

is, with regard to the poisoning being made simultaneous. I think it is patent to most people that poisoning is the most effectual remedy at present, until we see what the ferrets are going to do. I find, in my own case, that my neighbours are not poisoning simultaneously. I think we should all go together. Unless by simultaneous poisoning, there is not much good done. I may poison, and my neighbours may poison at different times, but the rabbits come back again. Then, as regards men and dogs, I think that is a most undesirable way of destroying them.

322. With regard to the Inspectors, have you anything to say as to the manner in which they administer the Act?—I think the Inspectors should discountenance the use of dogs. Both Mr. Andrews and myself, after very careful consideration of the matter, have determined that we would hunt rabbits no more with men and dogs. We find that rabbits, instead of being spread over the run, have gone into colonies. They have picked their own ground. If we use men and dogs we should disturb them, and help to distribute them over the land; so that we should have to poison not only every hill but every gully. If the ferrets are going to be of any use we must not go hunting with dogs. Those men who make it their business to hunt rabbits with dogs will destroy everything in the form of the natural enemy. It is their livelihood. In the face of such an evil as this rabbit-pest, the Government ought to bring in some regulations as they are found necessary.

323. You say that the rabbits have gone into colonies, and picked their own ground: do you observe that they choose a particular kind of soil?—I find that they avoid wet and cold clay land. They affect a light sandy soil. A great portion of the Wairarapa District is clay.

324. Have you any experience of the ferrets that have been turned out: do you think that they are likely to breed?—I am satisfied of it. But they would be killed in the end by men and dogs. That is the reason I should like to see hunting with men and dogs put a stop to.

325. What has been the result of the poisoning in your district?—It has been very good. The rabbits are at a very low ebb, but unless some efforts are made in the way of using ferrets they will increase again.

326. It is stated that you cannot poison rabbits where there is good feed for them?—I find that upon turning over a sod they will take it.

327. Do you not think that it is dangerous to sheep?—I do not think so if it is properly laid.

328. What course do you adopt?—We put poison very thick on some paddocks. I am inclined to think that if the poison is covered with a little earth, so as to allow the rabbits to scratch it up, that will be the best plan. Rabbits are always attracted by newly-turned earth. In New South Wales they make small square yards; they put down 4lb. or 5lb. of poison in a yard about a panel square.

329. What do you use?—Rhodium, and sometimes aniseed, which we think is better.

THURSDAY, 25TH SEPTEMBER, 1884.

Mr. H. JACKSON, examined.

330. *Hon. the Chairman.*] You are living in Wairarapa?—Yes.

331. Are you desirous to give evidence about rabbits and sheep?—I know very little about scab in sheep; at least I never have been scabby.

332. You come rather to give evidence about rabbits?—Yes.

333. Will you state to the Committee your views as to the working of the Rabbit Act: is it satisfactory or otherwise?—I consider that the Rabbit Act is as good as we can have it, with the exception of a few sections, which are too stringent—not for me, but for others. I can sympathize with those who have large runs. It appears to me that monthly notices are too close: it ought to be two months. I refer to section 8, where the first notice is given, and to section 9, where the first penalty is to be recovered. I think there the penalty is not sufficient. After a month's notice is given, and nothing is done, I think the fine ought to be £5. In section 8 notice is to be given first; the penalties are £1 or £20: I think it ought to be £5 or £10. Under section 10 two months' notice should be given instead of one. Where rabbits are numerous one month is of no use at all. I should like the Committee to understand that I have very few rabbits now; but seven years ago I was swarming with them: I killed them off before there was any Act in force.

334. How did you kill them?—With dogs: no poison.

335. Do you not think that you hunted them about into the other parts of the country?—I drove them on to my neighbours; I drove them back. If my neighbours killed as well, the rabbits would have been soon killed altogether. If this Act had been in force it would have saved them a great deal. The rabbits got so numerous that it was a question with many whether they would leave the rabbits and go themselves. I thought better of it: that I should live and the rabbits must go. I therefore set to work myself. It took me six months to get them down.

336. Did you use poison at all?—No; nothing but dogs and the gun. Poison was not then known for rabbits. I do not think it was even thought of. If my neighbours had been compelled to do the same as I was doing, it would have been a good job. The ground was poor, and would not keep rabbits. I had a good deal of artificial grass, so that they came on to me. I resolved to get rid of them, and I succeeded in doing it. That is the reason that I am so strong against their destruction by the natural enemies. I consider that every man, if he takes it in time, can destroy the rabbits and get rid of the nuisance.

337. But do you not recognize that that time is passed: that in many places they are too numerous to make any attempt to get rid of them with dogs and the gun?—Then, it is not the natural enemies that will do it. You must kill them yourself with dogs or by other means; not by the natural enemies.

338. What is the reason you object to the natural enemies?—Rabbits are breeding and ferrets are breeding.

339. Would you poison?—Poison is the thing. I would poison, and then I would have nothing but dogs.