

Fifteen. (5.) £447 10s. (6.) No reserves. Crown lands: approximate area 80,000 or 90,000 acres, mostly burnt bush, and very rough and broken country, and about 20,000 acres available for grazing. Every summer a great portion of the bush is burnt. About 50,000 acres requires poisoning; Native land requiring great attention, about 15,000 acres. (7.) 249lb. (8.) Nil. (9.) 20lb. (10.) Sixty-two. (11.) Fifty-three. (12.) Seven; withdrawn, two. (13.) Nil. (14.) Only a few persons breed ferrets in small numbers, mostly for their own use. (15.) Nil. (16.) Only one runholder; about 150, on 18,000 acres. The number being so small to the area shows very little impression on the pest; at the same time, ferrets kill a great many rabbits, and every encouragement should be given to persons to breed. *General Remarks.*—In addition to the remarks made last year, report (H.—13, p. 3) to which I refer you, I should wish to add that I consider trapping, very large packs of dogs, and bisulphide of carbon are all very destructive to the natural enemies of the rabbits, and ought to be discouraged as much as possible where those enemies are known to exist, unless used only by trustworthy men. Landowners ought to encourage the working of tame ferrets.

From Sub-Inspector R. K. SIMPSON, Marton.

(1.) Shooting and hunting with dogs and poisoning was tried last winter with good results. (2.) I would recommend that a practical man be employed during the coming winter to poison, and show the settlers how to do the work of poisoning. (3.) Fairly good. (4.), (5.) Nil. (6.) I only know of a small railway reserve of some 600 acres near Foxton. (7.) 15lb. (8.), (9.), (10.), (11.), (12.), (13.), (14.) Nil. (15.), (16.) No. *General Remarks.*—After the poisoning was completed in Horowhenua last winter, I carefully examined that part of the district, and failed to see a single rabbit. I am informed that a few have again made their appearance there. North of Rangitikei River rabbits appear to be slightly on the increase. I would strongly recommend the employment of a good man for the winter months, who would show the settlers the way to do poisoning.

From Sub-Inspector JOHN F. McCLEAN, Wellington.

(1.) Shooting in nearly all parts, and poisoning in those places where rabbits were thick enough. (2.) None. (3.) In places where rabbits were numerous, and where poisoning was properly carried out, good results were obtained. (4.), (5.), (6.) None. (7.) About 8lb. (8.), (9.) Nil. (10.), (11.), (12.), (13.), (14.), (15.), (16.) None. *General Remarks.*—Rabbits are thinly scattered all through this district, but, except in few places, do not appear to make headway, owing, no doubt, to the constant visits of the town sportsmen. In those places, however, further away from town, as the Pakuratahi, they are becoming a nuisance, and will require careful looking after.

#### MARLBOROUGH—NELSON DISTRICT.

SIR,—

Sheep Inspector's Office, Blenheim, 19th May, 1890.

I have the honour to forward herewith the annual rabbit report of the Marlborough—Nelson District for the year ending the 31st March, 1890, together with replies from myself and Sub-Inspector to the queries referred to in circular.

Nearly all the rabbit-infested country is under the jurisdiction of the Awatere Rabbit Board. Very good work was done last winter on most of the runs, but not sufficient summer work. Trapping and shooting for the factories is now going on, and rabbits are not so numerous as they were at this time last year. Poisoning on nearly all runs has commenced, and some low country that was trapped for the factories last year has been poisoned this year first.

I find there is a far greater extent of unoccupied Crown lands in the district than I was aware of last year. There is one block of 115,000 acres, one of 22,600 acres, and several smaller blocks, or a total of about 140,000 acres, that will require to be patch-poisoned every year, the land having lately been put up for lease and passed in without a bid. Several miles of wire-netting fencing have been erected, and 956 ferrets and 1,081 stoats and weasels have been liberated by the Awatere Rabbit Board.

I have, &c.,

T. G. RICHARDSON, Inspector.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands (Stock Department), Wellington.

(1.) Phosphorized grain, trapping, and shooting. (2.) Nil. (3.) Very good work was done on most stations, and rabbits are not so numerous as at this time last year. (4.) One. (5.) £83 10s. (6.) Three blocks—viz., South Slopes, Tapuenuka, 22,600 acres; 115,000 acres between Tairdale and Hillersden Runs; about 1,200 acres Wairau River-bed of no value for grazing purposes. (7.) 51lb. (8.) None. (9.) 27lb. (10.), (11.), (12.), (13.) None. (14.) Six. (15.) None. (16.) 956 ferrets and 1,081 stoats and weasels have been turned out by the Awatere Rabbit Board.

From Sub-Inspector A. K. BLUNDELL, Nelson.

(1.) Phosphorized oats, hunting with dogs and ferrets, shooting, trapping, and digging out burrows. (2.) Nil. (3.) On the whole, the district is in a satisfactory state, and I can safely say there is no increase of rabbits, but, owing to the exceptionally dry season, there have been an unusual number of young ones to contend with. (4.), (5.) Nil. (6.) Three small blocks, containing, in all, about 450 acres of very poor land. (7.) 4lb. (8.) 16lb. (9.) 33lb. (10.) One. (11.) None. (12.) One. (13.), (14.), (15.), (16.) Nil.