

commonage and mining reserve at Waikaia; two runs, Nos. 214 and 423, fair grazing summer pasturage; runs out of lease—these are a serious charge on the department. (7.) 217lbs. (8.) 299lbs. (9.) 405lbs. (10.) Four. (11.) Four. (12.) None. (13.) School Commissioners (4), W. Saunders, J. Lee, Sew Hoy, W. Stewart, W. R. Carruthers, Scottish and New Zealand Investment Company, F. W. Chapman, Invercargill Waterworks Company, C. Kettle, Bank of Australasia, W. Aim, W. McMichael, H. Driver, D. Sutherland, J. Hackworth. (14.) Thirteen; this is becoming quite an industry. (15.) 800; good results in favourable localities, and where protected from rabbiters. (16.) Yes; about 1,000 by one firm, and they are hopeful of results. *General Remarks.*—In view of any possible alteration in the Act I would alter section 98, so that no notice was necessary. This would expedite proceedings and tend to keep dilatory and careless owners on the alert, reduce the expenditure, and work no more hardship on defaulters than at present. Regarding the ferret as an auxiliary power in aid of other known means of dealing with the rabbit nuisance, although at first I was doubtful of their merits as active factors in the work of extermination, the last two years' experience fully convinces me of their vast importance to landowners in Southland. Ferret-breeding has become an industry in my district. Private landowners are beginning to realize that, in order to assist other practical methods in dealing with rabbit nuisance, they must also foster the natural enemy, and the sooner the better. For this reason I would recommend that ferret-breeders be licensed, paying a nominal fee. It would give Inspectors and others security that the ferrets so bred were the *bona fide* property of such breeders, and reduce the temptations to illegal traffic in Government stock or the property of private owners. It is objected that ferrets will shortly become a greater nuisance than rabbits. I do not agree with that. As long as there are rabbits to live on there is little danger to anything else. Those bred in boxes and reared by hand might perchance come near a homestead, and make a raid on the fowlhouse, but even this rarely happens. I am fully impressed with the importance of the ferret, and this year I was able to get owners of property adjoining Crown lands to contribute to the expense of releasing ferrets on such lands. There is nothing new in all this, and I am aware it was patent to you from the very first, but the general public require the same education in ferrets as they did in rabbit-poisoning five years ago.

From Rabbit Inspector HICKSON, Outram.

(1.) All known means; poisoning with phosphorized grain in the proper season; the remainder of the year trapping, snaring, fumigating, shooting, ferreting, dogs, and digging out with spade. (2.) In rabbit-infested districts, in erecting new fences, it should be compulsory to erect same with wire netting. (3.) Very fair progress has been made in the district; the country and stock show the result. (4.) Two. (5.) £108. (6.) Eight, consisting of hundreds, Native and mining; 26,283 acres; the whole available for leasing if such could be done. (7.) 4lb. (8.) 10lb. (9.) 7lb. (10.) One. (11.) One. (12.) None. (13.) None. (14.) Six. (15.) None. (16.) I am aware of Gladbrook Estate having turned ferrets out; result I do not know. *General Remarks.*—The working of the Act has been very satisfactory, the benefit of which is apparent every year. I have called meetings of the settlers with the object of getting them to take combined action, which has answered. There are three hundreds known as the Hindon, Traquair, and West Taieri; the acreage of the three combined would amount to about 20,000 acres; if the land could be leased it would be a great saving of expense to the Government.

From Rabbit Inspector DOUGLASS, Invercargill.

(1.) Careful poisoning with phosphorized grain; dogs and digging out burrows on runs; trapping and fumigating with charcoal where there are no ferrets; and a little shooting. (2.) None; believe Act is giving general satisfaction. (3.) There is a steady decrease in number of rabbits throughout the district, and not so much summer work required. (4.) One, for poisoning Run No. 415; and eight subsidies given on account of bush frontages. (5.) £200. (6.) There are a good many small reserves along the rivers; unsold portions of townships; bush reserves and railway-banks not available for grazing. Also Run No. 415, Marora, containing 64,000 acres; about 10,000 acres low country. (7.) 40lb. sent to Mr. J. Miller, and 97lb. (including 18lb. lost by defective tins) used by Mr. Bridge, and accounted for. (8.) None. (9.) 63lb. (10.) Two. (11.) Two. (12.) None. (13.) D. Carmichael and Co., Run No. 415. (14.) Four for Government and four private breeders, besides several small lots. (15.) One hundred and fifty-four last autumn and six hundred and sixteen this summer. Those turned out in previous years have increased and done much good, as shown in the reduced expenditure required in summer. (16.) About seven hundred, the greater portion on Mr. Holmes' properties. The experiment was only commenced last season, and heavy floods in New River must have destroyed numbers; but the hills are cleaner. *General Remarks.*—Each winter the quantity of poisoned grain required to be laid is much less, and not so many rabbiters required during the summer. Without doubt this is owing in a great measure to the work of the ferrets, which are now getting pretty numerous on most of the runs. About the farming districts, where I cannot turn out ferrets, I notice a far greater increase of rabbits during the breeding season.

#### APPENDIX C.

The DIRECTOR, Canterbury College, to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Canterbury College (School of Agriculture), Lincoln, 28th April, 1887.

Having been requested to undertake some experiments with all available kinds of food, aromatics, &c., in order to ascertain whether it was possible to discover a bait that the rabbit would