

241. Is it not a fact that Inspectors of Sheep are instructed to address all their correspondence to yourself?—No, they are instructed to address their communications to the Colonial Secretary, Stock Branch, Wellington.

242. There are several telegrams which have been put in by the petitioner, and which are signed "D. Maunsell." Did Mr. Cooper know anything about them?—I signed those telegrams as Private Secretary to the Minister. Mr. Cooper is the official head of the Sheep Department, and if the Minister has any instructions to give, Mr. Cooper signs the letters; but if only information is required I sign, as a rule.

243. What would be the course pursued in the office with regard to Telford's removal: how would that be brought about?—A letter would be written to Telford informing him that he was to be removed, and that letter would be signed either by the Minister or the Under-Secretary.

244. How would the Minister know that a change was necessary: has he any practical knowledge of the subject?—He would act on information which he received himself from the papers which are put before him from time to time: viz., from Inspectors' diaries, correspondence, &c.

245. Do you wish the Committee to understand that the Minister in charge of the department would, of his own free will, order the removal of an Inspector?—Yes.

246. Without having received any information from anybody?—The Minister would judge from the papers placed before him whether there was necessity for a change.

247. What papers would there be in this case?—There are no papers making charges against Mr. Telford, but there are all papers relating to the working of the Act in Mr. Telford's subdivision.

248. Then, upon what would the Minister act?—He would act on his own opinion, formed from a perusal of the papers relating to the subdivision.

249. But how would he arrive at his opinion?—It is not for me to say how he arrives at it.

250. But why was the change made in regard to Telford?—I do not know.

251. Are there any documents in the office which would explain why the Minister took this matter into his consideration at all?—The whole of the correspondence is in the office.

252. But are there any documents in the office which would show how it came about that the Minister took action in this particular case?—I presume the action was taken by the Minister in consequence of what took place at certain meetings in the Wairarapa District.

253. *Mr. W. C. Buchanan.*] Were there any public meetings held in the Wairarapa before Telford was communicated with through Mr. Sutton?—There were meetings about that time.

254. Did you know of any public agitation in respect of sheep matters in the Wairarapa?—Yes, the most influential meeting that ever was held on this subject in the Wairarapa took place about that time.

255. Do you remember whether Mr. Telford was communicated with before the meeting or afterwards?—I cannot say now, but I think it was after the meeting.

256. *Mr. Sutton.*] Did anything take place at the meeting you have referred to in respect of Mr. Telford's position; in other words, were any complaints made against him?—No, but the meeting passed some strong resolutions urging the Government to take other and more stringent means to eradicate scab from the Wairarapa.

257. Mr. Telford has told the Committee that no complaints were made against him. Is that the fact?—Yes.

258. What is generally done when you want to fill up a vacancy in the Sheep Department?—All recommendations for appointments are made by the Superintending Inspector to the Minister.

259. How long has that been the case?—Since November last year.

260. Then, the Superintending Inspector has something to do with the management of the office?—That is not office work. He has only to say whether the candidates for appointments are qualified to fill the offices they seek.

261. *Mr. J. McKenzie.*] Was the Superintending Inspector consulted in the case of Mr. Telford?—No, he was not appointed at that time.

262. What officer does the Minister consult in cases of this sort before taking action?—Since the 1st January, 1879, I have had to see the Inspectors and ascertain the requirements of the various districts; and before taking action the Minister asks me whether I have any information to give him.

263. Do you know anything of scab?—Yes. I have had some experience both in Canterbury and Wairarapa.

264. Did you hold any appointment in Canterbury?—No, I was simply a settler there, and had just come out from Home.

265. Do you think a man could learn sufficient in ten days to enable him to be an Inspector of scab?—No, certainly not.

266. *Mr. J. Green.*] I understand that no complaints came from the Wairarapa in regard to Inspector Telford, and yet that he is removed, and also that in the notice of his removal there is an intimation to the effect that if he is not willing to be removed he may take a retiring allowance. Is there not in that arrangement something which leaves the impression that it was hardly just to remove Mr. Telford; or is it the rule when you remove an officer to offer him the alternative of leaving the service?—Yes, it is always the rule to do so. The policy for carrying out the Act when it came into force in 1879 was that the Sheep Inspectors should not remain in a district for too long a time. Mr. Telford was also a property-owner in his district.

267. How long are the Sheep Inspectors supposed to remain in one place?—So long as their services are considered advantageous to the sheepowners.

268. How long had Mr. Telford been in his district?—He was Inspector at Greytown for ten years for the southern portion of the Wairarapa. In 1878 he applied to the Minister of Lands, who had the direction of the working of the Sheep Department at that time, for permission to remove to Tenui, where he had a small property of some two thousand or three thousand acres. When Parliament passed the Sheep Act of 1878, the administration of the department was transferred to the Colonial Secretary, and that gentleman allowed Mr. Telford to remove to Tenui, and since then he has resided on his own property there.

269. And, of course, that removal gave him a new district?—Yes, practically.