

2769. Are you aware that this colony has suffered loss at the present moment; that it is impossible to export sheep to New South Wales, where they have been fetching a very high price, in consequence of New Zealand being scabby?—So I hear.

2770. With reference to something you said about Wairarapa: You said that you did not consider it your duty to follow up indefinite charges against an Inspector?—I meant upon hearsay; that is not permitted in the Civil Service; but, if any irregularity were shown by that officer in carrying out his duty, that would be a matter of the utmost importance, and I should inquire into it, if it came to my knowledge.

2771. What do you mean by “indefinite” charges?—Complaints upon which I could not frame any charge against the officer concerned. Any person can make a charge without having a particle of evidence. Complaints upon hearsay have often nothing to sustain them. I could not possibly follow up a complaint made upon hearsay.

2772. Then, as to the qualification of candidates for the office of Inspector, I think you said the applications were taken and considered according to seniority?—Yes; if a person applied a couple of years before, if his qualification were satisfactory, he would be appointed before a person who had applied later.

2773. You said that one man was employed in Wairarapa to destroy wild sheep?—That was a contract entered into; it would be for two years.

2774. Are you aware that such a contract may exist for twenty years?—No, I do not think so. It depends upon the local Inspector.

2775. Why not stamp the disease out at once?—The features of the country are such that it would be impossible to do it. Great care is necessary in the selection of a person to be employed in such work. You must have a man acquainted with the district. A person who knew nothing about this business of killing wild sheep would be likely to do more harm than good. If he were to rush these sheep through fences on to runs the injury done would be very great. I can only judge by what has already taken place. It was the best proceeding that could be taken.

2776. Having found that Mr. Sutton had not reported what flocks were infected, why did you not dismiss him at once?—The whole of the correspondence is on the table. When Mr. Sutton went there he had a difficult district to deal with; he had a great deal to contend with. It was simply the charge that was made against him. There never had been any previous charge made against him. I believe that he was the victim of mischance. There was some evidence as to his efficiency; he was always considered a good man.

2777. *Hon. the Chairman.*] I would draw your attention to a matter in connection with this 26th clause: It is provided that the Governor may further suspend the operation of the 26th clause until 1885 in any subdivision of Auckland, Taranaki, Nelson, or Marlborough. Can you state whether any Proclamation has been made for the suspension of this clause until 1885?—No.

2778. How long was it suspended in the first instance?—To the latter end of 1880 or the beginning of 1881.

2779. So that it has actually been in force?—Yes.

2780. *Mr. J. C. Buckland.*] Mr. Foster told the Committee that he was averse to the remission of fines: was the matter referred to you as to these fines in the Kaikouras?—The matter was referred to me in connection with those first fines to which I have already alluded in my evidence.

2781. Which?—These were cases in which informations were laid for not taking sufficient means, not for being owners of scabby sheep.

2782. Which were they?—Gibson and Ingles. They were brought before the nine months because the Court would not sit for another three months. We wished to show a distinction between those who were doing something towards cleaning their sheep and those who were doing nothing. In one case the owner had put up fifteen miles of fence, and 20,000 of his sheep were reported to be clean.

2783. Did you recommend that the fine against Mr. Ingles should be enforced?—The Inspector was not prepared to swear to certain things. In the absence of proof in one case, and in view of a large number of sheep being cleaned in the other, I recommended that the first fines in both cases should be remitted. It was intended to bring the whole matter before the House.

THURSDAY, 2ND OCTOBER, 1884.

Mr. BAYLY, examination continued.

[The witness handed in papers relating to the branding of sheep on board trading steamers on the West Coast, also relating to the transport of sheep from Wanganui to Auckland and ports intermediate.]

2784. *Hon. the Chairman.*] When you said the Government brand was used on private steamers, did I understand you to say they were used with authority?—I do not think so, but these papers will explain how it occurred. The Inspector lived some distance from Waitara. He used to see some five or six hundred sheep for embarkation. He used to inspect these, and he would then empower a man to see the ship off. This man was supposed to brand the sheep, but, instead of doing so, he allowed some one of the persons on board to do it, so I heard. He used to put the sheep on himself in forties or fifties, and to save time they were branded in this way. That was the information I received.

2785. I suppose you made inquiries upon this matter?—I did.

2786. Did you ascertain that the Inspector signed a blank certificate?—He did; the papers are there.

2787. Is that Inspector still in the service?—He is still in the service. The papers will explain the matter fully.

2788. *Hon. Mr. Campbell.*] He is actually in the service still?—Yes.

2789. He is in the same place?—Yes.