

or otherwise : I consider that you can tell us the cases without mentioning that there was "persecution"?—I am not going to say anything except what can be substantiated. I complain that the 29th section of the Act has been abused in my case.

1563. Will you mention the cases in which you say that the Act has not been properly worked?—Shortly after my flock was examined by Mr. Drummond, at the instance of my son, who did not believe there was any infection, the result was that four out of five flocks were found to be free from disease. In the case of the fifth flock, to which notice of infection referred, a single sheep was detected to be diseased. Later on I applied to remove a flock of fat sheep. I did so by letter, and the letter was referred to the department. Later on I got permission to sell. Later on I applied to sell the second flock, also by letter. That letter was also referred to the head of the department. In this case it was refused. Therefore the action of the department was inconsistent. I applied, under section 29, that I might be allowed to remove. They gave me this document. This is what I wish to draw your attention to. I have told you that the whole of my flock was clean; that only one of them had been infected; that within a few days all chance of disease was eradicated; yet my neighbour is allowed to sell his sheep, all his flock being infected except one. I do not complain that his application was granted, and that he was allowed to sell, but I do complain that this section of the Act is variously administered. That is one case. I shall give you another.

1564. *Hon. Mr. Robinson.*] Give us the names of the Inspectors?—In one case it was Mr. Sutton, who referred to the department my application to remove. Subsequently Mr. John Drummond was appointed. Mr. Drummond refused permission after referring to the head of the department.

1565. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Were both of these Inspectors supposed to have instructions from the department?—I assume that.

1566. Do you know of no reason why that second application for selling sheep should have been refused?—None whatever. I challenge any.

1567. Were you going to drive them through infected country?—No.

1568. Was there any reason assigned?—I can give you the reason assigned to me. I applied at the office of the Inspector at Masterton personally, believing that Mr. Orbell was in charge of the department. I asked whether the flock of sheep referred to there—six hundred fat wethers—required to be branded with the letter S. My manager received instructions to brand with the letter S, but he had not complied. I applied to Mr. Orbell personally whether he required these fat sheep to be branded with the letter S. He said "Yes," adding, "Mr. Drummond is in charge of your district." I asked Mr. Drummond whether he required me to brand, as I was going to sell. "Under the circumstances," he said, "if I was going to shear, and wanted to sell, that the S brand should be put on some part that would distinguish the sheep." He said, then, "I will see them dipped and give you a pass for them." Later on I told him that I was about to make a sale. He said, "You cannot sell," I said, "You have changed your mind." Drummond replied, "Mr. Orbell says if I allow you to bring them to the boundary of his subdivision, he will stop them." Now I must explain. They did not have to go through infected flocks, but simply to the railway-station, where they would be at once trucked away. The distance through Mr. Orbell's subdivision to the railway-station was a mile, fenced on both sides, so that the objection made by Mr. Orbell must have been a factious one.

1549. You mentioned the names of two Inspectors : Will you state to the Committee whether there is a Chief Inspector in your district, with Sub-Inspectors?—There is one recognized as head of the department. Mr. Sutton was recognized as the principal Inspector. Subsequently he was removed, and Mr. Drummond is now recognized as the head of the subdistrict.

1570. Does Mr. Drummond give instructions to Sub-Inspectors in charge of subdivisions?—Decidedly. After the explanation from Drummond, that if he gave me permission I should be stopped by Orbell, I wrote the letter, which you will find before you, requesting permission to sell. After three weeks I got a reply, to the effect that he had referred my application to the department, and he declined to take any action. [Letter laid on the table.] I would like to remark that, in submitting the letter of the 3rd August to Mr. Sutton, I requested that it should be submitted to Mr. Drummond, who was the person that inspected the sheep.

1571. You were not holding a clean certificate at that time?—It had just been forfeited, within ten or twenty days.

1572. You spoke of five flocks : how were they separated?—They were separated by thoroughly sheep-proof fences. They were separated by three fences, one of which was a rabbit-proof fence, and the creek. One of these paddocks was used for cattle. The first were sent from No. 3.

1573. Do you not think that the reason was that they were adjoining infection?—I do not think so, because Mr. Drummond must be aware that it is impossible to get stock across this river. You must be made aware that there is a little piece of the river unfenced. It is deep water except in one place, and the bottom is mud, so that it is impossible for sheep and difficult for a man to get over. The flock in which infection was found was removed to an inner paddock (the Peninsula) immediately after being dipped, and were consequently separated from No. 4 flock by a seven-wire fence, as well as the creek referred to.

1574. Then, you have reason to think that was an instance of want of impartiality?—By way of contrast to that, I will put the case of my neighbour. My adjoining neighbour, having a number of flocks all infected with the exception of one, no impediment is made to his selling his sheep, I presume under the 29th section.

1575. Were they sold in the same market?—Mine were to go to Wellington for slaughtering. My neighbour's sheep were sold for fattening purposes. I bought some myself. They were sold on the run, I assume under clause 29, under inspection; they were allowed to dip and be removed.

1576. *Hon. Mr. Williamson.*] They were sold as stores?—Yes.

1577. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Is that run cut up like yours, so as to have separate flocks?—Yes; I think so.