

owner, within a month after scab is declared, to erect dip, &c., but the scab is liable to spread in the meantime. It is no hardship to be compelled to have to dip once and to have the materials for that purpose.

2442. *Mr. Buchanan.*] I was under the impression that it was necessary to have a dip always on every run?—No.

2442A. It was suggested by one of the witnesses that the Inspector should have power, within an infected district, within a certain radius from the infection, to call on owners to put up a dip?—We think that a man should certainly have the material to dip once. There is also clause 67 as to fees and fines: "All fines to be paid into an account to be called 'the Sheep Fund,' and, in the case of fines, to be applied in districts where levied in the eradication of scab." We think that the districts should get the benefit of these fines. They would go to assist people in cleaning their sheep and fencing against Crown lands.

2443. Do you think the penalties too heavy?—The penalties are not too heavy for men who will not do their duty. But under present circumstances it is sometimes a puzzling thing to know what the Act, as interpreted by an Inspector, means.

2444. Are those all the amendments proposed by the committee?—Yes.

2445. *Mr. J. C. Buckland.*] The only question I would ask is as to the efficiency of the men who now act as Inspectors: are they capable men: in my experience the continuance of scab is owing to the kind of men employed: are they capable?—Two are not; one is.

2446. Do you think that, if really capable men had charge, scab could be eradicated?—Undoubtedly; it is my conviction that scab could be cleaned if the head of the department is interested in doing it.

2447. You think that better steps taken to carry out the Act would settle every difficulty?—Yes.

2448. You think it could be thoroughly cured if dealt with in a proper manner by the Inspectors?—Yes; the service is largely increased with us. We formerly had two; we have now six.

2449. Would you say that they are dilatory in carrying out the Act for the sake of their billets?—I should not like to say that. One is a most efficient man—I do not say for the complete carrying out of the Act—but for the detection of scab he is most efficient.

2450. In how short a time could the district be cured?—In eighteen months, or even less than that.

2451. *Mr. Dodson.*] Have you had any experience of the Marlborough District?—Yes; I have had large experience of the Marlborough District. I have been nineteen years a manager, and have spent a large portion of my time amongst scabby sheep, although I have never been fined.

2452. *Captain Russell.*] Can you conceive any district in which it would be impossible to cure scab—such places as Tairādale for instance: would you guarantee to clean it?—I believe the most difficult country can be cured of scab. You cannot guarantee that it will remain so, but I believe it can be done.

2453. Do you think bush land is more difficult to deal with than any other land?—Yes; a dog has no chance to work sheep in the bush. On the ordinary hills a dog can work. Bush dogs also scatter the sheep.

2454. Do you know Mr. Ingles's country in the Kaikouras: can you say anything as to the difficulty of cleaning that country?—Fencing is the principal thing; that is the thing, to get it fenced first.

2455. *Mr. Dodson.*] The trouble you had was not sufficient fencing: could you have had the country clean?—With sufficient fencing I could.

2456. *Captain Russell.*] You are of opinion that if the Act were stringently enforced scab could be got rid of?—If it were administered in a proper manner by the Inspectors there ought to be no difficulty; it would soon be stamped out. Once a district was clean it would remain clean by taking proper precautions. To be sure that it is thoroughly eradicated, you want different men altogether.

2457. *Mr. Walker.*] Have you any experience of other parts of the colony?—No.

2458. Are fines imposed under this Act in your district?—Yes; they are heavy.

2459. Have the fines been recovered simply on technical points?—I cannot say in all cases. There is a case coming off on the 29th—the case of Mr. Andrew. It was heard and adjourned.

2460. Have some fines been imposed for certain technical omissions?—Yes; there have been a number of people fined for little bits of breaches and "catches."

2461. You think they ought to have been inflicted properly?—There is no doubt about that.

2462. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Do you know whether scab is increasing in North Wairarapa?—It has always been worked down in the autumn; once, according to ex-Inspector Telford, as low as one run. Seven weeks after he cancelled six certificates.

2463. Is it increasing?—Apparently, it is about the same as it has been for the last nineteen years. In this end it is stamped out properly.

2464. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Of the Inspectors pulling down fences, how many instances came under your notice where fences were pulled down and not put up again?—It is only from hearsay; but evidence of it will be brought before this Committee if permission is granted. Two parties will come forward, if required, to speak to a case within the last month.

2465. Suppose that an owner was unwilling to allow ingress for detection of scab: suppose, for instance, he locks his gate?—That would be interfering with the Inspector in the discharge of his duty. The Inspector ought to come to the station and get the key. Why should an owner run the risk of the Inspector being careless—leaving gates open to the danger of that owner's flock.

2466. Have you not got your legal remedy against the Inspector in case damage is done, just the same as you would have against anybody else?—There is nothing for it in the Act; the Inspector can go all over the run.

2467. Is there anything to absolve the Inspector more than any other person?—There is nothing in the Act that provides for protection against his damage.