

358. To whom was this statement made?—To me.

359. By whom?—By Mr. Foster.

360. Whose fault was that?—It was the Scab Inspector's.

361. He did not, then, follow the Act?—If a man has scabby sheep he ought to be compelled to muster and dip them, no matter what might be the consequences.

362. Is there not power to punish a man having scab in his flock for not giving notice?—Yes; but when all his sheep are scabby it is no use.

363. In the case of a scabby flock, is there not a provision that they shall be taken out to clean within a certain time?—But it has not been done.

364. Do you know any reason why the Inspector has not done it?—No.

365. Are there Government lands in that neighbourhood: there are unoccupied lands in that neighbourhood?—They do not join me at all. There are unoccupied lands there, but I do not know to what extent.

366. You are referring to Mr. Ingles's run?—Joining his run there are, I think, unoccupied lands. It is between Mr. Ingles's and Mr. Gibson's.

367. Do you know whether there are scabby sheep on these lands?—I think it likely.

368. You do not know personally?—No; I do not know personally.

369. It is stated that there are scabby sheep on these lands, and that that is the cause of those other lands being infected; and it is further stated that it is impossible to get rid of these sheep. Do you think it is possible to get rid of these sheep?—I think it is quite possible. These Crown lands are very high country: they are covered with snow at the present time. As the Government charge no rent for these so-called Crown lands, I think those who have the benefit of all these lands—all those who pay no rent—ought to clear the country of these scabby sheep.

370. It was suggested here that the Government, in cases like that, should act the part of landlord to his tenants; that they should fence those unoccupied lands, and then charge the pastoral tenant a percentage on the money so expended. Do you think that a good suggestion?—I think it would be a great expense to the Government. The Government would have to be continually mustering the country; no matter how good the fencing, sheep will get inside.

371. *Hon. Mr. Campbell.*] You think there is very little chance to clear that part or any part of the country of scab until the flocks around are all clean?—There is no chance whatever.

372. Then, Mr. Bullen, do you consider that the Sheep Act is not worked satisfactorily in your district: is that on account of the Inspectors not having it put into force properly? Have you any suggestions to make as to the working of the Act, or amendments to propose in the Act?—There is one thing I would particularly like to suggest, that is, that infected sheep should not be allowed to travel.

373. Section 46 provides that no sheep should be driven through any infected country. Are you speaking of infected sheep being moved? Do you think the proviso is a good one or not?—I think it is a question of danger for the clean flock to pass through infected country. Sheep are almost sure to pick up scab there although perfectly clean before. One may get away by accident. Wherever it came from it will try to get back there again, and so will carry scab with it.

374. Then, you think no sheep should be allowed to travel?—With regard to the case you were mentioning, the Greenhills, that was all a legal run, and therefore you would not call that "travelling sheep." That is the difficulty. If any sheep were driven to or from the Greenhills down to Swyncombe, if they get through the fence they are bound to carry back scab to Greenhill from the reserve.

375. I would draw your attention to sections 27 and 28, which provide for infected sheep being herded and yarded by shepherds. Are these sections, as far as you can observe the working of the Act, properly carried into force?—They are not carried into force in our district.

376. Do you know of any reason why they should not be?—I think it would be almost impossible to carry them out in that rough country.

377. I would draw your attention to section 57: it has been objected that that is not quite stringent enough. It provides that persons mustering sheep for certain purposes must give notice to neighbours. Suppose they were mustering for other purposes than those specially mentioned, could they do so without giving notice?—I do not quite understand your question.

378. Under that section, if you are going to muster for cutting or branding, they must give notice to neighbours, but suppose they are not mustering for that purpose, and therefore do not give notice, can they muster and deal with their sheep without having given such notice?—We do not give notice unless at shearing time. Where the runs are fenced they do not give notice.

379. It has been objected to that clause that it is wanting in this respect: that, while it names certain purposes for which persons mustering must give notice, it leaves it open to persons that muster their sheep for other than these particular purposes whether they will give notice or not?—Were scab, is the law cannot be too stringent. Persons should be compelled to give notice in all cases where scab is.

380. Do you consider that neglect on the part of many flockowners to clean their sheep necessarily works a hardship upon those who comply with the law?—Necessarily so. In my own instance this has caused me very serious loss. I have a very large piece of country, over five thousand acres; I have paid for the run; and under other circumstances I could stock it all the year round, but that I am afraid to do so. I have another piece of 15,600 acres, which I cannot stock on account of my neighbour's scabby sheep. Therefore it is a very great hardship on me. My neighbour adjoining had 27,000 acres, which he only stocked two years ago. He and the previous owners held it for sixteen years without putting stock upon it.

381. In the case of infected runs changing hands, how is the incoming proprietor treated: does he get time to clean, or is he treated as having been the owner of infected sheep?—He should be treated as the owner; he should get no time.

382. You do not know what has happened in cases of that kind?—No.