

271. He is a gold-miner then?—Yes.
272. Or, rather, a man who represents another as owner of a mining claim?—I do not know whether he is an owner of the claim or not.
273. How long have these men been rabbiters—the two you have named?—Joseph McCaw has been rabbiting for the last two years; he devotes all his time to it.
274. And the other man?—He has been rabbiting too, except at the shearing season.
275. For how long has he been rabbiting?—I think it must be about two years.
276. And rabbiting on Cottesbrook?—Yes.
277. Do you know what the means of these men are?—No; I do not.
278. Do you think they are likely kind of men to take up pastoral deferred-payment land on their own account, making deposits, and so on?—I cannot say.
279. Well now, this sale took place on the 28th February last?—Yes.
280. Are there any sheep on that land?—Yes.
281. All these that I have named, you say, were purchasers. On the land of all those eight persons I have named, are there sheep running now?—Yes.
282. Whose sheep are they?—They are Smith and Gellibrand's sheep, as far as I know.
283. Well, do they bear their brand?—Yes.
284. Are they tended by their shepherds?—Yes.
285. Do you know whether any sheep were sold off Cottesbrook in anticipation of this deferred-payment land being taken up by *bonâ fide* selectors? Were any sheep sold off Cottesbrook?—Yes. There were a good many sheep sold off Cottesbrook.
286. When?—About the months of March and April.
287. How many?—Over 20,000 were sold off.
288. Was it fully stocked previously?—That part of the run was fully stocked previously.
289. And where did these sheep go that were driven off?—To various places.
290. Not to other parts of Cottesbrook?—Oh! no.
291. Do you know these men from Tasmania, Young and Pearsall?—No.
292. Did you ever see them at the Cottesbrook Station?—No.
293. Were they ever there?—Not to my knowledge.
294. Do you think they could have been there without your knowing of it?—I expect I would have heard of them if they had been there.
295. You do not think they could have been there without your hearing of them?—I do not think it likely. Of course, many an one comes there I never hear of, but I think I should have heard of them.
296. Do you know of any person who was an intending purchaser at the sale that was put off attending by any representations made to him?—I could not say anything of that for certain.
297. Were you present on any occasion when a man expressed his intention of bidding at the sale and Mr. Pogson told him there was no use his bidding—the whole matter had been arranged? Were you present at any such conversation?—I do not remember it; I do not think so.
298. Do you know a man named Charles Dore?—Yes.
299. He was a shepherd on the Cottesbrook Station, was he not?—He is now.
300. Was he ever asked in your presence to allow his name to be used to take up land?—No; he was not. I never heard him asked that.
301. Did you ever hear that he was asked?—Yes; I heard that he was asked.
302. From whom did you hear it?—From himself.
303. One more question as to Johnston. You say that Johnston does not bear the reputation of being a well-to-do man. Did you ever know him to be sued recently for a small debt? Have you heard that?—I have heard of it.
304. You do not know it of your own knowledge?—No.
305. But it was reported that he has been sued quite recently for a small debt he was unable to pay?—Yes; I have heard it spoken of.
306. How long was that before he made this purchase?—I cannot remember. I did not expect to be asked such questions as these. I did not know that times and dates were required.
307. You cannot say the exact time when you heard about his being sued for a small debt?—No.
308. *Mr. Stout.*] You said something about 20,000 sheep being taken off the station. How many thousand were usually sold off the run each year?—They must sell about as many as the increase comes to. The increase is 13,000, 14,000, or 15,000 lambs.
309. Then, the sale this year of 20,000 would be only 4,000 or 5,000 more than the usual sale?—Something like that.
310. You said also, in answer to a question, you were not certain of any conversation about not bidding. Was there any conversation at all of the kind with anybody that you heard?—I do not understand you.
311. You said, in answer to a question, that you could not say for certain whether you heard any conversation at all about not bidding. Do you remember any talk at all? Had you any talk with Mr. Pogson, or at all, about the bidding?—I never had any.
312. Had you any talk with Mr. Patterson about a section you were going to apply for?—Yes; we talked about it before the sale.
313. Did you tell him you were going to buy at Cottesbrook?—I may have done so.
314. Did he make any remark to you about buying Cottesbrook?—Yes.
315. What did he say about it?—Different times?
316. What did he say about it?—The gist of what he said was that there was little use in trying to get land there.
317. He said there was little use trying to get land there. Did he say why, Mr. Williamson?—It was because the employer was supposed to be taking it.