

From Rabbit Inspector MACKAY, Balclutha.

(1.) Shooting, dogging, trapping, digging out in summer, and poisoning with phosphorus in winter. (2.) None. (3.) Very good. (4.) Eight. (5.) £143 10s. (6.) 106; bush, mining, quarry, coal, ferry, and unsold lands. About 7,000 acres available for grazing purposes. (7.) 158lb. (8.) 242lb. (9.) 318lb. (10.) Cannot ascertain. (11.) Two. (12.) Two. (13.) None. (14.) None. (15.) Five. (16.) Ferrets have been turned out, with very good results. *General Remarks.*—The present Rabbit Act works satisfactorily.

From Rabbit Inspector MACDONALD, Gore.

(1.) The most effectual and best-recognized means are phosphorized oats as poison in the winter season; trapping and digging out in spring. Ferrets and nets are found serviceable, as well as fumigation in burrows. (2.) None regarding the Rabbit Act. The powers conferred by it are ample. Additional assistance in carrying it out might be necessary during the poisoning season. (3.) Immense; but as yet only a partial victory has been gained. Sufficient escape to restock a district in a short time. Landowners realize the importance of the situation, and second the efforts of the department. (4.) Only ten. (5.) Total cost for the year, £429 18s. 7d. (6.) 258,350 acres, none of which is available for grazing, being either bush or so situated that no one would take it as a gift. (7.) 203lb. (8.) Of Government stock, 300lb. (9.) 574lb. (10.) 345,636; corresponding period last year, 924,609. (11.) Three civil cases to recover expenses. (12.) No summary proceedings. (13.) None. (14.) Twenty-one. (15.) Four under contract; many private. (16.) 120. The result is beginning to be noticed, young rabbits being less numerous. Ferrets are also increasing. *General Remarks.*—Poisoning is the mainspring of rabbit-extermination. This must be followed up by other expert modes, such as that indicated in answer to query No. 1. It is a great mistake to relax effort after once poisoning, because rabbits are not seen in alarming numbers. It is difficult, however, to instil this idea into the mind of the small landowner, who, perchance, looks upon the rabbit as not an unmixt evil. The ferret, though well distributed, is not in sufficient numbers to make an appreciable impression, and, unaided by other practical means, would be found totally inadequate.

From Rabbit Inspector DOUGLASS, Invercargill.

(1.) Phosphorized grain during winter; throughout the summer trapping, ferreting, dogs, and digging out burrows. On three large properties a considerable quantity of bisulphide of carbon was used, and charcoal fumigators have been found very effectual on several farms and along river-banks, &c. (2.) The Act has given general satisfaction in the district under my charge, and I do not think it can be improved. Wekas should be protected, and, if practicable, sale of cat-skins disallowed. (3.) With very few exceptions, rabbits have been well kept down throughout the district, bush frontages and river-banks being most difficult to manage. In not a single case have the skins paid poisoning expenses, and on several properties they were not picked up, not being numerous enough. (4.) Subsidies given to twelve landowners on account of bush boundaries (one of £50 withheld). (5.) £380. (6.) There are several Native reserves and unsold portions of townships; also railway and bush reserves. None available for grazing. I find two men can keep these fairly clear of rabbits. (7.) 100lb. (8.) None. (9.) 300lb. (10.) Cannot state accurately; about 200,000. (11.) Three. (12.) Three. (13.), (14.) None. (15.) Four, under contract with the Government. Several landowners are breeding and turning out small lots. (16.) 364 on Government account. Nearly all these have been turned out in the back country along main bushes and mountain-sides. It is too soon to tell results. *General Remarks.*—Of the ferrets turned out by me last season there is little doubt that some were trapped over twenty miles distant from place where liberated. On the Waiau hardly a young rabbit was seen till near Christmas. Amongst the farms wild ferrets are getting very numerous, and are, without doubt, doing much good. The very extensive tracts of bush land throughout Wallace and Southland afford great harbour for rabbits, and it will only be by steady perseverance with poisoned grain along the edge of bush and turning out natural enemies, that the pest will be subdued. The results of the last two years' work have been most encouraging.