

804. You think the Government comes down on the runholders too suddenly. Let us go back to 1878. The Act allowed three years for cleaning runs. Will you state what was done by these runholders in that time: what has Mr. Gibson done?—It took more time than that to clean the country, even the best country. We had extra musters, extra dips; we fenced in large paddocks, so that we could hold sheep. When we got them we had not the means to go on faster than we have.

*Hon. Mr. Robinson:* He has told us he never paid any fine, and he talks about the breath being taken out of his body.

*Hon. the Chairman:* He said so: that Gibson paid no fines.

805. *Hon. Mr. Robinson.]* I do not see, then, how he can talk about the breath being taken out of his body?—We have been over and over again at the Court in connection with cases. We have had all sorts of difficulties in trying to defend these cases. We had more work than we could do in extra musters, extra dipping, and fencing.

806. Was there a Mr. Clark over that country?—I believe so. I heard of his being there; I did not see him.

807. Are you aware of any report that he made about it?—I heard that he said it was a very good country.

808. Did you ever hear whether he said it could be cleaned?—Yes; with extra fencing.

809. He was sent there officially, was he not?—Yes; I believe he was sent by the Bank of New Zealand. He said it was a good country, but that it wanted more fencing. I say it can be cleaned, but not till it is fenced.

810. *Hon. the Chairman.]* Mr. Clark said it could be fenced?—Yes.

811. *Hon. Mr. Robinson.]* It can be fenced?—Parts of it.

812. It is a very short time since Mr. Clark was up there?—Some time last year.

813. Do you know whether he lived with Mr. Low?—I know that at one time he was manager for Mr. Lowe.

814. Do you know whether Mr. Low's sheep when he took charge were scabby?—I do not know.

815. Do you know whether his sheep were clean after Mr. Clark left?—I have heard they were. I do not know; it is merely hearsay about that.

*Hon. Mr. Robinson:* I would like to have Mr. Clark summoned. He knows the country from beginning to end. There is no one who will tell you so well of the feasibility of cleaning scab in any part of the country. Mr. Clark is the General Manager of the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency.

*Hon. Captain Fraser:* Mr. Ward has admitted that his run could be cleaned if a certain amount of fencing were done.

816. *Hon. Mr. Robinson.]* Who is the Inspector up there?—The Head Inspector is Mr. Bayly; the other is Mr. Passau.

817. How often has Mr. Bayly visited the country?—Mr. — can tell you for certain.

818. Have you any idea how long he stayed?—I think he rode across.

819. Who is the working Inspector?—Mr. Passau was.

820. How often has he been there?—I could not say.

821. Did he give you a certificate for a large number of your sheep being clean?—No; he might Mr. Gibson. I heard they were clean.

822. Do you know whether these sheep were discovered in a short time afterwards to be all scabby?—No, I do not know.

823. I want to come to some understanding as to how often the Chief Inspector has been there, and how often the men he is supposed to look after?—I do not know.

*Mr. Buchanan:* Does that refer to the Clarence Run?

*Hon. the Chairman:* It refers to the other as well.

824. *Hon. Captain Fraser.]* I wish to ask when it was you got possession of the reserve?—It was several years after I took up the run.

825. Did you apply for it?—The country was useless without it.

826. Had any sheep been shorn in it?—No. There were two runs. Mr. Watts was the owner of the Tytler Run, which I bought afterwards. This reserve was taken up for both of us. I think Mr. Watts was the first to shear.

827. If the Government had not let you this reserve you could not have brought over scabby sheep?—I do not know that.

828. The question is, whether, if the reserve had never been let to you by the Government, you could have brought scabby sheep to the south side of the Kaikoura?—I might have bought a piece from them.

829. Did the Government give you every facility to drive scabby sheep among clean sheep?—No. I have not so driven; we all drove at one time; so did Mr. Robinson.

830. *Hon. Mr. Robinson.]* You say that Mr. Robinson drove scabby sheep. Do you know that those sheep you refer to in four weeks afterwards turned out to be perfectly clean?—We cannot all be Mr. Robinsons.

831. *Mr. Lance.]* You are carrying now about forty thousand sheep?—Yes; that is about the outside limit for winter.

832. Mr. Gibson says that forty thousand is the winter-limit?—He would know.

833. Lately they were reduced by some thousand?—We boil down some every year.

834. *Hon. the Chairman.]* Mr. Gibson said that it was at one time forty-seven thousand; that the number was never less than thirty-eight thousand; that the present number was about forty thousand?—Since this Act has been in force we never drove sheep off the country. I could have sold five thousand to Mr. Acton Adams.

835. What was the reserve made for?—For shearing purposes for this Clarence country.