

79. Is it the proper thing that a clerk should be allowed to go away without your leave?—If the Colonial Secretary gave him permission to go, I could not do anything in the matter.

80. Then the man might properly have leave of absence, while his interference would be wrong?—Yes.

81. *Mr. J. McKenzie.*] You state that, since you have been appointed Superintending Inspector, an appointment has been made without your having been consulted?—Yes. I was in the South Island when the appointment was made, and I was not aware of it until I returned to Wellington.

82. Do you know anything of Mr. Fitzroy's capabilities for the office?—No.

83. Do you not think it would be better if you were called upon to report on the qualifications of a candidate before he was appointed?—Yes.

84. And suppose you had to report on this man's capability?—I should deal with him in the same manner that I should with any other man in the Service.

85. Do you think that Mr. Maunsell acted rightly in telling Mr. Telford to do some clearing work himself on land which he thought was infected?—No, if such was the case, I think he was decidedly wrong in so doing.

86. Do you think that Mr. Telford was properly treated when he was refused permission to be allowed to employ men to clear certain land which he believed was infected?—It all depends on the necessity of the case. Of course it would not do to establish a precedent, because there are many districts in the colony which would be in the same position as the Wairarapa would have been; and they would have had to be given the same privileges that were given to the Wairarapa. I think the Inspector should have been instructed to examine the ground and report on the actual state of affairs. In this case I think, were it an urgent one, and had he acted on his own responsibility, then placed the matter strongly before the Government, I do not think he would have experienced much difficulty in getting back the money.

87. *Mr. W. C. Buchanan.*] Can you tell the Committee what course is pursued in regard to the appointment of Sheep and Rabbit Inspectors?—So far as Sheep Inspectors' applications are concerned, they are filed, and when a vacancy occurs the most eligible man is chosen and recommended by me to the Colonial Secretary. When a new man is appointed he remains on probation in Wellington and receives ten shillings a day until a suitable vacancy occurs, and then he is provided for.

88. You have said that in one case there was an exception made?—There was an appointment made of which I had no knowledge.

89. What was the actual date of your appointment?—The 1st November, 1881.

90. Do you know of any other appointment having been made in either the Sheep or the Rabbit Department in which you have not been consulted?—There was the case of Mr. Fitzroy, at Napier; and I believe there has been a Mr. Robson appointed at Tauranga.

91. I understand that you had charge of the outdoor work of the department?—Yes.

92. Then why was Mr. Robson appointed without your being referred to?—I do not know; but he was so appointed.

93. Are you quite sure that no other appointments were made in a similar way?—There were none that I am aware of, but of course they might have been made without my knowledge; I should, however, have heard of them afterwards.

94. Are we to understand that there are now men in the Service of whose existence you are not aware?—I am aware that there are men in the Service of whom I know nothing.

95. Does the fact of your knowing nothing of them arise from this: that you have been so short a time in your present position that you have not been able to find out what their capabilities are?—They are in parts of the colony which I have not had an opportunity of visiting.

96. Appointments are made in consequence of applications being made by persons who desire to obtain situations?—Yes.

97. In the event of your having a complaint against one of your officers, have you the power to dismiss him as you would if he were employed by you privately?—I have the power to suspend a man without reference to anybody, but I can do no more than that. It then remains for the Minister to determine, after inquiry, whether the man's offence is such as to warrant his dismissal.

98. You have told us that you do not take orders from Mr. Maunsell?—Yes, I say that positively.

99. Are we to understand also that Mr. Maunsell has no power to give orders without reference to yourself with regard to the outside work?—He has no right whatever to give orders in connection with the outside work without consulting me.

100. Have you had occasion to notice any departure from this?—No, I have not. The only orders that have been given by Mr. Maunsell, to my knowledge, have reference to the clerical work.

101. Do you give him any orders?—No, but whenever I ask him to do anything for me he does it.

102. To whom do you give instructions for such work to be done?—I generally give instructions to the clerk in the office, Mr. Shaw.

103. Do you consider that you are in a position to give Mr. Shaw distinct orders without reference to anybody?—Yes.

104. But you cannot give orders to Mr. Maunsell?—No, I never instruct Mr. Maunsell.

105. In your absence who gives the orders that are necessary to be given?—If it were necessary to give an order while I was absent I believe Mr. Maunsell would write out the order and get Mr. Cooper to sign it. I may say that matters of detail merely are not generally submitted to the Minister.

106. Since you became Superintending Inspector have many appointments of Sheep and Rabbit Inspectors been made?—Yes, there have been several made down South.

107. Can you state the circumstances under which Mr. Campbell, of Balclutha, was appointed?—He is employed as an authorized agent under the Rabbit Act, but he has not been appointed. He, like many others, has simply been taken on as an assistant to the Inspector, who can get rid of him at a day's notice. Men of that sort are paid at so much per day, and are not permanently appointed by the Government at all.