

335. You saw the report?—Yes; I saw the report and the two rabbits—the one that M. Pasteur's representatives tried to kill by chicken cholera microbes, and the Wairarapa rabbit that Sir J. Hector took over.

336. *Mr. Lance.*] And yours was looking well?—Yes; he had been there three months. He had a hump on his back as big as my fist.

337. It was very large when he started?—It was much larger after he got there. I was quite satisfied with the progress of the disease. The disease is slow and sure enough.

338. You say the Hawke's Bay fence is no use at all?—It has not kept the rabbits out.

339. Have you any authority for saying that rabbits have got through?—No. Some gentlemen were fined living a hundred miles away.

340. Were rabbits on that ground before the fence was erected?—I believe a few rabbits were turned out there.

341. Well, but we know for certain that rabbits were there before the fence was erected. • In 1874 Mr. McKerrow saw rabbits on the north side?—Then, if the rabbits are there, what is the use of the fence?

342. You have said this fence is of no use: have you any proof that rabbits have got through since?—No; I have not. I have not been close alongside the fence. A fence is a costly piece of business.

343. You are not to consider the expense of a remedy?—Excuse me, but I must do so in regard to its efficacy.

344. *Hon. Mr. Pharazyn.*] In your opinion, are fences no good?—Well, that is a sweeping assertion to make, but I make it.

345. Well, take a peninsula, for instance, where there is a narrow neck of land, surely a fence across such a place would be of great protection, if not an absolute protection?—Yes; in that case, where the expense would not be great, it might be useful; but take the case of a narrow neck between the lakes, a fence there would be no good, because the rabbit would get round the lakes.

346. *Captain Russell.*] You have said that rabbit-fencing has done a positive harm?—Yes.

347. In what way?—It prevents the spread of the bladder-worm. It is far better to spread the disease, and turn out the natural enemy. There are a lot of instances where bad settlers have kept the rabbits going. My argument is, you should never fence your run. You must assist your neighbour in putting down the rabbits; a fence stops that. Selfish action in the matter of this rabbit-pest is the very worst kind of action. A man having a bad neighbour should not fence him off, but assist him in clearing out the bad spots. A fence stops that. The bad neighbour may not have the means to cope with the pest, or he may not have the energy. The good neighbour must supply those omissions. Lift the fences of a badly-infested district, adopt proper measures, stop trapping, and then the energy of the good settlers will be felt over the whole district. I speak now of a badly-infested district, like North Wairarapa has of late become. But the Canterbury fence may check the rabbits for a while, at a great cost though.

348. You told us when you were in Hawke's Bay you found the uselessness of this fence: who gave you this information?—I judged it was so from what I saw and heard from the settlers.

349. Did you converse with the Chairman of the Rabbit Board?—No. It makes no difference to me whether the rabbits come through the fence or not. If the rabbits are there the fence is no good. There will be plenty more there in time, fence or no fence.

350. Did you hear from anybody how many rabbits had been killed on the north side of the fence?—There is a difficulty in mentioning names. I do not think I heard for certain. There were a fair number being killed. The Hawke's Bay settlers had better not rely upon their fence.

351. Supposing that the greater number of residents in the district say the fence is a complete success, would you modify your opinion?—I regret to say, no.

352. You said that a gentleman was summoned living a hundred miles away from the fence?—Yes.

353. Are you aware that rabbits were turned out by Mr. Tanner about thirty years ago?—Yes; by somebody; I did not know it was Mr. Tanner.

354. And these rabbits are the offspring?—Yes.

355. And nothing to do with the fence?—They may have. I cannot say. They may have come round by the Ruahine.

356. Well, have they anything to do with the erection of the fence?—I simply say that New Zealand was a clean country till the rabbit was brought here. It is here now. It makes no difference how it came. What we have to do is to get rid of it, and fencing will not do that.

357. What I am anxious for you to say is this: in your opinion, are the rabbits increasing rapidly there?—I say they are increasing.

358. Where—in Howke's Bay?—On the confines and pumice-stone country, up towards Wai-kato.

359. Not in Hawke's Bay?—I have been told so. I heard that swaggers had brought rabbits on some of the runs.

360. Do you know that you cannot purchase a rabbit in a shop there?—I think you are pretty clean as yet.

361. Then, is it not reasonable to suppose that the fence has done some good?—I hold a contrary opinion. I have such an objection to it that I cannot believe in it.

362. Supposing you surrounded a property with a stone wall: would that be of any use?—I have often thought that if you surrounded a property with a stone wall sunk 2ft. into the ground that that might be effectual in keeping out the rabbit. As expense is not to be considered, the settlers of New Zealand had better begin erecting such walls at once. It would be difficult crossing watercourses, road-lines, &c., with them; but the plan might be tried. But, of course, the rabbits can be got under in the inexpensive manner I tried and succeeded with.