

97. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Mr. Gibson's lease extends over the whole, so that when he drives his sheep to be shorn he does not take the sheep off his run?—They are on his own run from the beginning to the end. But, as these were three distinct flocks, it occurred to me whether there was anything in the Act under which they might be regarded as separate runs, and treat them as such, so as to prevent sheep from being driven from one to the other.

*Hon. Mr. Waterhouse:* They are returned as one run.

98. *Hon. the Chairman.*] The reserve was to provide for the shearing of the flocks of several runholders?—It was intended for any one who liked to use it.

99. I was about to ask how it passed into Mr. Gibson's hands?—Mr. Gibson was the only person using it, and he offered to pay rent for it.

100. The Government accepted his offer and gave him a lease of it?—Yes.

101. *Hon. Mr. Waterhouse.*] Are you aware that after the expiration of next year it will not be legal for him to run the rams among the ewes when scab is proved to exist? The Inspector will have no discretion. When the flock is infected it will be imperative to separate the rams from the ewes, with a penalty for each ram that is not kept separate. Will not the effect of that be to ruin sheep-farmers unless they take provision for fencing in their land?—It will be so in many instances. I am informed that many sheep-farmers have not the means to fence, and they must submit to be ruined.

102. Are individual interests to be considered in preference to public interests when individual interests threaten to inflict on the public serious loss?—I am not prepared to answer that.

103. Is it not within your knowledge that, if the numbers of flocks are curtailed, it is in every person's power to get rid of scab? In the case of Mr. Gibson, has he not increased his flock from 24,000 to 43,000?—I believe so.

104. Is it possible that he can so readily keep clean 43,000 as 24,000: by increasing his flock he has increased his difficulty in cleansing them?—The danger which these flocks constitute to the neighbourhood is undoubted.

105. *Hon. Sir. G. S. Whitmore.*] Is it the case that some Sheep Inspectors in that part of the country have made arrangements with some persons to take their bond, allowing them to spend the money represented by that bond in cleaning their sheep?—That is an arrangement not with the Inspector but with the Government, after the Inspector has prosecuted and obtained a conviction. When the conviction is obtained, the Inspector has nothing more to do with the case.

106. You are not aware under what law that is done?—I believe it is under the Governor in Council.

107. Has the Governor in Council power to give a man money for the purpose of cleaning his flocks?—I believe the Governor in Council has power to do anything he likes.

108. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Have you any other remarks to make as to the working of the Act?—No.

109. *Mr. Buchanan.*] I would like to ascertain the general opinion of Mr. Wood on this point: whether the greatest bar to cleaning sheep is the want of capital: that relates to what is to be done or what ought to be done to get rid of scab?—I hardly know how to answer that question; because I have been told by one of Mr. Gibson's overseers that he has plenty of capital at his back, and that he intends to carry out the arrangement so far as his run is concerned. But I think that is the great difficulty at the present time; it is the great difficulty in most cases.

110. Then, your general answer would be "Yes;" that the want of capital is the greatest bar to getting rid of scab?—Yes.

111. *Hon. Mr. Nurse.*] Do you think that any great public injury would be inflicted if these shearing sheds were abolished, or resumed and sold by the Government?—I think that at the present time, although called a shearing reserve, it is the property of Mr. Gibson. The Government could not, therefore, at present resume and sell it. It is used now, but Mr. Gibson rents the land, and although used it is not now a reserve for shearing purposes.

112. Then you think it is not open to any one to shear there?—I think not.

113. *Hon. the Chairman.*] In dipping, do owners use various kinds of dip, or do they generally use the same dip?—I think the rule is to use lime and sulphur.

114. Does the Inspector direct what kind is to be used?—I do not think he does. I am not sure. We have always used lime and sulphur, and that has been approved.

115. Are you aware of any case where other material has been used, and the owner having failed to clean his sheep expressed an opinion that the Inspector had ordered him to use that other material?—I do not know of it.

116. Do you think that the Act should prescribe a dip for scab?—I do think it is necessary.

117. What do you consider the best dip?—Lime and sulphur.

118. Experienced persons would use that dip?—Yes; it is always used in our neighbourhood; it is considered the best. There might be some improvement upon it, but I am not aware of any.

FRIDAY, 12TH SEPTEMBER, 1884.

Mr. WALTER GIBSON, examined.

119. *Hon. the Chairman.*] I would ask you, first, some questions in regard to the working of the Sheep Act. You are the lessee of a sheep-run in the Province of Marlborough?—Yes, in the Kaikouras, in the Provincial District of Marlborough. The Warden, Tytler, and Jam are the names of these runs.

120. Is there scab on that run?—There is a little; there are three runs that are joined and worked together.

121. You say "a little." Have they been scabby long?—When first stocked the country