

2718. Does it amount to ten cases or fifty?—I could not say exactly how many. I think there is a return of convictions and fines.

2719. *Hon. Mr. Waterhouse.*] There are no instructions for your guidance; you do what you think right?—The only instructions received are in the hands of the Chairman.

2720. *Captain Russell.*] Roughly, what are they?—I have always considered that my duties were in connection with the outside work.

2721. Do you ever go to a place like Whangarei, where you say it is impossible to fine?—I have been over the whole of the ground on two occasions—part on one occasion, and another portion on another occasion.

2722. It is your duty to go to these districts?—Yes; to report what the Inspectors have done, or to state any case to them.

2723. If you found that they have not done their duty, have you recommended their removal?—Yes.

2724. Has the Government adopted your recommendation?—Yes.

2725. Is there any insuperable difficulty in the eradication of scab?—Not insuperable, but there are many difficulties, in some places more than others.

2726. Supposing there to be sufficient men available, is it possible to extirpate scab in the most difficult places within twelve months?—So far as the holdings themselves are concerned, I should say Yes; but I think it will be two or three years before the last wild sheep will be got.

2727. That is, if the Government would kill all the wild sheep on their own grounds. Is it possible to do that?—I think it is, quite.

2728. Then, it is only this circumstance, and the question of owners of runs not having sufficient capital to work them, that retains scab in the colony?—I am led to believe so.

2729. *Hon. Mr. Williamson.*] I should like to ask whether you have regular returns from Inspectors in districts?—Yes; I have returns which represent all that has been done; nothing can occur without its being brought under my notice; if the diaries are correct, I know everything that is done.

2730. *Mr. Buchanan.*] In the returns before the Committee it is shown that there are eight Inspectors in Auckland?—Seven, I think; there is one, a Mr. Bonar, who receives £25 a year to assist the Inspector.

2731. *Hon. the Chairman.*] But is he or not an Inspector, drawing, you say, £25 a year?—He is not on the regular staff; he is put for a certain purpose at a certain place, drawing a certain salary.

2732. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Do you recollect the number of sheep in Auckland?—It is something under three hundred thousand.

*Hon. the Chairman:* About two hundred and sixty thousand.

2733. *Mr. Buchanan.*] There are eight Inspectors, drawing salaries and allowances to the extent of £1,400 a year; in Napier there are nearly two millions of sheep, with only four Inspectors, with salaries and allowances between £1,000 and £1,100: can you give any explanation of these two facts: First, the long continuance of scab in Auckland, with a superabundance of Inspectors compared with the number of sheep; and, second, the fact that Napier is clean, with so large a number of sheep as compared with the relative number of Inspectors?—With reference to the working of the two places they are not parallel at all. One, Napier, is a very large clean district, every part of which can be got at easily; it is comparatively easy to deal with from end to end. In Auckland, with the exception of the Waikato, the flocks are small, the places are difficult of access; they are accessible in some places only by bad roads and water communication. These sheep are mixed with others all round the coast, where scab is all the year round. I attribute the difference to the fact of the owners and flocks being in many cases so far from supervision that people have been able to move their sheep without the knowledge of the Inspector; the fact that steamers, which are all about the coast, have been moving sheep from place to place intermediate; that, in some particulars, Auckland differs from other places, and that sheep have been brought there from other places along the coast without certificate. In many places scab has been taken without owners or Inspectors being aware of it.—So far as the outside of Auckland is concerned, I think it is nearly, if not quite, clean. I own I cannot understand why it should have been kept so long in the vicinity of Auckland itself. I cannot account for that. There is also another statement I should wish to make to the Committee. There are more sheep imported into Auckland than into any other port in the colony. It requires one man wholly and solely for this purpose, namely, to watch these imported sheep. The diaries will show that every day is taken up more or less with this duty alone.

2734. What is the date of your appointment as Superintendent Inspector?—The 1st of November, 1881.

2735. Do you remember the position of matters in Wairarapa: how many Sheep Inspectors did you find in that district?—I found two only. I think they were Mr. Sutton and Mr. Drummond.

2736. And the number of sheep would be?—About three-quarters of a million.

2737. How long did the district continue under the care of these two Inspectors?—For about eighteen months I think after my appointment: there or thereabouts.

2738. Were applications made by the Inspectors for increase of the staff?—No application was made by the Inspectors.

2739. Were either or both the Inspectors charged with duties of inspection under the Rabbit Act?—One had that duty devolving upon him.

2740. Do you consider the district as a whole a difficult one in which to bring about the eradication of scab and rabbits?—Part of it is exceedingly rough; other portions of it are very easy.

2741. Are you aware of a public meeting of the settlers with regard to the movement for