

clause allows a sheepowner, under certain circumstances, to drive through infected runs. Do you think that desirable?—No, I do not think it is desirable.

565. You think it objectionable?—I think it is.

566. Is yours a run that is infected?—We are called infected, but we have no scab.

567. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Are your sheep branded with the letter S?—No.

*Mr. Buchanan:* You are in an infected district.

568. *Mr. Lance.*] You have a clean certificate, therefore yours is not an infected run within the meaning of the Act?—No.

569. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Do you think that, under any circumstances, clean sheep should be driven through an infected run?—I certainly think they should not be allowed to go through and pass into a clean district.

570. It has been suggested that the clause in the Canterbury Act relating to this matter of the fine is better than that in the present Act; the clause I mean under which a bond is allowed to be given, instead of paying the money down?—I think that would not be an improvement. I think scab will be in the country for the next twenty years under such an arrangement. The whole thing will drag on as it did before. I do not think that half measures are of any use.

Sir NORMAN CAMPBELL, examined.

571. *Hon. the Chairman.*] You are interested in sheep in the Amuri County?—Yes.

572. Will you state to the Committee your experience of the working of the Sheep Act?—Will you allow me to refer to my notes? The country in which I am interested at present is the Cloudy Range country. One run has engaged me a good deal. There was great pressure brought to bear to clean. I was asked to take charge, and I went down there and took charge.

573. *Mr. Lance.*] What year was that?—In the beginning of 1879. I took the management of Lyndon on the 17th March, 1879. We commenced operations by boiling down eight thousand sheep. We abandoned 35,000 acres. We mustered the sheep and found that they were badly scabbed. We abandoned that country, but it is now being completely fenced and worked again. A great portion is, I believe, stocked again. Some of it was lying idle for three or four years. The country itself is clean now.

574. You say the country is clean now?—Yes; but when I took charge there were between eight and ten thousand badly scabby sheep there. The only thing to be done was to get them and boil them down.

575. What sort of country is it?—It is rough country.

576. I suppose the leading range would be between four and five thousand feet high?—Yes.

577. You considered that abandoning these 35,000 acres was the best way of getting rid of infection?—We took the sheep off. I thought the best way was to kill them all off and boil them down. The Inspectors tried to persuade me to dip the sheep before boiling down. I thought it better not, and refused to do so.

578. That was on the run itself?—Yes. Then we killed nearly all our lambs that year by dipping sheep late in the winter. We went on dipping to the 18th August, right through the winter, and began shearing and dipping on the 9th October.

579. You were summoned?—Yes; we were summoned and fined, upon two charges, £450—£400 for not having the sheep branded with the letter S, and £50 for having no dip nor material. A private neighbour laid the information. The case was heard before Mr. Whiteford, and he fined us. The Inspector laid the information that we had no dip or proper dipping material. I pointed out that we had a most elaborate steam dip. Every one knew that we had a very good dip.

580. You were put to great expense?—We put up about fifty miles of fencing, while I was there, in fifteen months.

581. Were there any any other runs scabby?—Yes; there was one which was very badly scabbed.

582. Were steps taken by the owners of these runs to get rid of the scab?—Yes; Mr. Lowe was working harder than we were.

583. Then, do you say the only exception at that time was Mr. Gibson: was he not cleaning his flocks?—I do not think he was doing anything. He did not bother me much at that time, as I was interested in other matters.

584. But you recognized the necessity that, so long as scab was in the district, the owner of every flock should be doing something to clean his flock?—It was, I consider, the duty of every one to go in at the same time and do what he could. That is what I complain of, that we should have been hunted down as it were—that all our exertions and money spent should be thrown away, and other persons be allowed to take it easy.

585. Do not the Inspectors try to enforce the Act in the cases of other persons?—They are not enforcing it now as strictly as they did five years ago against us.

586. Do you know the reason of that?—I do not know what is the reason why they should not.

587. Are those sheep of Mr. Gibson's still scabby?—I believe so. I have never been over Mr. Gibson's country.

588. There are unoccupied runs adjoining him?—I believe there are; all I know of that is simply hearsay.

589. According to your knowledge, do you think it impossible to clean scab?—I do not think it at all impossible. It is a question of money.

590. But if there is a country exterior to it, difficult to fence, on which it is very difficult to put sheep-proof fence?—No fence is a completely sheep-proof fence in time of snow.

591. It has been stated that it is impossible to put up a fence that will answer the purpose of keeping sheep, on account of the number of deep gullies and rapid streams in this case?—I do not think it impossible. You can fence almost any country now.