

40. *Hon. Captain Fraser.*] Suppose the scab was eradicated, would the country carry more sheep than at present, or are some runs overstocked, considering that they are scabby?—It is generally considered that a scabby flock, if it is to be cleaned, will require some clean ground—that is to say, that the sheep shall be kept off infected ground for some time after they have been dipped. In that case you cannot stock so heavily.

41. My question is, whether, if there was no scab, you could carry more sheep than you are doing now?—I have 18,000 acres on which I have not been able to put one sheep in consequence of my fear of there being scabby sheep about, and that any sheep I should put there would be infected.

42. Do you think that an injury has been done to the colony by the scab not being eradicated?—Yes; I might mention that one particular run has been understocked for several years from the same cause. Mr. Bullen, of the Kaikoura, has kept a large tract of country, about twenty thousand acres, between himself and scabby runs, unstocked, so that his flocks might not be infected. All these parts of the country could be fully stocked if there were no scab.

43. *Hon. Mr. Nurse.*] Are the fences not liable to be broken by the snow?—Yes.

44. Are not all of them certain to be broken?—No, not certain, for sometimes the snow is not sufficiently heavy; but they are liable to be broken.

45. Might not an avalanche come down and sweep away fences?—In such places it would not be prudent to put up a fence.

46. *Captain Russell.*] I understood you to say that the chief danger of prolonging the existence of scab lay in the fact of sheep getting into the higher grounds, and then being driven down; that the only way of meeting the difficulty was by putting a fence below the snow-line. To what extent would the runs be affected by shutting off the snow-land?—They will be affected to the extent of 10 or 20 per cent. I think no sheep could be turned in that country in the snow-time; but they could be mustered before the winter came on.

47. My question had this direction: I am supposing you were obliged to keep your stock down for one or two years; would that render it necessary to reduce the number of flocks considerably? Not very considerably. It certainly would reduce the carrying capacity.

48. Have you any idea of the extent?—I cannot say, because I do not know the extent of the runs.

49. Take your own case as an instance?—In fencing that country I think we have shut out 8,000 acres. About half of that would be available for many months in the year. I think it would be available for six months.

50. Does it carry much stock during these six months?—A very fair proportion.

51. Do you think it would seriously interfere with the quantity of sheep if that was shut up for several months? Would it effect the carrying of sheep—10, 20, or 25 per cent.?—It depends upon the amount of country shut up. I could not give you any idea.

52. *Hon. Sir G. S. Whitmore.*] With reference to the snow-line, I do not know whether Mr. Wood knows it, but in the Malvern Hills they told me that when it was coming near the snow-time they turned out their shepherds to bring the sheep below the snow-line. I want to know whether that could not be adopted in the cases he refers to, and whether that would not preclude any danger of scab?—I think it would be difficult to carry out that system in Kaikoura.

53. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Do you know any case in the Marlborough District where, immediately after a clean certificate had been granted to a run, it has been discovered that the owner of the run had commenced to kill scabby sheep—that is, suppose a clean certificate granted to-day, and presently, in two or three days, it is found that the owner or his shepherds are killing the sheep for which the certificate was given?—I do not know of any such instance.

54. As to fencing, you state that you have erected within the last year or two sixty miles of fencing, and that your neighbour, Mr. Gibson, has done some. Do you think that you could be sure of cleaning scab in your locality by being able to muster your respective flocks of sheep within the fenced portion, then hunting on the wild land outside, and dipping those sheep that could be caught?—I see no reason why that plan should not be carried out successfully. I think it could.

55. But you say, generally, that many sheepowners have not sufficient capital to enable them to do that?—That is the fact.

56. Can you say, of your own knowledge, that a sufficient portion of the area of each run could be fenced in, and whether there is a percentage of land not touched by the snow to carry most of the sheep, say, for two or three months of the year?—I think so; but I am hardly competent to answer the question decisively. I do not know the country sufficiently. I do not know the country on the other side of the range. I suppose it could be done.

57. You do so in your own case?—I do so in my own case.

58. Do you know sufficient of Mr. Gibson's to say?—I do not know sufficient in his case to say.

59. In the case you have instanced, of a person taking fourteen days to muster, and, in the event of misty or gloomy weather, returning in the meantime without many of the sheep. They had no fencing?—Little or no fencing.

60. But with fencing he could be in the same position as yourself?—If they had the proper fencing they could have confined their main flock of sheep, and mustered stragglers at any time afterwards.

61. There is a shearing reserve adjoining your run?—Yes.

62. Are scabby sheep shorn on that reserve?—Yes.

63. How do they get there?—They are driven over from the other side of the range and along a reserved driving-track between Mr. Bullen's run and mine, until they reach the shearing-reserve paddock and yards.

64. But they are driven through the reserve; and is all of that Government land?—Yes.

65. Is that fenced off?—Yes; it is all practically fenced off.