

1315. The three years have expired?—Yes; the three years have expired.

1316. Do you think that the Act has been properly enforced since then?—I cannot say; but if pressure had been brought to bear—I take it the 66th clause was framed for that purpose—all these people would have been doing something towards cleaning their sheep.

1317. Besides the clauses which suspended the operations of the Act in certain places, there was a special clause, the 66th clause, which provided for certain things to be done, and that was never acted on?—No.

1318. So far as your own district is concerned, I suppose you had no occasion to act with stringency?—No; Canterbury is a clean district.

1319. There was a portion of Canterbury that was infected?—That was for the time being created into a district by itself: the Waiau Sheep District.

1320. Are you aware that the existence of scab in New Zealand is very serious for the colony?—I should say most serious.

1321. Will you explain how?—As far as Canterbury is concerned we are always running the risk of having the infection brought into Canterbury. It stops the importation of sheep from the Amuri District.

1322. But I would ask you, with reference to the colony as a whole, whether it is not seriously affected by its being known to be infected with scab?—I should say so, for we cannot export sheep to the Australasian Colonies.

1323. Is there opportunity for doing so?—Yes.

1324. Do you think you could export with a profit?—Yes.

1325. If it were not for the infection?—If it were not for the infection in New Zealand.

1326. Then, again, within the colony itself, one may suppose that it is a great loss to those who have clean sheep if they happen to become infected?—Yes; also because of the charges they have to pay in passing sheep from one district to another.

1327. *Hon. Mr. Robinson.*] The Canterbury sheep are all clean?—Yes.

1328. Did it not happen two or three years ago—I forget the time exactly—that some scabby sheep were discovered in the yard at Canterbury?—Yes; some years ago, in 1875.

1329. Was it ever ascertained where these scabby sheep came from?—Yes; as far as I can remember, they were sheep that had been sold from a farm in the Glenoamaru Run.

1330. Had you anything to do with giving the Inspector any instruction about these sheep?—No.

1331. Was he supposed to act under your instructions?—To a certain extent.

1332. Now, you think there is a great deal of risk of introducing scabby sheep into the District of Canterbury?—I consider there is great risk.

1333. Do they dip when they come into the district?—On the boundary.

1334. Are they supposed to be dipped once or twice?—They are supposed to be dipped twice.

1335. Are they supposed to be dipped under the supervision of an Inspector?—Yes.

1336. Are they supposed to be efficiently dipped, that is to say, in a dip that will cure scab?—They should be.

1337. You say there is great risk in bringing sheep out of an infected district into Canterbury unless they are efficiently dipped?—I think there would be very great risk.

1338. When these sheep were passing, Mr. Foster was under your supervision?—Yes.

1339. Was he supposed to carry out the Act by dipping in a hot dip?—Yes.

1340. Now, of course, you knew that these sheep were coming out of an infected district?—No.

1341. Were you aware of it at the time?—No, I was not aware of it until afterwards. I was not aware of it until the end of April.

1342. I want to know when you became aware that these sheep were not efficiently dipped, and whether you took any proceeding upon becoming aware of the fact; whether you remonstrated, wrote to, or corresponded with any one in relation to it?—I proceeded up the Waiau and had an interview with the lessee of the dip there. I requested him to produce his books with the number of sheep dipped from the 1st January. I think it came up to about the middle of May. I found that there were thirty thousand odd sheep dipped, and that out of this number twenty thousand odd had been dipped with Little's dip.

1343. Hot or cold?—Cold.

1344. Was the Inspector whose duty it was to look after this matter present?—It was with Mr. Foster's sanction that these sheep had been dipped with Little's dip.

1345. You say he sanctioned the dipping of these sheep coming from the Amuri District to be dipped with Little's dip?—Yes.

1346. Have you any evidence of it?—I can prove it. I entered into a correspondence with Mr. Foster on the subject. I never spoke to him upon it. Our communications upon the subject were all by correspondence.

1347. Have you got that correspondence?—I have copies, but the original correspondence is in the hands of the Government. It has never been acknowledged. I have never had any acknowledgement.

1348. *Hon. Captain Fraser.*] What year?—This year.

1349. *Hon. the Chairman.*] What is the title of the correspondence?—“*Re Dipping Sheep from the Amuri into Canterbury.*”

*Hon. Mr. Robinson:* I should like to have this correspondence read; we can get the originals by applying for them.

*The Chairman:* I shall read the letters.

Mr. P. B. BOULTON to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 24th June, 1884.

I have the honour to enclose correspondence with Inspector Foster with reference to the dipping of sheep on crossing the boundary from Marlborough and Amuri into Canterbury.