

167. *Hon. Mr. Menzies.*] Are you not aware that a notice has been posted up to the effect of that circular?—No. I am unable, however, to answer the question. The notice may have been received since I left home. I can easily ascertain. I can telegraph if you like.

168. *Mr. McKenzie.*] Do you think it would be a good thing for the Inspector to give notice to every one, so that action might be taken against any one who failed to do his duty?—Yes, it would strengthen his hands. But, at the same time, I think the matter is so well understood by every one who lives in a rabbit-infested country that I do not think it would do much good.

169. *Mr. Dodson.*] Have you tried fumigation down your way?—Yes, wherever we have found burrows where that could be done. We used bisulphide of carbon.

170. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Do you find that rabbits grow in colonies?—Distinctly. You will sometimes find them living in a barren piece of ground all huddled together.

MONDAY, 31ST MAY, 1886.

Sir N. CAMPBELL examined.

171. *Hon. the Chairman.*] You are living in the Amuri?—Yes.

172. When you were before a similar Committee to the present a few years ago, I think you told us that there were not many rabbits in that district then?—Not many.

173. But there were some?—Yes.

174. They have increased since then?—Yes. We have nearly exterminated them, but they have increased considerably in our immediate neighbourhood.

175. Where did they come from?—They have been there since I have been in the district.

176. I thought they were spreading down from the country north of you?—They are said to have spread down, but in reality they have not—they have spread up. The Inspector says they have come up from the Awatere; but that is not the case—they have come up from the Clarence River.

177. What means have you taken to reduce them?—Poisoning them and turning ferrets and cats among them; and there has also been one man employed shooting them.

178. What kind of poison did you use?—Phosphorized oats; also carrots and arsenic, and phosphorized wheat.

179. Which method do you prefer?—We found phosphorized oats the best.

180. In what proportions do you mix it?—We put $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of phosphorus to 100 lb. of oats.

181. Do you put in sugar?—Yes, about 1 lb., and rhodium or oil of anise. We find the rabbits take the poison more readily by mixing with it something of that sort. But we have not done any poisoning since I was before the Committee in September, 1884; we have done the work by natural enemies entirely—ferrets and cats.

182. Do you breed your own ferrets?—Yes.

183. What number do you turn out?—We have turned out about two hundred a year for the last two years. We have about a hundred and seventy-five now to turn out in the spring.

184. Have they increased in their wild condition?—No, I do not think they have—not very much. We have not enough rabbits to keep them going, and a great many of them die, I think.

185. Do you take any measures for feeding them?—No.

186. Before you turn them out do you put them into a loose yard, or open space fenced in, and prepare them for the wild life they are about to enter upon?—No; we generally turn them straight out, but they have a yard to run about in.

187. Do you give them wild rabbits to kill in that yard?—We have not got the rabbits. There is no doubt, I think, that many of them do die simply because they are not used to the rabbits.

188. Do cats kill ferrets or fight with them?—I could not say for certain. I have known them fight when confined together.

189. You do not think there would be any danger on the run with cats?—No; I do not think they would interfere with one another.

190. Then you use guns and ferrets?—We have one man out shooting—one of our own shepherds. We have had a man out for two winters. We have got so few rabbits now that we are giving him 1s. a skin for every one he gets, and he has his wages besides.

191. Have you any wire-netting fencing?—No; we have not tried that.

192. Then, I suppose the country outside yours is not infested with rabbits?—It is swarming with rabbits. That is our grievance. The Rabbit Act has been suspended, and our neighbours are allowed to do as they like.

193. To what do you attribute that?—I do not know, I am sure. We want very much to know. The Inspectors have suspended the Act in the Kaikoura District on their own authority.

194. Who is the Inspector at present?—Inspector Forster is now in charge of that district.

195. But he is the Superintending Inspector, is he not?—I do not know exactly what he is called.

Hon. Mr. Buckley: He is the Inspector.

196. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Are there Sub-Inspectors as well?—There are several Sub-Inspectors.

197. Who are they?—Inspector Clifton is at the head of the Kaikoura District. Then there is a Rabbit Inspector—Inspector Miles. Then, in the Amuri District, Inspector Cook is under Inspector Forster; and I believe another has been put on lately.

198. But who is the Inspector that you come in contact with?—Inspector Forster. He is in charge of the Kaikoura and Amuri Subdivisions.

199. Have you had any notice from him to kill rabbits?—No; he has never interfered with us.