

that the Land Board did not consider, in any case that came before it, that the transfer was applied for with the object you state, although, possibly, some applications to transfer may have been made with that object.

10. *Mr. J. McKenzie.*] Had you any inquiry, during your Commissionership, under the Act of 1885?—Well, although I do not like to speak quite offhand about it, I do not think we have had an inquiry under the Act of 1885.

11. You are aware that the Act of 1885 made ample provision for inquiry?—It embodied the provisions contained in the Land Boards Inquiry Act of 1883.

12. Previous to the passing of the Act of 1883, which was embodied in the Act of 1885, you were not able to make proper inquiry into dummyism: were you not prevented?—We were not furnished with the powers we were afterwards furnished with. It was "The Land Boards Inquiry Act, 1883," that gave us the power to hold an inquiry.

13. Can you mention to the Committee any case of wrongdoing which you sheeted home by that Court of Inquiry?—Well, there were the famous Cotterbrook cases. We brought home in these to a number of applicants the fact that they were applying for land which they did not intend to occupy—that is, applying in the interest of other people, which is the essence of dummyism. The Board forfeited the deposits of the applicants, and the lands were reopened for sale.

14. Can you mention to the Committee any case the Land Board of Otago inquired into, and in which they failed to prove dummyism?—Yes; the case you, I think, refer to was an inquiry into dummyism in regard to deferred-payment sections forming part of Run 106, which had previously belonged to Mr. James Smith. In that case, I think, the Land Board was moved to action by a petition, if I recollect rightly. I speak subject to correction. I think there was a petition sent to Wellington on the subject as well as to the Land Board, and it was determined to hold an inquiry. The Board held a very exhaustive inquiry, but failed on the evidence that was adduced to prove the suspected existence of dummyism.

15. *The Chairman.*] What year was that?—It was in 1884, I think.

16. That was before the passing of the Act of 1885?—Yes. The powers of the Board as to inquiry into dummyism were in the same position as after the passing of the Act of 1885, for that Act embodies all the provisions of the Act of 1883.

17. Is the position of the Board strengthened in regard to detecting dummyism under the Act of 1885?—No; I do not think so; it remains much as it was.

18. *Mr. J. McKenzie.*] There was a slight alteration of one or two words—"right" and "usage"—which made the meaning of the Act more clear?—There is a difference in the wording of a section as to a person letting another man run his sheep upon his land. It is now provided that there must be a regular agreement for agistment for adequate consideration. That was the only alteration as far as I can remember.

19. With regard to the Greenfield cases: have any circumstances come to light since then which prove that these were cases of dummyism?—Well, not to my personal knowledge, except what I learned through the newspapers. I know nothing of the facts. I saw some reference to the matter in the newspapers, in connection with some legal proceedings.

20. Are you aware that the case was tried in the Supreme Court, and that it was proved that the man was a dummy?—I did not read it; I only heard so. As far as I understood the facts, they were these: The person who took up the land in connection with Smith stated on oath that what he had previously stated on oath was a lie. That was all. I should come to the decision that the second statement was just as likely to be a lie as the first.

21. You recollect that a man named Gilliand gave evidence at the inquiry?—Yes, I think I remember the name. I did not read the report in the newspapers about it. My attention was drawn to it merely by some person speaking to me in the street about it.

22. You recollect Mr. Gilliand giving evidence?—I think there was a man called Gilliand who gave evidence; but I do not recollect what evidence he gave.

23. Would you know his signature if you saw it?—No. If you had not suggested to me the name of Gilliand I should not have remembered it at all; but I think there was a man called Gilliand who gave evidence.

24. You say that no case of dummyism has come under your knowledge: is that true?—Yes; it has not come before the Board officially. Of course, you know as well as I do, when you were on the Board, that where we found a man not complying with the conditions of his license, and not living on his land, his license was forfeited. There might have been an element of dummyism in some of these cases, but it was not called dummyism.

25. You have known of some cases where the Board have forfeited a license without making any inquiry?—Men have been served with notices to show cause why their licenses should not be forfeited for not having complied with the conditions of their licenses, and, if they did not show sufficient cause, the licenses were forfeited.

26. There have been cases of that sort?—Yes, many cases; principally, I may state, arising from non-payment of rent. These are quite distinct from dummyism.

27. Have you not received a petition accusing certain persons of dummyism?—Yes. We lately received a petition in connection with alleged dummyism at Deepdell—Macrae's.

27A. You forgot that?—The report of the Ranger about the cases was received before I left, and the persons referred to have been cited to show cause before the Board on the 24th of this month why the licenses should not be forfeited for breaches of their conditions. One case referred to was that of a woman who had abandoned her section, and gone to Southland to be married.

28. Had not the rent for that woman's land been paid by another individual?—I do not think so; I think she is in arrears. She got married—I speak from memory—before she had occupied the section at all.