

749. How did you get there?—The first year I drove down the Conway River, across the Green Hills. I was perfectly clean then. I remained so for four years. Some men attributed my keeping clean to there being sulphur on the run. Ultimately I got scab from my neighbour's sheep. It was impossible to keep them apart. They came over in hundreds. Thus, I got scab from a neighbour in a better country. Now the neighbours come round upon me and try to tread me out altogether.

750. *Hon. Mr. Robinson.*] Then, you have been scabby since 1862?—I took up the run in 1858. I stocked it in April, 1859.

751. Then, it is from 1863 or 1864?—Although scabby for years it was not to any great extent. I did not lose two bales of wool.

752. That is now twenty years they have been scabby?—Yes; they were all scabby. Knowing that Mr. Bullen had a better country than I had—more easily mustered, we agreed to take up the Kaikoura run, so as to act as a “buffer,” and make sure that my sheep should not scab Mr. Bullen's. They have never scabbed his flock. We put up fences, cutting off Cloudy Range. Seven years ago (six or seven) Mr. Caverhill summoned me for having strayed sheep on the Cloudy Range country. I made it a point to see those sheep brought in off the Cloudy Range. Mustering was put off for some time. The sheep were brought in. There were several hundreds of sheep. They were all very scabby. The eleven sheep I was summoned for were clean. They were straying, but it was as if they were going among small-pox. We immediately set up a fence between us and the Cloudy Range. We did the best we could. Ever since that we have a man kept there to look after the fence.

753. I do not see what all that has to do with the administration of this Act. The question is, what number of scabby sheep there are there, and whether they can be cleaned or not. So far as I can understand, Mr. Ward, there was a number of them between you and the shearing ground?—We had the whole country. I drive through no country but my own.

754. You were clean for four or five years. You have ever since been scabby. How many runs are scabby now?—I do not know.

755. How many are declared to be scabby?—I cannot say.

756. Gibson's is scabby?—Yes; but I do not think that Mr. Wood's is.

757. A short time ago, it may be about two years, all the sheep were clean with the exception of Gibson's and Ingles's?—You may say the whole range from Cloudy Range to Waipapa was infected or scabby. Mr. Wood has now cleaned all that are within fences, but there are sheep of his brand on ranges outside fence.

758. You are aware that Mr. Bullen has had his sheep clean for a great many years?—I doubt that.

759. You are aware that he has held a clean certificate for a number of years?—Not a great number.

760. Well, six or seven?—Not so many, I think; I do not know exactly—about three or four years. I am under the impression that his clean certificate is more recent.

761. Do you know that his flocks have become scabby through Gibson's?—I do not know; infected, I think.

762. Will you tell me the reason of your not having cleaned your sheep for the last twenty-two years?—The difficulties of the country.

*Hon. Mr. Campbell:* That is exactly the question.

763. *Hon. Mr. Robinson.*] That is what we want to know?—The difficulty of fencing? You must go back and consider how many years we were fencing.

764. I cannot say. You have not been doing your best. We want to know how this thing is, and the reason evidently is that you have not your country sufficiently fenced?—The answer I give is that up to a considerable time after the passing of this Act all my neighbours were scabby. They did not press me or I them. We dipped regularly. I did not lose two bales of wool all this while.

*Hon. Captain Fraser:* That is not the question.

765. *Hon. Mr. Robinson.*] Then, as I understand it, as long as you and they did not interfere with each other, you agreed to go on and be scabby?—We did the best we could.

766. Well, you continued, so long as your neighbours were of the same opinion, to go on sheep-farming, so long as you merely kept scab down?—I believe the impression was that it was impossible to clean perfectly, and that, if we could keep it well under, that was all that could be done. That was my impression for years, and it was the general impression. When the present Act was passed, to think of cleaning some of the country was laughed at as ridiculous.

767. You brought in your sheep and dipped them purposely, merely to keep scab down?—We brought them in and dipped them, doing the best we could do. I did not lose two bales of wool.

768. Where do you now shear?—At the reserve.

769. Where is the reserve?—It is adjoining my runs at Clarence, sixteen miles from Kaikoura.

770. Do all the runs adjoin this reserve?—On one side, Mr. Wood's country joins; on the other side, a small portion of Mr. Bullen's; and the rest, Kaikoura Run, which is held by Mr. Bullen and myself.

771. Do other people shear in this reserve?—No, nobody. It is leased to Mr. Gibson.

772. Then, you are not interfered with at all?—The Inspector visits it.

773. Was not Flaxbourne scabby?—Yes.

774. And Richmond Brook?—Yes.

775. And several runs adjoining?—I believe so.

776. Do they now hold clean certificates?—Some do, some do not.

777. Do you not know that nearly every runholder about there now holds a clean certificate; that they were all scabby for years; and are they not now all clean?—Generally clean; Flaxbourne, and Richmond Brook, and country have no connection with my runs.