

1451. The Inspector would not allow it. Then, is it possible to remove clean sheep?—Yes, if he does not take them through an infected run.

1452. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Would that come under the head of “travelling sheep”?—Yes; I have travelled sheep myself.

1453. *Mr. Lance.*] Undipped?—Undipped, so long as they do not pass through an infected country.

1454. *Hon. the Chairman.*] You are speaking of travelling within one district, not from one district to another?—Yes.

1455. Is there any other point to which you would refer?—I should like to refer to the penalties under the Act. The penalty for failing to clean: there is a minimum penalty and a maximum penalty. I think the Act should be so amended that they should not exceed 1s.; that “threepence” should be eliminated from the Act. There are matters which prevent owners cleaning; it is impossible to know the difficulties they may have to contend with. If they fail to clean they are fined 3d. a head. I cannot think that that is just or right. Many a man may, through a variety of circumstances, be not able to clean his sheep within the specified time. A great deal may depend upon the time his sheep have become infected, at a time when he cannot practically work them. If he gets his flocks infected in April or May there comes lambing season and bad weather. After that, perhaps, comes a wet shearing season. The man is taken to Court. He has done everything that is possible to get his sheep clean. I think it should be left to the Magistrate, upon the evidence given. If a man is careless, fine him—fine him heavily if the circumstances justify it; but there may be circumstances over which he had no control; in that case, he has no business to be fined in that way.

1456. We have heard a great deal about partiality: would that not open the door to a good deal more of that sort of thing?—As to the partiality of the Inspector, I do not like to say much about it myself; but I think what has led, in a great measure, to remarks, is this: that the Inspectors in the district are related to a good number of owners. I think, on broad grounds, that is a mistake. I should be sorry to accuse any one on that account, but, on broad grounds, I think it is a wrong principle that Inspectors should be related to a number of owners in their districts. These people are human, and feel for their friends. I think that Inspectors should be shifted periodically.

1457. *Hon. Captain Fraser.*] Like policemen?—If you like; like policemen, unless there were some special reason why they should not be removed. I do not wish to accuse these men of partiality, but I know there is that feeling in the district, and it is a very strong feeling too.

1458. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Then, as regards branding: you suggest that it should be a colour?—We do not intend to interfere with the broad-arrow; but the truth is that, in branding with the letter, the letter cannot be kept plain and distinct. Give the sheep a round with the dog, and you cannot say whether it is an “S” or what it is. The colour is the best if it is a distinct colour. Red and blue are largely used by private persons.

1459. Not for stamping: do private persons use red?—Yes. All that is wanted is a distinguishing mark which you cannot mistake.

1460. You know that under the Branding Act there is a registered wool-brand?—Yes.

1461. You would recommend a distinguishing colour?—Yes. I also think that the Act should specify some kind of dip to be used. It is now generally conceded that lime and sulphur is the most efficient curative. I think if any amendment of the Act is made it should be in this direction. People are in the habit of dipping with all sorts of cheap mixtures. These are not reliable. But people use them through ignorance. You have, in this matter, to deal with a great many ignorant in this matter of dip. Many of these dips are rubbish, and worth nothing. If, instead of using these dips, they were obliged to dip with lime and sulphur at a proper strength, their sheep would be cleaned. If they would not dip, then the Inspectors might bring them to Court.

1462. But suppose the Inspector insisted on lime and sulphur and they said they would not dip with that?—He cannot compel them.

1463. How would you deal with a man, in case of imposing a penalty, if he did not dip in accordance with the Act?—I say, let the Act specify the dip. If you are to have forty of one to eighty of the other, and if you are to dip at a certain heat, let the Act specify these particulars. If he does not comply, then let the Inspector lay an information.

1464. It appears to me the Inspector can proceed against a man now if he does not dip to the Inspector's satisfaction?—I have noticed that dipping in bad material is so frequently going on as to make some special provision of this kind necessary.

1465. Then, you think it is necessary to provide for this in the Act, if it should be amended?—Yes. I do not say that lime and sulphur alone should be specified; arsenic is a very good dip; tobacco makes a good dip but for its expense. But some dip should be defined as the only means of eradicating scab.

1466. With regard to fees, what do you say about them?—I think the fines should be applied to the eradication of scab.

1467. Would you apply them to the payment of inspection?—I do not think that would be the best way of appropriating them. I rather think they would be more usefully applied in destroying wild sheep.

1468. In certain districts where scab is, such as Auckland and Wairarapa, they pay considerably less than the cost of inspection, whereas a clean district, such as Hawke's Bay, pays considerably more; so that when you say these fines should be applied to a certain purpose, do you think it would be right to appropriate them in that way?—I think that the fines taken from a man ought to be applied to help him and those in his district.

1469. As regards the certificate, I read in these recommendations from the district that there is no power to compel the Inspector to grant a clean certificate when sheep are clean. Do you know of any case in which it has been withheld?—I think there are cases in the district where the certificates