

The activities of the natural enemies of the rabbit, such as weasels, ferrets, cats, and hawks, which are of inestimable value in rabbit-infested country, are also opposed to the interests of the trapping industry, and trappers do not and cannot be expected to take an interest in their preservation.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, no proper place can be claimed for rabbits in the economic life of this country, and any person who discovers a more efficient method of exterminating them than those now in use will deserve well of his country by ridding it of a pest and at the same time providing a ready means of greatly increased production.

A "WATER - POTATO."

CURIOUS OCCURRENCE NEAR RANGITAIKI RIVER.

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To those who are acquainted with the history of the potato-plant and are aware of its wide climatic and geographical range, certain eccentricities manifested in its wild state will not be surprising.

On the islands of the Chonos Archipelago Darwin found the plant growing in great abundance on the sandy, shelly soil near the sea-beach. The tallest plant, he says, was 4 ft. in height. The tubers were generally small, but he found one of an oval shape 2 in. in diameter. They resembled in every respect English potatoes, and had the same smell, but when boiled they shrunk much, and were watery and insipid, without any bitter taste. He considered them undoubtedly indigenous, and ascertained that they grew as far south as latitude 50°. The specimens which he brought home formed a variety which by some botanists has been considered as specifically distinct. "It is remarkable," he continues, "that the same plant should be found both on the sterile mountains of central Chile, where for more than six months no drop of rain falls, and within the damp forests of the southern islands."

It apparently remains, however, for New Zealand to record the occurrence of what may be termed a "water-potato." On the northern side of the Rangitaiki River, in the Bay of Plenty district, opposite the old Maori settlement Waiohau, where a splendid spring of fresh water issues from the base of a hill and flows between banks heavily fringed with watercress to the near-by river, a remark-