

44. But you surely did not take the men off on account of a threat of that kind?—I kept the men on till I thought all the sheep were off.

45. *Mr. Lance.*] But did the threat influence you in not keeping the men on as long as you would have kept them on?—I should have kept them on longer if Mr. Crisp had not continually threatened proceedings. I laid the information thinking I would get possession of the run myself: that was my main object in taking the men off. The proper thing now to be done would be to send men out to see if any stragglers could be found. If they could not find stragglers, they should put on a flock of sheep and trail them over the country; that would very soon have told whether there was scab there or not.

46. *Hon. Mr. Peter.*] If they disclaimed ownership, I should like to know how it was they came to threaten you?—I really do not know why they threatened me with proceedings.

47. *Mr. Lance.*] Let me ask you one or two more questions. We find that in September of last year Sub-Inspector Knyvett granted a clean certificate. On the 20th November he inspected the flock again and found scabby sheep in it. Can you explain how that was?—September was before my time. It was the 24th September, but I know nothing of it. I took charge in October. In November I sent him over again, and he then got a scabby sheep inside the fence. Crisp blames the men for driving that sheep in.

48. He has no ground for that?—Still, he says so.

49. Do you know any reason why the Sub-Inspector granted that certificate?—I believe the Inspector there instructed him that, if he did not find scab, he was to give a clean certificate. He was ordered to give the certificate. That is what I understand took place.

50. Well, then, on the 20th November he did find scab; but there is no information laid until the 2nd May?—No; you cannot lay information against people if they are doing anything like what is fair. You have to give the order to clean in six months under the amended Act of 1888. I have no fault to find on account of the sheep inside the fence, but of those outside.

51. *Hon. the Chairman.*] If they deny owning the run, and their sheep be there and are scabby, they have not abandoned the sheep to run over the country?—He said that they had nothing to do with outside the fence.

52. *Mr. Lance.*] Now, Crisp, as manager for the Loan and Mercantile, complains that you have spited him by over-inspection; and he goes on to say that in November and December last he mustered; that in January and February he was prepared for inspection, but he could not, or did not, see you?—I could not be there in that one place all the year round; I had other portions of the country to go over.

53. On the 25th March he received notice to muster. He complains that it was injurious to him to muster then?—In November, when he told me he was not going to dip off the shearing, I said that I should see the flock later on. He said, "I am going to muster in April or May to draft culls." I sent him notice so that the sheep would not be put through the yards without an Inspector being there.

54. What is the complaint about mixing up with Carter's sheep?—I do not know anything about that. The runs join; they are fenced; but neither Carter's nor Bell's are scabby.

55. *Mr. Dodson.*] That is on the south side of the river?—Yes; on the south side of the river. They have a clean certificate. I had nothing to do with "mixing" his sheep.

56. I do not understand that Mr. Lance is making any complaint by asking these questions?—I know that Mr. Lance is not, but I know what Mr. Crisp is doing.

57. *Mr. Lance.*] He says another thing: he complains that injustice has been done him; that he has been unjustly treated by the Inspector?—One cause of his complaint is that he is compelled to dip before sending away his sheep, and that Carter is not compelled to do so. If you look to the 29th section of the Act you will see that he cannot remove his sheep without having dipped them. Carter has a clean certificate, and has held a clean certificate for years, so that I cannot touch him.

58. Bell Brothers are in the same position?—Yes; they are in the same position. They are the adjoining run. They also hold a clean certificate.

59. *Hon. Mr. Richardson.*] I may tell the Committee that I have looked into this matter as head of the department, and I am quite satisfied that Crisp has been treated as he ought to be treated.

60. *Mr. Lance.*] The department, witness, decided that if the leasehold was cleared of sheep to the satisfaction of the department surrender would be accepted?—If there was such an arrangement made it was entered into before I had charge of the district. When I took charge of the district I went over the country. There were four hundred or five hundred sheep killed on that block. I could not give in a report that it had been cleared.

61. *Mr. Dodson.*] In fact, you were not satisfied that the country was clean?—No; there were some five hundred and fifty sheep killed there or around there—the Mount Patriarch country—during the month of October.

62. When?—After I went there in October.

63. *Mr. Lance.*] You refused to give a certificate until you had proved the country was clean—first by scouring the whole of the surrounding country, then by trailing-out, and next by mustering?—Yes.

64. And they refused to give you the sheep necessary to do the trailing-out?—Yes; they said they would do it if I would be responsible for the sheep that came in short, or dip them if scabby.

*Hon. Mr. Richardson:* I should say, in regard to the offer referred to by Mr. Lance's question, that that offer was not made for all time. It was made with the view of administering the Act, and would hold good if certain things were done. If these things were not done, then it is not to be thought that the offer still stood open. Now, let them do what they liked, the offer would not be made again. They have since put the Government to very considerable expense in cleaning the country.