

791. But surely you could compel the County Council?—I do not say you cannot; there is however, some difficulty about it. I cannot make it out; it is a question beyond my legal acumen. Both commonages and hundreds come within Crown lands according to my reading of the Act.

792. With regard to laying poison: is that always done by contract?—Not always; as a rule it is, but not always.

793. Whom do you employ?—Occasionally we have to employ weekly men. Where the lands are not of too great extent we have to employ persons who will cart the stuff about.

794. Has the Government used the block of land near Wakatipu for rabbit purposes?—No; such was reported, but it is not the case.

*Hon. the Chairman*: About a year ago a lease was prepared with the full expectation that it would be signed.

*Hon. Captain Fraser*: Was that the Navora?

*Hon. the Chairman*: Ostensibly it was to be for running sheep; in reality they were going to make a rabbit-farm of it.

*Hon. Mr. Campbell*: 65,000 acres!

*Hon. Captain Fraser*: A nursery for rabbits.

795. *Hon. the Chairman*: There has been no lease for within twelve months?—None.

796. Was there an understanding that there was a lease to be given?—I am not aware.

797. *Mr. Buchanan*: I understood you to say that it did not matter what method was taken to destroy rabbits, so long as that object was accomplished: have the Government been using the ferret and weasel in the expenditure for obtaining which you concurred. Taking, for instance, Mr. Macdonald's report, it is evident that he is in favour of dogs, poison, and traps, not ferrets. Now, Government land adjoins the land under his charge: what is the effect of having such an Inspector there?—I do not think he means carrying out what he suggests: I do not think that, because he holds those opinions, he would act against the judgment of the department.

798. But, if he is allowed to employ men and dogs, will he not do so in preference to employing the natural enemy?—I do not think it would be necessary to interfere.

799. Would it be advisable, in your opinion, to issue another circular dealing with the question of efficient means, so to bring about as far as possible a uniform practice as to what the advice of Inspectors should be to owners? You have mentioned that it was the duty of the Inspectors to guide the landowners: you perceive that a great disparity of action must take place among Inspectors holding various opinions; do you think it advisable to deal with this question?—Decidedly, when I am in possession of the information required to draw it up.