

then by dipping again twice after sheep have been shorn, I have never known them to become again diseased, unless through mixing with infected sheep. It is true we got a low price for the wool, and we lost most of the lambs. But we were determined to get clean. That is how we cleaned the country. My country is the highest about there. There is no run adjoining to the west and north-west on the main range.

625. Yours is the highest country?—Yes.

626. Is it higher than Mr. Gibson's?—Yes; it is some thousands of feet higher.

627. Have you any bush land about?—Yes; a great deal of bush and Crown land.

628. Do you know Mr. Gibson's country?—I never saw much of Mr. Gibson's country. I have seen a part of it. I think our country is as difficult to clean as that.

629. You were put to great expense, were you not?—Yes; it cost us £800 in fines.

630. Was the payment of the fines insisted upon?—Yes; we had to pay every fine.

631. Did you ever give any bonds?—No; we never gave any bonds. Counting everything, I think it was nearly £1,000.

632. What is your opinion of the working of the Act in this district?—The new Act, I think, has been working fairly well.

633. Were there a number of owners who had sheep killed?—Yes.

634. Did they require compensation?—There were no less than five runs that had sheep killed, namely, Mr. Edgar Jones, who killed off some five thousand; Mr. Holmes killed off every sheep he had, numbering nearly five thousand; "Hopefield" killed about three thousand; "Montrose" about five thousand; and "Glynnwye" about two thousand. No one asked compensation from the Government, but in one case (Mr. Edgar Jones's) a voluntary compensation was paid by the neighbours adjoining, who subscribed the small amount necessary. They were not compelled to kill their sheep; but it was a rough country, and they wanted to clean the country before the scab had time to spread.

635. Then, I understand from you that the runholders in your neighbourhood put their backs together to try and stamp out scab?—Yes; the Inspectors have not been put to any trouble with scab in our district, as we knew our interest, and took the necessary steps.

636. Your district is not now an infected district?—The runs in it are entirely clean now. Some of them were infected last year, there being then a slight breaking-out; but at the present time every run in it is clean, although legally the district remains an "infected district."

637. What is your opinion of the Inspectors, not only of those in your own district, but those adjoining, as far as your knowledge goes?—I think they have carried out the Act very well. They may not in every case have the highest class of men. Mr. Foster is a good man, and he had really a splendid man under him till lately, namely, Mr. Scaife. In our district those who were fined got no fines remitted, but there are cases in other districts where the fines have been remitted. Some four years ago we had a few infected sheep hunted by some one across the Waiau River on to Mr. Edgar Jones's run. The Inspector "hunted" us immediately, and it cost us £500, although it was no fault of ours, and we have never had any remission.

638. That was some years ago?—I think the Inspectors have done their duty in our district; but what I complain of is that the Act is not now strictly carried out.

639. Do you think that if it were carried out in its integrity that it would have the effect of cleaning the country?—I do. It is bound to clean the country.

640. How long would it take to clean, say, Mr Gibson's run?—I cannot say, as I do not know the country sufficiently. It might require fencing or some special means to be taken. But I have no doubt that if a good man took it in hand he could clean the country in two years at the very outside.

641. Would it require some fencing to fence off the Government land at the back?—I should think so.

642. Now, suppose a mountainous district, where fences had to be made across gullies very difficult to be fenced, in consequence of the snow breaking them down: do you think that is an obstacle to clearing a run?—Yes, it is an obstacle; but after the snow clears away you can get good men to repair fences wherever it is necessary to have them repaired.

643. That is a thing you would do, I suppose, as a matter of course?—In a country which is not at all high, flood-gates have to be constantly looked to and repaired. Where fences are put through a snow-country they are liable to be broken. There are always places where there are snow-drifts and landslips likely to break down some part of the fence; consequently it wants periodically looking to. It is quite possible in the spring to repair them and keep them in a state of repair by being constantly on the watch.

644. That is a sort of thing not exceptional in your country. You are obliged to look to fences in that way?—My experience is that in all high country there are fences going across hills and gullies for miles. They get broken down, but people repair them.

645. Is it a great expense?—Yes.

646. What amount is there on your run?—Some years the expense will be greater, some years less; if it is a good winter the damage is very light. It is impossible for me to give an estimate. It depends also on the amount of packing that will be necessary to carry the material.

647. *Captain Russell.*] You keep men permanently employed in repairing places, do you not?—Well, Yes; we have men constantly repairing fences and putting up new ones.

648. How many miles in the year?—Twenty miles last year.

649. Should you say, on the whole, that it takes one man to keep fences in order?—I think it would.

650. How much?—I think a good man would keep forty or fifty miles of fencing in order; that is, if the fence is well put up, and of good material; and unless there is quite an unusual fall of snow.