mr. Scott be removed.

The petition charges that Mr. Scott, through neglect, has allowed the purple scale to spread from Clearwater across to Whittier; also that he has antagonized the state board of horticulture, thereby prejudicing the best interests of the fruit growers of the county.

A number of witnesses for the petition were examined. It is a noticeable fact that the majority of the complainants against Mr. Scott are from the neighborhood of Downey, while the growers in the San Gabriel valley are almost a unit for his retention.

A number of facts were brought out by the examination, but nothing has been obtained in direct relation to Mr. Scott's hostility to the state board.

Mr. Scott was also examined. The main point elicited from him was the fact that frequently the required notices, as prescribed by law, were not served when the orchards were declared infested with the scale, and the district was, from this oversight, not able to obtain a lien on the property. It is necessary, so as to pay for a certain per cent of the cost of fumigation. Mr. Scott stated, however, that in cases where notices were not served agreements were entered into by the orchardists and himself whereby the latter bound themselves to pay their proportion.

Just what facts the petitioners will be able to prove today remains to be seen, but it is certain that Mr. Scott's position remained unshaken when the board adjourned, after having listened to a large quantity of testimony. There are certain facts which have yet been scarcely touched upon, but the supervisors seem determined to sift the entire matter to the bottom, so far as the district, and ever is likely to throw additional light on the controversy will be admitted as evidence.

After disposing of minor matters the hearing of the petition praying for Mr. Scott's removal was announced by Supervisor Cook as the next business before the board.

Judge Knox speaks. Judge Knox, the attorney for the petitioners for removal, then stepped forward and said: "May it please the board I think that there has been a misunderstanding in regard to the time set for the hearing and I do not think that all of the persons whom I represent are here."

Supervisor Cook said that as there were probably enough to start the case the matter would be heard at once.

The clerk then proceeded with the petition to the board which is as follows:

The undersigned, your petitioners, residents of Downey and vicinity, would respectfully urge upon your honorable body the urgent necessity for the removal of the present incumbent of the office of horticultural commissioner, and the appointment thereof of some person in whom both the orchardists of the county and the state board have confidence. Through the neglect of Horticultural Officer Scott the purple scale has gained a foothold in this district, and has been allowed to spread all the way from Clearwater to Whittier, and is steadily increasing, and little or no effort has been made to stop its progress. This, if continued, will not only ruin the trees and fruit, but will prevent people from improving in this locality. We have been given to understand that predaceous parasites can be obtained only through the state board of horticulture, by whom they were colonized, owing to a lack of confidence in Mr. Scott. From this want of harmony between the state board and our commissioner, the fruit interests of our county, and particularly of this locality, are suffering.

No doubt the state board had good cause for its action. In view of this lack of confidence and the great expense to the county annually, it having cost about \$12,000 to sustain the commissioner's office for 1892, for which outlay there was no appreciable benefit, we ask that a change be made in the incumbency of the office, whereby the fruit growers of the county can receive a benefit both from the investigations of the state board and as a return for the taxes they are compelled to pay.

We assert no claim and have no desire to dictate to your honorable board the person whom you shall select to fill the office of horticultural commissioner. We only ask that he be a man in whom fruit growers may have confidence, and one with whom the state board will work harmoniously.

Signed—Geo. Probert, C. Johnson, A. Keltz, Cyrus Brown, C. Hollister, H. Neval, Seymour Davis, Chas. McKenny, J. F. Renfro, Emmet Stewart, J. W. Venable, W. Dickenson, E. P. Dickmeyer, C. E. Smith, H. S. Redfield, E. F. Nolan, B. B. Arey, Jas. Stewart, J. Steller, Downey; Frank Dyert, Los Angeles; J. C. Dunn, Long Beach; J. P. Humphreys, J. A. Philbin, Clearwater; E. R. Harris.

A number of petitions endorsing that Mr. Scott be retained and praying that his course be next read. Among the sections represented were: Anusa, Covina, Duarte, San Gabriel, Los Angeles, Rivera, San Fernando, Pasadena, Pomona and Burbank. Signed to these various petitions were the names of the leading growers and commission men of the respective sections.

The clerk was interrupted by Supervisor Hay, after the petition from Rivera had been read, who asked if the name of R. V. Harris was not also in the petition requesting Mr. Scott's removal. Upon investigation the name of Mr. Harris appeared both on the pro and con petition.

When the reading was concluded, Judge Knox took the petition and read the portion relating to the spread

of the purple scale. He addressed the board briefly, saying that his purpose was to endeavor to show that Mr. Scott had been derelict in his duty as commissioner, and should be successful in proving this fact, the duty and course devolving upon the board was apparent.

MR. STEWART'S EVIDENCE. John J. Stewart of Downey was the next witness called by Mr. Knox.

He said: I am in the nursery business and have a small orchard at Downey. The purple scale has been in my orchard for four or five years. I have called Mr. Scott's attention to this fact, and about one month ago he first visited it.

His inspector in that neighborhood for the past two years has been Mr. Evans, whose first visit to the orchard to look after the purple scale was about two months ago.

"Mr. Scott rented the orchard with Mr. Evans later. The former suggested that the trees be cut off and the trunks washed. He feared that they would die at the opening of the winter. Mr. Scott then suggested that I wash the trunks with coal oil and spray the tops with the Acme wash. There were about 17 2-year-old trees tagged by Mr. Evans. He had previously visited the nursery, looking for the purple scale. The trees were originally brought from Florida.

"There are a number of orchards in that vicinity that are troubled with the purple scale.

"Before Mr. Scott's visit I did nothing to kill the scale, because I did not know what to use. Mr. Evans, the inspector, has an orchard in which are about 17 trees affected. In Mr. Silen's orchard there are about 12 trees with the scale, which has been there for about four years. I should judge there are about a dozen trees infested in Mr. Wood's orchard. Mr. Johnson has about the same number. I do not know whether the scale has made much progress in that locality or not.

"It was not due to Mr. Evans' efforts, however, that the spread of the scale was prevented."

"Mr. Scott said he thought that the wash he recommended was a good one and would destroy the bugs."

"My experience has been that it is not. Neither Mr. Scott nor Mr. Evans has ever offered any excuse for their negligence."

CROSS EXAMINED.

"Now, Mr. Stewart," said Waldo M. York, who represented Mr. Scott, "did you ever, while the scale was in your orchard, speak with any one in regard to it?"

"No, sir; I spoke to the neighbors."

"Did you ever report its presence to the commission's office?"

"No; but they knew the scale was there."

"How do you know that?"

"Because when the trees were brought into the country from Florida the scale was upon them."

"Are you not aware that there has been a change in the commission since that time? Why did you neglect to inform the commissioners in regard to the presence of the scale?"

Judge Knox here interposed an objection.

Supervisor Hay favored the witness answering the various questions put to him in order that full light be thrown upon the matter.

Supervisor Forrester remarked that if the orchardists desired to be rid of the scale nests they should work with the commissioners and report its presence to the authority.

It was then decided by the board that the question of Judge York be allowed.

TALKED SOME MORE.

"When I took hold of my orchard the scale were there. I consulted with some of my neighbors but as none seemed to know of any remedy I did nothing for it. There is also black scale in my orchard and as I had been told that it was harmless I did not try to destroy it."

A WITNESS FROM THE VALLEY.

Col. J. R. Dobbins of San Gabriel was next sworn. I am an orchardist. This year I shipped about 3000 trees north to Butte county. They were inspected by Mr. C. H. Richardson, who gave me a certificate for them.

"She trees were planted in Butte county and were complained of on the grounds that all the scale had not been killed. They had been fumigated before leaving here."

"Did Mr. Scott make any effort to get those trees out of quarantine?"

Yes; he stated that he had written north in regard to them."

"Do you know anything from your own knowledge of the presence of purple scale in this county?" asked Judge Knox.

"No, sir; I do not."

"Do you know," said Mr. York, "of any time that Mr. Scott has neglected his duty as horticultural commissioner?"

"No, sir; and I have always considered him an efficient, faithful and competent person."

"That will do."

"One moment, please," interrupted Judge Knox. "Have you signed a petition asking for the retention of Mr. Scott as commissioner?"

tor, had asked him to sign some sort of a petition against the state board of horticulture.

Mr. Eames said that he thought the state board had accomplished much good for the orchardists. They had introduced the orcus chalybeus and the ladybugs which he thought had been a success. Mr. Scott had not convinced him that they were failures.

The board then took a recess until 1:30 o'clock.

AFTERNOON SESSION. F. W. Hepburn of the city was the first witness called.

"I was connected with Mr. Eames' nursery some time ago. During the period I had several conversations with Mr. Millard. The first was in regard to the root knot. There was a lot of trees which came from Santa Paula and which Millard said we could throw out, as he would give no certificate. I requested that Mr. Scott come down to see them. I had had persons who I thought more competent to judge than Mr. Millard to examine them, and they could find no root knot."

"These trees had received a certificate from one or more of the commissioners of Tulare county. I sent several specimens to the department of agriculture to be examined. The result was a letter."

THE LETTER. "The letter was from Mr. G. T. Galway, chief of the division, who stated that an examination had failed to reveal any fungus growth, but in regard to a certain growth about the roots he was unable to state, and suggested that samples be sent to their agent, Mr. Pierce."

"I collected samples," continued the witness, "to send to Mr. Pierce, but he had moved away and I did not learn where he was."

"Mr. Scott visited the orchard once, but never in connection with those trees. It was upon some other business. He came before I had the trouble with Mr. Millard."

"The condemnation of the inspector, however, was eventually dumped out."

"Do you think Mr. Scott was neglecting his work?" asked Supervisor Hay.

"Yes, I know that he did. I sent word to him to come and see the trees, but I received the reply that he did not propose to come."

"The reply given, too, was that the trees were affected with some growth detrimental to trees, and the inspectors refused to give any certificate for them. This was based upon his judgment, and which I believe to be very faulty."

MR. STEWART. E. E. Stewart of Downey testified next:

"I know that the purple scale is in my brother's orchard, and Mr. Evans, the inspector's place. There is some of this scale in my orchard. I do not know how to treat it; have never had any conversation with Mr. Evans in regard to it."

"I bought some trees from Pomona recently, which were accompanied by a certificate by the inspector, Mr. Critchfield, I believe. After they were placed in my orchard Mr. George Compere, at that time the inspector, found there was scale upon them, and reported the matter to Mr. Scott. The latter ordered that they be gassed. They were sold to Dr. Baldwin, who gassed them and they died."

SOME PEACH TREES. "I also received a consignment of peach trees from Downey. Mr. Evans, the inspector there, had issued a certificate upon them, but the local inspectors refused to take them, on the grounds that there was some imperfection in the root."

J. A. CAMPBELL. J. A. Campbell, the inspector for the city district, was next called. "I know nothing of Mr. Stewart's trees beyond the fact that I condemned them in this city and Mr. McMullen took them in charge."

"In my opinion the purple scale is fully as dangerous as the other varieties because it is harder to deal with. I have found that cutting the tops of the trees and rubbing the trunks with kerosene and kerosene will exterminate the pest. I first saw the scale in the country about five years ago. It was in some nursery trees in a place on Spring street. I called the attention of the commissioners to its presence."

"The only other places where I have seen it are Fruitland, Downey and Long Beach. About one and one-half years ago I visited Downey and saw it there."

"The purple scale is not restricted only to Florida, but I have seen it on fruit from Messina and Sicily as well while at Downey, Mr. Evans, the inspector, showed me the scale in his orchard."

"On my return to the city I told Mr. Scott that it certainly did not look well for the scale to be in this orchard of an inspector."

"How long do you think Mr. Compere," asked Judge Knox, "that it would take Mr. Scott to personally visit and inspect all of the orchards in the county?"

"Well, if he got down to work he might do it in three years and maybe not then. In order to rid the country entirely of the scale pests, it would require about 100 men."

"Tell something further of the purple scale."

I was at Long Beach on the 5th of this month. The scale had nearly all been cleared out.

"I went to Fruitland in July in company with Mr. Scott to investigate the fumigating of an orchard infested with purple scale."

"Has not Mr. Scott constantly given all of his attention and shown much intelligence in conducting the business?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you not think he is a capable horticulturist?"

"Yes; so far as I have known he is."

MR. DALTON. Mr. George J. Dalton of Los Angeles testified.

"I was requested by Mr. Millard to sign a petition asking for the removal of the state board of horticulture. I refused to do this."

Judge Knox then tried to get the witness to prove by means of a conversation that it was his duty to condemn them. The witness stated that he and Mr. Willard were constantly having difficulties, and he requested the latter to acquit Mr. Scott with the condition of the trees and ask him to visit the nursery.

Mr. Willard's answer, when next seen, was that if Mr. Eames wanted to see Mr. Scott in regard to those trees it was his place to go to Mr. Scott's office. It was not, continued the inspector, a part of Mr. Scott's duty to chase around to Mr. Eames' orchard.

The witness arraigned Mr. Scott for not having come to inspect his trees, which, he declared, was a neglect of duty.

In reply to a question by Judge Knox, he stated that Mr. Millard, the inspec-

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