

have been withheld for little or no cause. I know one or two cases where the reason given for withholding it was that the owner was not fenced against Crown land.

1470. Because there are scabby sheep there?—I believe so. The Act does not say that you are to have a fence. You are to keep your sheep and to have shepherds. It appears to me to look like persecution if a man gets scab and then gets clean again that his certificate is refused.

1471. You say that after the expiration of the nine months, if the Inspector finds no scab, there should be power in the Act to compel him to give a certificate?—It is a serious thing to have a certificate withheld: you are liable if one of these sheep gets away.

1472. You mean that your neighbours could come on you for damages?—With a disagreeable neighbour there is no knowing where the damages would end.

1473. Then, there is the travelling of infected sheep?—There is nothing in the Act by which the Inspector can actually stop infected sheep from travelling. There is a provision that a man travelling sheep can be fined for every run he goes through. But that does not stop him taking infected sheep about the country. In some instances it might pay a man to drive infected sheep in this way. A case came under my own notice in respect to lice in sheep from Napier. Mr. Drummond detected lice in them. They were allowed to travel through the district. They were taken on the run of the person.

1474. Do you mean that they were scabby?—Yes; it was brought under my notice through them being infected with lice. There was no power in the Inspector to destroy them. I think there should be. I am afraid that, in spite of precautions that are supposed to be taken, in driving through the country infection is caught. I have been told of a case in the district where the sheep came from the northern portion of the district. They were infected coming through infected runs. Previous to that, there was the case of Mr. Elder, where, the Inspector being with the sheep, they were infected and driven to Wairarapa.

1475. How is it they were not stopped?—The Inspector was there.

1476. *Hon. Captain Fraser.*] Who was the Inspector?—I think it was Inspector Smith.

1477. *Hon. the Chairman.*] You say that, under the 45th section, any person driving infected sheep should be fined; not stopped?—There is no provision for stopping. There is only provision for a penalty; there is nothing to prevent this man doing a great deal of damage. There should be power to detain him or take the sheep over.

1478. *Hon. Captain Fraser.*] If he infects other runs he is liable?—Yes; but the mischief is done.

1479. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Probably he is not in a position to pay damages on recovery?—There is no use locking the stable-door after the horse is gone. The thing is to have in the Act what will prevent them doing mischief. I think this Act fails in the fact that there is not enough legislative provision in this respect.

1480. With regard to the 46th section?—The words "shall" and "may" the Inspector reads them as one. I think their meaning should be clearly defined. Many people say that "may" means "shall." [Clause read by the Chairman.]

1481. We ask for the word "reasonable" to be substituted for "sufficient," for there has been a case where the Inspector insisted on a man being put to 10s. expense for every sheep, which was tantamount to a refusal.

1482. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Was not that hearsay?—I was assured that it happened in a case in Marlborough. I think there is not a proper system of inspection throughout the subdivision. I believe there are places in the Wairarapa which have not been inspected for years.

1483. *Mr. Dodson.*] They still hold clean certificates?—Yes; but sheep in many flocks are in a terrible state with lice. Sheep have been brought in from infected flocks that were very bad. It is very hard to say what condition sheep might be in various parts of the district.

1484. *Hon. the Chairman.*] How long does a clean certificate last?—Until it is cancelled.

1485. It is not renewable?—I think not.

1486. Suppose it was necessary, some definite period would be required within which the Inspector would have to examine the sheep before renewing?—I think there should be stringent and regular inspection.

1487. It might be confined to infected districts?—Yes; in infected districts. There is no use in harassing people more than is necessary. I think that with regard to lice in sheep some step should be taken: there are flocks in Wairarapa in a disgraceful state.

1488. You say that lice are prevalent?—The state of lice in sheep is getting prevalent. There is something very peculiar in the fact that the Act is not being worked in this particular. Under Mr. Sutton it was commenced. One or two gentlemen lost their clean certificates. It stopped suddenly, and the whole thing was got rid of.

1489. Lice can be got rid of: it is not a more serious state than that of scab?—I think it would be a good thing to require owners to dip once a year.

1490. Is it necessary to dip for lice?—I think it would be a good thing to dip: the most intelligent men dip their sheep at least once a year: that, I think, would be sufficient.

1491. Cannot he be compelled to dip for lice?—I think, if the Act is worked strictly, it must be worked in the same way for lice as for scab. But I would not advocate that: it would be a serious thing for the owner of sheep otherwise clean: it would shut up most of the clean fat sheep. You would have not only the producers but the consumers up in arms at once.

1492. *Hon. Mr. Williamson.*] Do you think that sheep will generate lice without contagion?—It is a doubtful point: I have not studied it. I would not like to say that they generate spontaneously. We want Tyndall, or some such man, to discuss the subject. I have an opinion that some of these lower farms of life do generate spontaneously in that way, but I would not like to assert the fact.

1493. *Captain Russell.*] If I understood you rightly, you said you advocated one dipping for lice?—Yes.