

Enclosure in No. 4.

Mr. NEWTON to the AGENT-GENERAL.

DEAR SIR,—

Magdalene College, Cambridge, 8th December, 1876.

I beg leave to enclose and to recommend to your notice a letter from Mr. Marlborough Pryor, late Natural Science Fellow of Trinity College in this University, and an exceedingly good practical naturalist as well as sportsman. He has taken considerable interest in the New Zealand rabbit question, and I forwarded to him for perusal the report you were so good as to have sent me a short time ago.

The suggestions contained in his letter seem to be eminently practical, and I may add that Mr. Pryor has a personal knowledge of the class of men of whom he writes, having passed much of his youth with his late grandfather, Mr. W. Birch, of Wortham Hall, near Thetford. My own experience, gained by living over thirty years in the same neighbourhood, where there are perhaps more rabbits than elsewhere in England, entirely bears out Mr. Pryor's, and I have not the least doubt that half a dozen, or even fewer, well-chosen warreners from the neighbourhood of Brandon and Thetford, acting as Mr. Pryor suggests, would in a very short time stop all reasonable complaints of the nuisance.

I have, &c.,

ALFRED NEWTON.

Sir W. Tyrone Power, K.C.B.

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure in No. 4.

Mr. PRYOR to Mr. NEWTON.

12, Great Winchester Street, London,

6th December, 1876.

MY DEAR NEWTON,—

Thanks for the papers returned. I think that the form New Zealand Government interference ought to take should be to obtain and send out a small number of the most skilled Norfolk and Suffolk rabbit-killers—that these men should work under, say, the Road Board on the open unoccupied and Crown lands, but that their services should be at the disposal of squatters at cost price. These men, with the unskilled labour obtainable on the runs, would work wonders, and train the men on the runs whether they wished to do so or not. The squatters should prepare for the rabbit-killer by cutting down the ragged edges of scrub so as to get fair straightish boundaries to it, so as to be able to make the first clearance by long-netting at night. Types should be used of course, especially on the more open runs. By having a staff of rabbit-catchers for a district the cost of long nets and other tackle would be distributed, and it would be possible to arrange for the rabbits to be taken in suitable vans to rabbit “usines,” where they could be made into manure, and their skins worked up so as to be of more value than when roughly prepared. Rabbit fluff fetches a good price for hop manure.

I have, &c.,

M. R. PRYOR.

A. Newton, Esq.

By Authority: GEORGE DIDSBUXY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1877.

Price 1s. 3d.