

*General Remarks :*

From Rabbit Inspector PASLEY, Napier.

(1.) Hunting with dogs and shooting. (2.) None. (3.) The prosecutions instituted last year have had a good effect, and a sharp look-out is kept by owners : at times no rabbits are seen, and then a few appear. (4.), (5.), (6.), (7.), (8.) None. (9.) 20lb. at Waimata. (10.), (11.), (12.), (13.), (14.) None. (15.) At Waimata Dépôt on the 31st March there were 150 ferrets. (16.) Thirty-five have been turned out near Waimata, thirty about the fence and Akiteo hills near the boundary, five at the back of Akiteo, and two in a small clearing ; results good. *General Remarks.*—In August last I was at Waimata, and the tracks of rabbits were pretty numerous on the sandhills across the Waimata Creek. Ferrets were turned out there with very good results, all traces disappearing for some length of time. About a month ago a rabbit was killed against the fence, and there are slight signs again on the sandhills. When at Waimata a fortnight ago I instructed the agent to turn out some ferrets on the sandhills and to lay poisoned grain at the back where he thought suitable. The fence has proved a great safeguard to this district. The sheepowners have let a contract for extending it three miles, and have ordered material for eight miles altogether.

From Rabbit Inspector ORBELL, Masterton.

(1.) Phosphorized grain during the winter months, fumigating with bisulphate of carbon, charcoal and sulphur, and chemicals ; hunting with dogs, shooting, ferreting, trapping ; burrows broken up, thousands of acres of scrub and bush cleared, cover destroyed. (2.) Owners of infested land to be compelled to breed or procure ferrets to turn out (when practicable), to the satisfaction of Inspector ; ferrets to be turned out on Crown lands, and Government to have substantial breeding dépôts. (3.) Good progress ; diminution of the pest very satisfactory. (4.) Twenty. (5.) £209 9s. (6.) Twenty-five, including Crown lands ; about two-thirds bush, remainder pastoral ; approximate area, 30,000 acres. (7.) 78½lb. (8.) 400½lb. (9.) 88lb. (10.) Skins from Wairarapa exported, Port Nicholson. (11.) Thirty-three. (12.) Thirty-one ; fines inflicted, £134 10s. (13.) Two. (14.) Tunuiarangi. (15.) Unknown. (16.) Yes ; with very satisfactory results. *General Remarks.*—Simultaneous poisoning with phosphorized grain during the winter months, with concerted action ; systematic method in poisoning large tracts of infested country ; breeding and turning out unlimited number of ferrets (the dark, African ferret preferred) and other natural enemies of the rabbit. I anticipate great results, and that the pest will be combated with success, provided owners work with energy and a will of determination. Dogging, trapping, fumigating being detrimental to the natural enemies, I would strongly recommend that an uniform rule and some definite system should be adopted where rabbits abound in numbers, to protect the ferret and other natural enemies. Wild ferrets are fast increasing, and their good work is already perceptible, with grand results.

From Rabbit Inspector PRICE, Nelson.

(1.) Traps, guns, dogs, and poison. (2.) None at present. (3.) Satisfactory. On all properties the rabbits have been kept under, especially in the Wairoa Gorge, where they were most numerous. (4.) One, namely, Joseph Andrews. (5.) £37. (6.) Three that I shall have to deal with this winter. With the exception of the sections that Mr. Andrews dealt with last year, the others are useless for grazing purposes. (7.) 20lb. on Crown lands. (8.) 35lb. (9.) 15lb. (10.), (11.), (12.), (13.), (14.), (15.), (16.) None. *General Remarks.*—With the exception of Sellon's run, and the Wairoa Gorge, I do not think the rabbits will increase to such an extent as to become a nuisance, as most of the properties upon which there are rabbits are held by small holders, and can be easily kept down. I did not commence poisoning till August, and found it, in most instances, a perfect success.

From Rabbit Inspector BLUNDELL, Blenheim.

(1.) Poisoned grain has been very extensively used, and men have been employed to hunt, shoot, and trap. (2.) None. (3.) On those runs where the poisoning has been systematically carried out there is a marked improvement, but I cannot say the same of the district on the whole, although on taking the returns for 1883-84 it will be seen that more than double the number of skins were exported during the latter when compared with the previous year, showing that extra exertions were made to cope with the pest. (4.), (5.) None. (6.) One, known as Awatere Shearing Reserve ; contains 5,696 acres, the greater portion of which is covered with manuka scrub. (7.) None. (8.) 310lb. (9.) 40lb. (10.) 646,997. (11.) One. (12.) One. (13.), (14.) None. (15.) Nine. (16.) 2,041 ferrets have been turned out, and where rabbiters are not employed ferrets are certainly increasing in numbers. *General Remarks.*—Ten mongooses have been imported, and are being kept for breeding purposes. An attempt has been made to cross them with the ferret, but so far unsuccessfully. Now that so many ferrets are being bred and turned out in the district, I should like to see all rabbiters dispensed with, as there is no doubt they destroy the ferrets and all other natural enemies of the rabbit.

From Rabbit Inspector PASSAU, Kaikoura.

(1.) Phosphorized wheat, with marked success. Shooting over ferrets, and continuous breeding of ferrets by the runholders. (2.) That pressure should be brought to bear upon the Land Board re the unsold suburban land, the whole of which is totally unfit for agriculture, and most of it unfit for pasture in its present state. If leased at a nominal rental for seven or ten years I think settlers