

1812. Would you support the change to local management from what is known as the central form?—I should be against that. We have had experience of that. I do not think such a change would be good.

1813. Would you leave the power in the hands of the Inspector as to the dip to be used?—I should specify for scab lime and sulphur.

1814. What I meant was, would you put it into the power of the Inspector to recommend some dip?—If the Inspector were an intelligent man. But an Inspector might be mixed up in the interests of some quack affair. That would not be right. I would specify a dip for scab—lime and sulphur.

1815. Would you leave the onus on the sheepowner that he should find his own dip?—I would not leave it in the hands of the Inspector to specify any dip.

1816. Do you think that sheep should be marked by a distinct colour?—I think the Government might be requested to do it. I think that any surplus funds of the department might be applied to that.

1817. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Has the management of the department been satisfactory in your opinion?—We have had a great many men who worked hard and did their best. At the meeting, to which I have referred, resolutions were passed to the effect that the Act had been maladministered in the district; but there were many men at the meeting who thought otherwise.

1818. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Did the opinion of the meeting apply to present Inspectors or to past ones?—Those who voted for the resolutions, many of them, thought the Act was administered properly and fairly.

1819. *Captain Russell.*] You spoke of the Act being administered by intelligent or non-intelligent Inspectors: do you think there should be any discretion left to Inspectors?—I did not speak of any particular Inspector; I referred to separate flocks being allowed. An intelligent Inspector could, I think, make separate flocks. I think the Act should be plainer in this respect.

1820. You think the general tendency should be to limit the powers of Inspectors, and make them carry out the Act in its entirety?—Yes.

1821. *Mr. Lance.*] As regards these bush lands, by energetic working of the Act, could not your district be cleaned in a short time?—I think so. The property we purchased was the worst part of it. Now we have fallen the whole of the bush it is nearly stamped out. It was from a special piece of land that the scab spread. There still exist some scabby sheep inland, as well as in the bush.

1822. Do you think that the payment of 5s. a head reduced it considerably: would not a number of men employed for the purpose be equally effectual?—I think the Inspector should have power to engage good men to go into the thing. Leverton is a good man. Few men could do what he has done; but his hands are full now.

1823. If the Inspector had authority he could do it?—Yes; I think it ought to be done within the next three months.

1824. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Would it not be a better plan to give payment for the last sheep?—I do not think payment per head would get the last sheep. I think a good stamp of men should be employed.

1825. *Hon. Captain Fraser.*] You say that the Government pays 5s. per head and the pelt?—Yes; he gets the pelt. I think he sells the pelt: in some cases he gets 15s. for the pelt.

1826. If that were known to the general public, would not a considerable number of people go in to kill scabby sheep in the surrounding country, and so help to keep the flocks clean: how is it that no recommendation of this kind has been made to the Government?—I think that recommendation has been made to the Government. I think Mr. Bayly in his last report refers to it. I know that another Inspector did so some years ago.

*Hon. Captain Fraser:* If you say that the disease could be got rid of in three months, it appears to me a monstrous thing that it should have been allowed to exist so long.

1827. *Hon. the Chairman.*] You say that the person who kills the sheep sends down the skins and sells them; is there not danger of spreading the disease in that manner?—Yes; the Act requires that they should be put into bales. Our manager took some skins, and the fact of there being scabby sheep in the district caused him to be fined some £6 or £7.

MONDAY, 29TH SEPTEMBER, 1884.

Mr. LEWIS, examined.

1827A. *Hon. the Chairman.*] You are Chief Inspector of the Auckland District?—I am.

1828. Including several subdivisions?—Yes.

1829. How long have you been holding that appointment?—Since 1879; since the Act came into force.

1830. The Act came into force on the 1st January, 1879?—It was then I was appointed.

1831. You have scab in some of your subdivisions, have you not?—Yes, in two subdivisions—the Marsden Subdivision and the Auckland Subdivision.

1832. Has there been any diminution of scab?—There has.

1833. Take the Marsden Subdivision first: this return states that there are two owners, Messrs. McLeod and Cork, who have become scabby; one has a flock of fifty, and the other one hundred and twenty. I imagine these sheep run within fences; why are they not clean?—They are clean now; their names are not on the list. We have other names on the list and other flocks.

1834. How do you account for scab continuing in Auckland?—It is most unaccountable. These are all small flocks, and are soon cleaned or killed off; but we soon find another case or cases within a mile or two miles, for which we cannot account.

1835. Will you state to the Committee what steps are taken to clean in your district?—Notice is given to the owners not to suffer one to leave his ground. All of the sheep are bound to be