

1640. Then, on what ground do you suppose that Mr. Orbell could stop your sheep going from the place you stated to the railway, seeing that they were not going out of a district, but from one subdivision to another?—Mr. Orbell never stated his reason to me. The only reason I got from Mr. Drummond was that it was purely a matter of restriction, that would be enforced in my case. The Committee might elicit from my son, who was stopped by Mr. Orbell, what reason was assigned in his case.

1641. Did you call on him to give his reasons?—No; I applied to Mr. Drummond.

1642. Should you not have called upon him to give a reason why he would have stopped the sheep: what became of the sheep?—In my case they remained on my run.

1643. *Hon. Mr. Robinson.*] What did your son do with his?—He took them on to the sale-yards and sold them.

1644. Then, Mr. Orbell did not stop him?—He attempted to stop him.

1645. *Mr. J. C. Buckland.*] I would ask whether this Inspector is the one who has charge of the district, and, if so, whether he allowed other flocks to come into the district in the same way?—I never knew any other except my son's sheep obstructed in the same way.

1646. Do you know of other flocks going into the district?—Yes, a number of them.

1647. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Your run was in the district?—Under Mr. Drummond.

1648. He refused to give you leave because Orbell would not allow them to pass into his district: had he (Drummond) given you permission to move them, do you think he would have stopped them?—I would then have tested the question with him. I would have thrown the onus on Mr. Orbell.

1649. Did it not fall within Mr. Drummond's duty to decide whether or not you should get permission?—He was responsible. I produce the letter.

1650. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Did Mr. Drummond give any reason for wishing to stop your sheep, such as the failure of dip, or anything of that sort?—He assigned no reason beyond this which I have just given—that, if he gave the required pass, Mr. Orbell would stop them as they came to the boundary. This was *viva voce*, and it was therefore I wrote to him.

1651. Are you in a position to state to the Committee, from anything that Drummond said to you, that he had no other reasons?—None other possible.

1652. That was the only reason?—That was the only reason. [Letter read: "I am not prepared to grant permission," &c.]

1653. *Mr. Walker.*] In case of moving into Orbell's district, it would be like taking from an infected district into a clean district?—

1654. *Hon. the Chairman.*] This was from subdivision to subdivision?—It is all one district.

1655. *Mr. Walker.*] The sheep had never been dipped?—They had never been dipped, dressed, or anything done to them.

1656. Then, there was no reason within the Act why they should not have been moved?—No.

1657. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Is there anything further that you would like to state?—You asked me some questions as to whether I could suggest any alterations in the Act. I would recommend that a previous recommendation made to the Government should be adhered to—that was, in effect, to have a Chief Inspector, who should have complete control; then I would recommend that all Sub-Inspectors should be chosen for their known practical efficiency, and not on account of favouritism: the department should be careful not to appoint a number of men who have relations in the district, over which they will have control. That has been one of the most fertile sources of the partiality I complain of.

1658. That amounts to this: that the Government should be careful that the best men should be appointed, and that they should enforce the Act strictly?—Yes; but there are certain circumstances under which the Act cannot be enforced. You might ruin people, and rather spread scab than clean it by attempting to do so. I refer specially to enforce herding on broken and scrubby country.

THURSDAY, 25TH SEPTEMBER, 1884.

Mr. R. MEREDITH, examined.

1659. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Tell the Committee where you live?—I live in East Wairarapa.

1660. What is the name of your run?—Beaumaris.

1661. Your father gave you that?—He is on Kohiwaiti. Riversdale Run was divided by my father into three: Waiorongā belonging to my brother; Beaumaris belonging to myself; and then he subsequently leased a portion of the other—that is, Riversdale—to my brother Edwin. He keeps Kohiwaiti himself. I have brought a map with me showing how it is divided, and showing every fence on the run.

1662. What the Committee would be glad to hear is as to the working of the Sheep Act in your district. Of course, in explaining how that is worked, if you have any special case to refer to, the Committee would be glad to hear it shortly. We want to avoid as much as possible questions of grievances. If you can state shortly what are your experiences of the working of the Act we shall be glad?—It will be necessary for me to cite cases. I can cite my own case. I have the letters here and all the correspondence with reference to it.

1663. Which run are you speaking of?—Beaumaris.

1664. Have you scab on that run?—No.

1665. Have you had lately?—No.

1666. How long since?—I have not had scab there for three years.

1667. Do you hold a certificate?—I hold fifteen or sixteen certificates, not for the run but for sheep. It is this way: when I had the scab I cleaned my sheep and then sold. A permit was given to those sheep.

1668. Your run was considered to be scabby?—No, it was clean. There were no sheep on it,