

## INDUSTRIAL RABBITS.

A considerable number of permits to keep these rabbits, mostly Angoras, are still in force, and in all cases the conditions set down are being well observed. If the present price for Angora wool is maintained, there is a better prospect for those engaged in rabbit-farming, so far as that breed of rabbit is concerned.

## NOXIOUS WEEDS.

Taking noxious weeds on the whole, a fair measure of control has obtained. Ragwort has been the chief source of complaint, and in respect to it the use of sodium chlorate has helped to clean many properties, both by spraying and dry methods of application. In many cases where sodium chlorate could not be bought, largely on account of finance not being available, resort was made to clearing by pulling up or cutting. The Unemployment Board's No. 11 Scheme was also made available for this class of work with resultant benefit to many settlers and their holdings, particularly in badly infested areas of the North Island.

Despite the fact that a great deal of clearing has been carried out, ragwort has become so widespread that it might appear that no real headway has been made in its eradication or proper control. It must be borne in mind, however, that approximately 500 tons of sodium chlorate went into consumption during the season, and this, with other methods of destruction, must account for no small measure of success in clearing. Many individual farms have been cleared and kept clear of ragwort, but, on the other hand, there are many that are probably worse than they were a year ago. Special efforts have been made to keep the already clean districts clear of ragwort.

Other noxious weeds, particularly blackberry, Californian thistle, gorse, and broom, are much in evidence in different parts, while sweetbrier is prevalent and inclined to spread in certain areas of the South Island. This weed is a most difficult one to deal with, but some clearing is being attempted. These latter weeds, although more or less troublesome, have not assumed the menace of ragwort, and, generally speaking, a fair amount of work is being done in respect to their eradication. In time a great deal might be possible in the way of confining them to rough and useless areas.

## STAFF.

Mr. J. Lyons, M.R.C.V.S., relinquished the Directorship of this Division in November last, and I took over control of the Division shortly after.

I must express my appreciation of the loyal and efficient services rendered by the staff in all sections and branches of the Division's activities. Particularly would I mention those prominent officers who retired at the end of the year, Messrs. D. Munro, R. Wright, and W. Wills, Principal Inspectors at Auckland, Wellington, and Dunedin respectively, who each had a long period of service in the Department and were officers of outstanding ability.

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