

thousand sheep in the midst of very large runs. If these owners of small flocks had scabby sheep, and if nothing could be done for a month because it was impossible they could be prepared for the emergency, it does seem a great hardship that a man who had, say, twenty or thirty sheep should, with impunity, infect the whole of the surrounding runs. As scab travels quickly from one run to another, it is therefore desirable that all persons having sheep-farms should have at hand sufficient material with which to dip their sheep.

1799. Have there been any cases in your district where sheepowners have been summoned, and the Inspectors failed to prove against them. Do you remember the case of Telford and Meredith: do you remember the circumstances of the case?—I do not know whether it was the Act itself or whether it was the want of evidence that led to failure in that case. I know nothing of the management of Mr. Meredith's property. There have been very few fines inflicted although scab had been in the district a good while. I hope it may soon be stamped out.

1800. Have you any other suggestions?—I would suggest that the question of separate flocks is a very important matter. People must be prevented from selling or removing sheep within twenty miles radius of scab without asking the Inspector. I think, under proper restrictions, an Act should be so framed that men should be allowed to sell on proving to the Inspector that there was no disease, and that the flock was a clean and separate flock.

1801. The Acts does refer to that in a definition of what a run means. I suppose you would not recommend that the amendment should apply to separate flocks, where they all belong to the same premises. If a run were divided in two by a fence, the sheep on this side would go to these yards, and the Inspector would have power to consider them as separate flocks?—If that power were left with an intelligent Inspector it would be so, but the Act seemed rather to refer to its being in the hands of an unintelligent Inspector. In branding sheep, for instance, a scabby sheep from the bush would require, say, fifty thousand sheep to be branded with the letter S if scab showed itself; thus branding the whole of the sheep on the run, which might not by any other means be infected. One of these sheep would get out to a neighbour's run, and he also would have to brand with the letter S. Sheep that are or may be infected should be branded with a distinct colour. I think myself that a distinct colour would be the best. A colour should be used instead of the letter S. There is a strong reason, I think, why separate flocks should be allowed.

1802. *Hon. Captain Fraser.*] I understand you to say that the Government pays the owner so much a head for killing his own scabby sheep?—The owner at the time had a clean flock. He took sheep out of the country for many years, and kept them perfectly clean. It is only within the last few months that his certificate has been cancelled. He was surrounded by scabby sheep in the bush. These scabby sheep were on Government land. He is a very energetic man. Every year he destroyed considerable numbers of wild cattle and sheep. I think it was only two years ago he was offered a bonus for wild sheep. The bush was full of them round about there.

1803. Were they his own sheep?—No, not his own sheep. I feel sure that he was never paid for any of his own sheep.

1804. Then, as to the skins, they would be worth something?—He kept the skins and sold them.

1805. You said that in some parts of the district it is impossible to erect dips: would you qualify that statement and say it is difficult?—There is nothing impossible, but it would be very difficult to get timber up within a month. I was told by a gentleman that if the Act were stringently carried out you could do that in the Wairarapa with little difficulty. I knew a gentleman who got timber up under more difficult circumstances in a very short time.

1806. *Hon. Mr. Nurse.*] Do you not think the word "immediate" in this Act is very tyrannical; and, as you said it was almost impossible to erect a dip, that time should be given. A month seems a very short time?—I qualified that by saying in a district where scab is known to exist; but in a new district I did not say that it is necessary. Afterwards, however, he should have a dip. I think that is a matter of vital importance. I know of numberless instances of scab being spread by men not being able to take the matter in hand at once. The East Coast District is in very great danger from the cause I speak of. Now things look a little more hopeful; with the exception of the wild sheep in the bush it might be stamped out in a few months. But here is a case: A man has 1,000 sheep not surrounded by fences, or very poor fences. There are sheep in every direction round him. He has no dip. The Inspector has no power to go to him and say, "You must have a dip." A month would scarcely be sufficient to put up a dip. But if there are no scabby sheep the Inspector has no power. A man could not be made to do so until some of his sheep were scabby. But the delay of a month is a very serious matter. The Inspector ought to be in a position to say, "You must have your dip now." According to the Act, he may have a month after his flock becomes scabby. It might be limited to a radius.

1807. *Hon. the Chairman.*] A radius of forty miles you suggest?—Yes; forty miles is a long distance, but I do not think it is too much. Most sheep-farmers have dips, but a man who has a small flock may be in considerable danger, and may be the means of spreading disease.

1808. *Hon. Mr. Nurse.*] Then you say that every owner must put up a dip whether his sheep be infected or not?—In scabby districts a man who acts intelligently will have one.

1809. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Lice are common among sheep. How would you get rid of them, Must the sheep be dipped?—

1810. *Mr. Buchanan.*] As a matter of fact the Act puts lice in sheep under the same conditions as scab?—Yes; it would be no hardship to compel a man to have a dip, even if there were no scab in his flock. I think every intelligent sheep-farmer should have a dip. It is his interest to have one.

1811. No doubt it is very desirable in his own interests as well as that of others?—It is only the small owners who are commonly unintelligent or negligent. Every sheep-farmer should have a dip; but I know an instance where a man could not get up his dip for a month.