

1113. Has the fact of your sowing it with English grasses been one of the successful elements in enabling you to carry on this work?—Most decidedly it has helped.

1114. What difference has it made?—We have doubled the number of sheep we shear.

1115. What is your usual export of rabbit-skins?—None at all. Since 1882 we have not gathered the skins.

1116. And before then?—One day nine men gathered eleven hundred skins, and on another occasion nine hundred. The skins, however, were a secondary consideration.

1117. Have you ever tried grain slightly malted?—No.

1118. You have heard of such a thing being used?—No, not in our district.

1119. *Hon. Mr. Acland.*] Do you think the use of sugar and salt makes the grain more attractive?—In the summer it does. I would put rhodium in, too, at that time.

1120. How much do you call a heap?—Half a teaspoonful. We put it along the ridges and beaten tracks, where rabbits are likely to go at night.

1121. Does it require to be used as soon as made?—I think so; it gets sour after lying in a heap. It is a mistake to leave it lying too long.

1122. Have you ever found the sheep to eat it?—When we first started we lost a few sheep, but since then the loss has been a mere bagatelle.

1123. *Mr. Lance.*] You do not find the rabbiters interfere with the ferrets?—The man I have got is from Home. I would not allow Tom, Dick, and Harry to go out, because I believe they would do it.

1124. Have you heard of any Inspectors compelling runholders to put on rabbiters?—I believe some time ago some of them did so; but a person ought to be left to decide for himself the means he will adopt to exterminate the rabbits.

1125. Do you know for certain whether Inspectors in your district have taken that course?—I know they have called upon people to do it.

1126. *Hon. Mr. Robinson.*] How long has your land been occupied?—It is one of the earliest runs taken up in the Shag Valley.

1127. Does it border on the sea?—No, we are about three miles from the sea.

1128. Is it high country?—The highest top is about 1,800ft.

1129. Is much of the land cultivatable?—We have cultivated all we think it is good enough to do. There are about twenty-three thousand acres of freehold, while the reserves bring it up to twenty-four thousand acres.

1130. Were there rabbits when you first went there?—There were not many. They came on suddenly.

1131. And how many sheep?—About sixteen thousand.

1132. Do you think it is possible to get rid of the rabbits?—I am afraid not entirely.

1133. Do you think that united action would clear the country?—It would on the low ground, but in the high country it would be a very difficult matter.

1134. You never tried to fence in your property?—No; we have a fencing boundary along the Government run now, but it is only a temporary boundary; and this is the fence that has given us most bother. If I had had a proper boundary I should have gone in for that.

1135. Do you think a fence would stop the rabbits?—I think so.

1136. Have you ever seen a fence put up that has stopped the rabbits?—There is only one fence in our district, and I do not think it was intended to stop rabbits, because they put it on the wrong side of the fence, and left the gates open.

1137. Do you know how a fence is put up?—Yes; a person puts it up with a piece of the wire turned outwards, and buried in the ground about six inches.

1138. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Is your country very rough?—Yes; it is nearly all gullies.

1139. Is it a fair sample of the whole country throughout Otago where rabbits are such a great nuisance?—I think it is.

1140. Can you see any reason why the rest of the country could not be cleared in the same way that you have cleared yours?—I see no reason to the contrary. It is all a matter of expense.

1141. Is it the fault of the Inspectors or the Government in not keeping their own lands clear, or of the settlers?—It is all combined. In some cases the Inspectors are not exactly what they should be. We want better men. We have better men in our district than we used to have. It is also a mistake to allow land to be unoccupied.

1142. You consider, then, your district has been, on the whole, fortunate in its Inspectors as compared with those of other places?—As far as I see at present, our Inspectors are doing their duty. They have only been there a short time.

1143. Do you hear complaints as to the Inspectors in other districts?—Several say the Inspectors do not take energetic steps. I quite believe it.

1144. *Mr. Dodson.*] Have you snow in your district?—It is only in the back country.

1145. As a matter of fact, you can ride at any time in your country?—Yes, at any time.

1146. With regard to the preparation of phosphorized oats, you say you have a special appliance?—Yes. I boil the water, and when it comes to the boil I put the cylinder in with the phosphorus and oats, and keep it revolving for some time, after which you take it out.

1147. Is the cylinder half in and half out of the water?—Yes, about three or four inches.

1148. Then, you merely use the water for heating?—Yes.

1149. Does the grain swell considerably under that process?—Yes.

1150. You have never tried whether it sweetened the grain?—No; I know it makes very good poisoning.

1151. *Captain Russell.*] It is said you have been more successful than any others in your district in getting rid of the rabbits?—I have no reason to complain myself; I am content.

1152. You have not been compelled to do this by the Inspectors?—No.

1153. And your neighbours are pleased that you go on their ground to poison their rabbits?—I have never poisoned their ground; but the men go through with guns and ferrets.