

for the important and responsible duties imposed upon them. The various witnesses examined were naturally reluctant to name individual cases, but the Committee is none the less satisfied that many appointments have been made of men whose previous history furnished nothing but a record of failure in other walks of life, and incapacity and unfitness for any responsibility such as is contemplated by this Act. To carry out its provisions with vigour, it is necessary that the Inspectors should be allowed to exercise large powers; and when it is remembered that, under present arrangements these same officers are intrusted with the working of the Sheep Act, it will be at once recognized that they have duties to perform involving great responsibility, and requiring the use of much tact and judgment.

The Committee thinks these considerations cannot fail to give weight to the remarks above made relating to the appointment of officers, and to impress the Government with the duty which rests upon them of at once dispensing with the services of men unqualified for such an important duty.

It is also of opinion that the Sheep and Rabbit Acts are alike well framed for effecting the purposes for which they were passed—that it is not desirable to make any other amendments in them than that above mentioned; and, just in proportion as the officers charged with putting them in force are well chosen or the reverse, so will the administration be attended with success or failure.

The Committee is further of opinion that, in view of the great success which has attended the use of the ferret, the Government should lose no time in contracting with suitable persons for delivery in New Zealand of considerable numbers by every direct steamer, in order that they may be turned out on the unoccupied Crown lands and reserves. They would also direct the Superintending Inspector's attention to the necessity of protection to ferrets disclosed by the evidence of witnesses, who complain of pressure from Inspectors to use packs of dogs as well as traps, to the inevitable destruction of every description of natural enemy.

The Committee desire, in conclusion, to express their entire concurrence with the almost universal tenor of the evidence, that it would be highly undesirable to place the management of the Sheep and Rabbit Acts within reach of the local influences and jealousies which would inevitably accompany their administration by the local bodies.

17th October, 1884.

G. RANDALL JOHNSON,
Chairman.