

proposed to section 32 is, that "When the owner of an infected flock shall have complied with the provisions of the Act, and the Inspector shall have found the sheep free from disease at the end of three months after the last dipping, the Inspector *shall* forthwith give such owner a clean certificate."

2423. Then, you think there should be power given in the Act to compel the Inspector to give a clean certificate within three months, if he has found the flock clean?—Yes.

2424. There is a proposal as to simultaneous dipping: "The Inspector shall have power to require owners of all or any infected flocks in any subdivision to dip their sheep twice simultaneously at any reasonable time of the year, and also to require the owners of sheep adjoining infected flocks to dip once simultaneously with the owners of infected flocks any sheep depasturing in paddocks adjoining or near such infected flocks"—Yes; that all adjoining an infected run should be called on to dip at the same time.

2425. Would not that be inconvenient?—I believe it is the main thing. If you attempt to clean sheep you must have clean neighbours. It is quite possible for a stray sheep to get into your flock, and it may not be discovered to be scabby for six weeks or two months. Although I have been clean I am infected again, in consequence of a sheep getting off my neighbour's run. If we were compelled to dip simultaneously the danger would be lessened.

2426. With regard to Crown lands?—That is a burning question with us.

2427. With regard to the Crown lands at Ruahunga, have you taken any steps to clean those lands?—I believe the Government have taken certain steps. They have granted 5s. a head to Mr. Leverton; but that is not enough. The Government are not very liberal. A certain gentleman applied to the Government to be allowed to cut fencing material off the Government bush, so as to fence against the Crown lands, and the Government charged him 10s. per hundred posts royalty for it. Leverton is an energetic, active man.

2428. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Has the gentleman paid it?—He has not paid it, but he has been charged with it. The Government bind him down by strict regulations with regard to the fence. I think that it is monstrous when it is to fence against their own land.

2429. Has not Mr. Leverton another district: do not these lands join each other: are they not all one block?—No; they are separate blocks.

2430. Can you mention other Government blocks: the evidence we have had already laid before the Committee is to the effect that it was all one large block?—There is another large block.

2431. Are there scabby sheep in all these places?—Yes.

2432. What is the name of the block that Mr. Leverton is killing on?—I do not know the name of it.

2433. You say that the Government has done nothing on the other blocks except granting 5s. a head to Mr. Leverton?—They offered 5s. a head, but people would not go.

2434. It is bush land?—Yes.

2435. Is it all bush?—There are bound to be sheep there; but there has been no clearing actually done, although a few trees may have fallen, thereby making small clearings.

2436. Do the sheep go far into these bushes?—They do at certain times of the year.

2437. One would have thought it was too thick?—It depends on the underbush.

2438. The next suggestion is an amendment of the 46th clause?—Yes; the Inspector reads the word "may" rather strangely.

2439. You mean that the word "may" in the proviso should be "shall," and that instead of "sufficient" the word "reasonable" should be inserted?—It is, in effect, that he "shall" give permission if he is satisfied that "reasonable" precautions have been taken.

2440. *Hon. the Chairman.*] The evidence here is that it should not be allowed. The clause reads, "That no sheep shall be driven through any infected run under a penalty of not less than ten pounds, nor, when the number of sheep driven shall be more than one hundred, exceeding two shillings for every sheep so driven: Provided that the Inspector may give permission for any sheep to be so driven if he is satisfied that sufficient precautions are taken to prevent such sheep from becoming infected." You would substitute "shall" for "may," and "reasonable" for "sufficient." It is stated that it ought not to be allowed because of the probability of sheep being dropped, and making their way back again, carrying infection with them?—I am myself dead against sheep going through an infected district except for slaughtering purposes. There is another thing I would mention to the Committee, that is, notice being given by drovers. They never give us proper notice. Something should be inserted in the Act to provide for this—a proper form, so that they could copy it. This is a matter that gives us a lot of trouble. They give us twenty-four hours' notice, which lasts for three days; they very often never state from what end of the run they are going to enter. They would not find any inconvenience in it if notice had to be given every twenty-four hours; but, as it is, you are obliged to send two men for three days to watch for small flocks of sheep that never turn up. I think the notice should be renewed every twenty-four hours, instead of making one notice last for three days. It is very hard on some runs, and amounts to a heavy indirect tax. It is also proposed that every owner of sheep in an infected district shall maintain, to the satisfaction of the Inspector, a sufficient dip, with material for dipping his sheep once, and that in default he shall be subject to a penalty; that, in case of subdivisions infected at the time of the passing of this amendment, this section shall be in force at the end of one month after the passing thereof, and in case of subdivisions proclaimed infected hereafter, at the end of one month after the date of such Proclamation. It is proposed that he should have at all times a sufficient quantity of lime and sulphur to thoroughly dip all his sheep at least once.

2441. You mean that it is proposed that the Inspector should have power to fine him?—Yes; if the owner has not at all times sufficient material to dip his sheep at least once, especially in a place where there are infected sheep. There is one place where the man has neither dip nor anything else. If that man is infected it is a most serious thing. The Act gives power to call on the