

likely to be roaming in the proximity, and poison, especially strychnine and arsenic, in the hands of a careless person might be the cause of a regrettable fatality; hence it is a difficult matter to suggest a universal means of control by poison.

J. Ferguson, C.M.G., in his book "All about the Coconut-palm" states, "They (rats) breed in the trees, and find both food and drink in the young nuts. I know of no effectual remedy for this pest. Traps and poison are useless under the circumstances." Messrs. H. Hamel Smith and F. A. G. Pope, in their book "Coconuts, the Consols of the East," state, "Laying poison in the shape of yams or rice, &c., impregnated with strychnine or arsenic will only serve once or twice, and is also to be deprecated, because it might reach domestic animals and even children." Mr. H. F. Macmillan, in his book on "Tropical Gardening and Planting," states, "Bait poisoned with arsenic is perhaps the best way of extirpating them." Mr. F. P. Jepson, B.A., F.E.S., in his "Report on Economic Entomology, Fiji," states, "Traps and poisons of various kinds have been tried, but not with much success." The Administration is at present in communication with New Zealand regarding the importation of a colony of the New Zealand owl, or morepork. Once acclimatized these birds should prove useful in preying on the rats.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the Director of Orchards, &c., Wellington, and also Inspector George Harnett, of Auckland, for prompt reports forwarded on condition of fruit, &c., landed in New Zealand from these Islands. These reports are of great assistance in carrying out the work of export inspection in this Group.

PUA-AU NURSERY.

GOOD progress has been made in this work. The whole area of 12 acres is now practically under cultivation. Shelter-belts of *Tamarindus indica*, *Prosopis juliflora*, and *Canarium commune*, with nurse-trees of *Aleurites*, or candle-nuts, have been planted round the area.

The nursery of 1½ acres is now planted throughout with 2,640 seedling orange-trees for propagation with suitable varieties later on. About forty of these seedlings have already been successfully budded with mandarins.

The following is a list of trees planted permanently:—

No.	Name.	Common Name.	Country procured from.
38	Citrus tree	Mixed varieties	Queensland and Victoria.
16	<i>Prosopis duliflora</i>	Fodder-tree	Hawaii.
2	<i>Cassia fistula</i>	"	"
10	Paw-paw	"	"
50	<i>Tamarindus indica</i>	Sweet tamarind	India.
2	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	Honey-mango	"
2	<i>Anona reticulata</i>	Custard-apple.. .. .	"
2	<i>Zizyphus jujube</i>	Jujube	"
2	<i>Flacourtia sepiaria</i>	"	"
2	" <i>cataphracta</i>	"	"
1	Sapota	"	"
2	<i>Terminalia belerica</i>	"	"
1	Sapota	Naseberry	Jamaica.
2	<i>Melicocca bejuga</i>	Guinep	"
1	Sapota	Sapodilla	Tahiti.
26	<i>Carica papaya</i>	Paw-paw	Ceylon.
30	<i>Canarium commune</i>	Java Mt. Almond	"
10	<i>Piper nigrum</i>	Black pepper	"
1	<i>Anona cherymoyer</i>	Custard-apple.. .. .	"
2	<i>Persia gratissima</i>	Avacado pear.. .. .	"
100	Gros Michel	Bananas	Fiji.
1	Litchi	"	Queensland.
2	Mammoth loquat	"	"
1	White Smyrna fig	Turkey fig	"
3	Varieties grapes

A further collection of useful fruit and timber trees is making a good show in the pots. These will shortly be planted out permanently. Unfortunately, mainly owing to the war, I was unable to increase our collection of varieties of citrus trees, but hope to have the orders at present placed with nurserymen in California, Florida, and Queensland delivered for planting during the coming season.

A variety test of tomatoes and water-melons was carried out, reports in detail on which have been supplied.

The formation of an Agricultural Committee is under way. This committee will visit the experimental area—say, monthly—note work in progress, suggest experiments, and assist the horticultural officers by exchange of experiences, and will also serve as a medium to bring the work before the other planters and the Natives, thus creating a general interest in the work being undertaken.