

618. Have you sent a circular as to the best methods which he should adopt?—Yes; I sent a circular. [Circular put in.]

619. *Hon. Captain Fraser.*] Was that the last?—No, there was a subsequent one.

620. Was that sent to the agents?—We do not know the agents.

621. *Hon. the Chairman.*] You say that the Inspectors are responsible for the agents?—Yes.

622. *Mr. Dodson.*] But you sent a copy of that document to each Inspector?—Yes.

623. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Apparently, in these instructions there is no reference to the point alluded to; that is, as to the power of the Inspector to compel an owner to adopt a certain course?—It has never been held that such should be done; but the Inspector might do a good deal by recommending from his own experience certain things to be done.

624. Would you leave him discretion?—He has to see that rabbits are kept down: it does not matter to the department what steps are taken. If rabbits are found on a place notice is sent to the owner.

625. That he must kill?—Yes.

626. After that if they are found, and that, in the opinion of the Inspectors, sufficient means have not been taken to clear them, the owner is summoned and fined. It would appear from that that the "opinion of the Inspector" has to guide the course to be adopted?—He must give information as to how it should be done, if he knows. I know of no instance where that course has been taken in which any difficulty occurred: it is only where sufficient steps have not been taken.

627. You leave the Inspectors to act upon the results of the steps that have been taken?—Yes.

628. But where the owner had killed a great number, not only on his own land, but coming from infested land adjoining, the results would not be shown?—There it would be the duty of the Inspector to proceed against that person. He could not adjudicate himself; he would leave it to the Bench to decide whether it was a serious breach of the Act or otherwise.

629. My object in asking the question is that some of the witnesses in their evidence have complained that the Inspector ordered them to put down the pest with rabbiters and dogs?—If the Inspector ordered that I hold that he decidedly made a mistake.

630. *Mr. Dodson.*] What is that?—If the Inspector gave a distinct order for that he exceeded his authority.

631. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Do you examine the diaries?—Invariably.

631a. Then you would see whether the order was given or not?—Yes.

*Mr. Walker:* We have had before us a witness who spoke to a prosecution and conviction in his own case, because he refused to put on rabbiters.

*Hon. the Chairman:* What case was that?

*Mr. Walker:* Mr. Bell's case. There it was stated the officer ordered him to do certain things which were against his (Mr. Bell's) judgment.

*Mr. Dodson:* He said it was against what he (Mr. Bell) thought the proper means, and as a consequence that he (Mr. Bell) gave up ferrets.

632. *Mr. Walker.*] Could you produce that Inspector's diary?—Yes; you can every one in the service if it is required.

633. *Mr. Dodson.*] When: within what time?—Within a quarter of an hour.

634. *Hon. Captain Fraser.*] How often do they send in their diaries?—Every month.

635. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Mr. Bell's evidence was in effect that the order to put on rabbiters caused the loss of all the money that had been expended upon turning out the ferrets, which were killed by traps and dogs?—Here are papers connected with Mr. Bell's case.

636. Was it brought under your notice?—Not in the way it is put. I received several communications; one a very long letter from Mr. Bell in respect to which a gentleman was appointed to make inquiries; in another case, the Resident Magistrate was requested to furnish particulars; in another case, the Chief Inspector was sent to inquire: none of their decisions—for what reason I do not know—were favourable to Mr. Bell.

637. *Mr. Dodson.*] But these probably were concerned in the convictions?—None of the inquirers blamed the department.

638. But the real question is whether Mr. Bell ever received instructions from the Inspector to employ dogs. He said he did, and the consequence was that the ferrets were killed by the traps and dogs?—That, as a formal complaint, never reached me. I was aware of a petition with a copy of a letter attached to the petition from Mr. Corbet and others.

639. *Mr. Buchanan.*] I think it an instructive question to put to Mr. Bayly whether, having so many complaints coming before him as Superintendent Inspector, he visited the locality and inquired into the circumstances, so forming his judgment on the spot?—I went once for the purpose mentioned; I next went at the instigation of people who complained of the state that Mr. Bell's country was in. I think Mr. J. McKenzie, M.H.R., Waihemo, knows more about that affair than any one else.

640. *Hon. the Chairman.*—Not the gentleman who is on this Committee?—No.

641. His name was mentioned as offering evidence?—Yes; I made inquiries and rode over the whole of that—or rather over the greater part; it was overrun then; in some places very thickly.

642. If such an order were given would it have issued from you?—It would have issued from the Inspector.

643. Not from an agent?—Certainly not: he has no power to give an order at all; he has no power whatever; he has nothing to do with it at all; he has no right to interfere.

644. As to the Inspectors, are they in every case Inspectors under the Sheep Act as well?—They are—that is, the Inspectors.

645. The districts being counties?—Yes.

646. Are you satisfied with these Inspectors: are they persons that you can trust with the powers which they appear to exercise under the Act; are they fitted for their duties?—I am satisfied with them as a body. They are not all perfect; but, as a body, I am satisfied with them.