

21. Is there any reason for their being so long infected?—It is because the Act has not been enforced, I suppose.

22. When the Act itself was passed, a period of five years was allowed to the District of Marlborough before certain portions of the Act were brought into force. The object, I believe, was to enable the sheepowners to take the necessary steps to clean their flocks. Did they avail themselves of that?—They availed themselves of the time, but they did not clean their flocks.

23. *Hon. Mr. Campbell.*] They availed themselves of the time, but they did not take the steps?—I do not know whether they took steps, but they do not hold a clean certificate. There have been difficulties in the way.

24. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Do you hold these difficulties to be insuperable?—I am not in a position to answer that question. Those more conversant with the runs will be able to give you more information.

25. What is the name of the Inspector?—It was Mr. Passau. It is not Mr. Foster; he is Inspector in Charge.

26. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Clifton?—Yes, that is the name.

27. Mr. Clifton was formerly of Castlepoint. He is a very good man?—That is his name.

28. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Do the Inspectors make periodical visits to the district?—Mr. Passau lives in the district. I think the new Inspector means to do so likewise.

29. In a case that came before us some time ago, I think one Inspector was not able to state what number of sheep was on the run, and he went so far as to say that he never was on that particular run. Do the Inspectors fairly visit the different parts of the country over which they are Inspectors, so as to know something about them?—I think so.

30. You have no complaint as to the manner in which the Inspector carries out his duties?—None whatever. The Inspectors seem very anxious to do their duty and clean the runs if possible.

31. *Hon. Mr. Williamson.*] The witness recommends fencing either by the occupants or by the Government, or by both. We have had evidence given to us that these fences were liable to be broken down by the sliding of the snow. It was also said that it would be impossible to keep them up?—I think the snow-line should be made the basis. That fences should be erected as far as the snow-line, shutting out anything where fences were likely to be broken.

32. How are you going to distinguish?—Unless you do something in the way of fencing, how is it possible to get a clean muster? It is almost impossible where people have to go out for days to look for them: it is impossible, unless you get a boundary within which you can confine your sheep when collected.

*Hon. Mr. Williamson:* I express my own opinion that it would be a less expensive process for parties interested to destroy those sheep.

*Witness:* The difficulty is for parties to collect them.

*Hon. Mr. Williamson:* It may be difficult, but I think it would be the less expensive mode of dealing with the matter than fencing.

*Witness:* But if you destroy all our sheep, how are we to live?

*Hon. Mr. Williamson:* Of the sheep that come from "no man's land," most of them must have come from the sheepowners themselves. I certainly think it would be less expensive if they were to muster with the hands of the different runs and destroy these sheep.

*Witness:* The same thing is likely to occur over and over again. Sheep will be always likely to stray over these runs.

33. *Hon. Sir G. S. Whitmore.*] Would sheep live under the snow of the winter? If the Government were to shoot down all the wild sheep, would it not be impossible to have scab?—Yes; provided none of the other flocks could get back to this ground.

34. Suppose you kill them all off in the autumn?—Every flock will go over this very ground. For instance, my flock is on one side of the ranges, Mr. Gibson's is on the other side. They will sometimes cross the range. A stray sheep will get into other flocks unless there is provision made against it by fencing. I have put up sixty miles of fencing in two years. My fence runs between Government land and my neighbour's land. I can call on my neighbour to take some share of the fencing. I may call on the Government, but they will not.

35. When the snow has once fallen there is no danger. It is to be presumed that all sheepowners have mustered their flocks; only those outside are left. Then, by killing all the sheep you can, there ought to be no danger left, if everybody did so. It would not be possible for these sheep to come back?—You may have boundary-shepherds, but I do not think that boundary-shepherds will do it.

36. *Hon. Captain Fraser.*] Are there many unfenced runs between "no man's land" and these properties?—There are very few indeed which are fenced. Most of them are unfenced. Sheep Inspectors have impressed upon the owners the necessity of fencing, but they say they have not the means to fence.

37. *Hon. Sir G. S. Whitmore.*] There are no physical difficulties in the way, such as an avalanche coming from the tops of the hills, that would prevent it?—There is, perhaps, some rough land across which you could not put a fence.

One more question as to the means of getting rid of the two pests. Would it be better if each were dealt with by a separate department?

*Hon. the Chairman:* We proposed to take the sheep question first.

38. *Hon. Sir G. S. Whitmore.*] I only wish to ask this question: Whether, witness, you think we could or not manage to get rid of the two pests more effectually if a department were specially organized for extirpating each, or whether Inspectors should not be both Sheep and Rabbit Inspectors?—I do not think the present department has more work than it can do. I do not see what use it would be separating the two.

39. Both are special in their way. It might happen that the services of one man were more valuable than those of another?—I do not think that is a difficulty.