

253. In that year feed was scarce and dear?—Yes.
 254. You put it down at 4s. an acre?—Yes.
 255. You have seen the acreage destroyed by fire?—Yes.
 256. How much did you put it down at?—Mackle's, at 70 acres.
 257. It is burnt in an irregular way, is it not?—Yes; and this is only a rough estimate.
 258. Did you measure Moore's fences?—Yes; it is 116 chains.
 259. You are allowing for only 20 chains of the boundary-fence?—Yes.
 260. What would be the cost of replacing that?—Well, there are various lengths that take different quantities of wire and stake.
 261. The fire in Moore's case had acted irregularly too?—Yes. I calculate that 77 chains, with two wires, were fit to use. Then 20 chains would require five wires. That is where the gorse was, where the fire burned fiercely. Then 9 chains would require four wires, and there were 10 chains without wires at all. The cost would be: 812 stakes, £9 15s.; 12 cwt. of wire, £8 2s.; ten posts, £1 5s.; erecting 116 chains, at 2s. 6d. a chain, £14 10s.; clearing 77 chains, at 1s. 6d., £5 15s. 6d.; staples, say, 10s.: total, £39 17s. 6d.
 262. Can you tell us anything of the value of the feed destroyed?—No, I cannot say.
 263. What did Mr. Staunton do?—He measured the fences with me.
 264. *Mr. Cresswell.*] Have you land of your own?—Yes, a farm.
 265. In this district?—Yes.
 266. How far from Mackle's?—About five or six miles.
 267. Have you found any difficulty with the gorse?—No, except that it takes a lot to keep it cut.
 268. Has it not been attacked generally by a blight that has played havoc with it?—Not in our district. I have noticed that in other districts.
 269. Gorse is liable to be attacked by a blight that practically destroys it?—I believe so.
 270. A good post-and-wire fence is a more desirable fence for a farmer here than a gorse fence?—Not in the winter.
 271. Well, taking it all the year round?—I would have the gorse fence. If properly looked after it is the best fence.
 272. You have given us the figures for the erecting of a fence: it would be a better one than the old one, I presume?—Yes; it would, of course, be new; but you could not put a gorse fence there straight away.
 273. No, that would take some time to grow. Now, how old was Mackle's fence?—I do not know.
 274. How long have you known it?—About five or six years.
 275. What is the average life of a fence of that description?—That is hard to say. With proper attention it will last for ever, by replacing a few stakes now and again.
 276. So that, in course of time, the original material had all disappeared?—That might be.
 277. Has this fence been repaired a good deal from time to time?—I could not say.
 278. *Mr. Purnell.*] Although a stake or two might want putting in, the wire would last?—Yes.
 279. Do you agree with Mr. Studholme in his opinion that the sod banks are permanently injured to some extent?—Most decidedly.

THOMAS STAUNTON, sworn.

280. *Mr. Purnell.*] What is your occupation?—A farmer at Hinds.
 281. Did you go with Mr. Miller to measure these fences of Mackle's and Moore's?—Yes.
 282. Did you hear the measurements he gave?—Yes.
 283. Do you agree with those measurements?—Yes.

HENRY MACKLE, sworn.

284. *Mr. Purnell.*] You are a farmer, residing at Hinds?—Yes.
 285. Your land adjoins Mr. Moore's?—Yes.
 286. How many acres of land have you?—About 420, in several paddocks.
 287. I think you were away from home at the time of the fire?—Yes.
 288. How soon after the 27th January did you return?—It might be a week after that I heard of the fire.
 289. Had the fire done you any harm?—Yes.
 290. What damage?—It burned about 160 chains of fencing.
 291. Does that include the whole of the boundary-fence between you and Moore's, or only half of it?—It included all the boundary-fence, except Moore's.
 292. What sort of a fence was it before the fire?—A good gorse fence.
 293. Stakes and wire?—Yes.
 294. You have not re-erected the fence?—No, only temporarily.
 295. Why have you not re-erected it?—I have not had the means.
 296. What would it cost you to re-erect the fence?—I could not put up such a good one as the one that was burnt for 8s. a chain.
 297. Would that include the clearing of the remains of the fire?—Yes, including everything.
 298. That comes to £64 altogether?—Yes.
 299. Do you agree with what Mr. Studholme and the last witness said about the bank being permanently injured?—Yes.
 300. You do not take that into account in reckoning the cost of re-erecting the fence?—No.
 301. What sort of feed was there on your place before the fire?—Fairly good feed for the dry season.