

366. Will you state to the Committee what course you adopted?—I used poisoned grain. I kept them down afterwards with dogs. I used other means also; sometimes I employed ferrets, sometimes cats.

367. What do you think the best method to adopt?—Where they are numerous I think the poisoned grain should be used, leaving the rest to the natural enemies.

368. Are you an advocate for rabbiters?—I have rabbiters; but I am rather against them on the whole. I would not advise any one, if he could possibly do without them, to have rabbiters.

369. But you think they are necessary in some cases?—In some cases.

370. Can you state to the Committee your opinion as to whether the Rabbit Act has worked satisfactorily in your district?—I think on the whole it is satisfactory.

371. Do the Inspectors do their duty under it?—It would be better if the Inspectors would look around a little more than they have done, and keep watch in particular places.

372. The Inspectors make periodical visits?—They are paying as much attention to those runs which have no rabbits as to those which have them to a large extent. That, I think, is a mistake.

373. Have you any recommendation as to the amendment of the Act itself, beyond saying that on the whole it has worked satisfactorily?—On the whole I am satisfied: I think it would be a pity to alter the Act.

374. You are satisfied with the administration of the Act?—Yes.

375. *Mr. Lance.*] In some cases you think rabbiters ought to be employed?—I say so in some circumstances. I think it is a matter which should be left to the discretion of the landowners whether they should use rabbiters in places where they do not want ferrets; about the homestead, for instance.

376. As to rabbiters, do they not destroy the ferrets?—They do.

377. *Mr. J. McKenzie.*] I was about to ask Mr. Martin whether he has, from his experience, been led to the belief that in the administration of the Act too arbitrary powers are lodged with the Inspector, and whether he has known these powers to be abused?—I cannot say: I have heard complaints made that the provisions of the Act are somewhat confounded.

378. Do you understand the Act well?—I do.

379. *Hon. Mr. Robinson.*] Have the Inspectors power to insist on landowners employing rabbiters and dogs?—He has power to make them clear off rabbits.

380. That is not an answer to my question. Has he power to make them employ men with dogs—rabbiters?—I do not think he has.

381. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Have you anything to say about the administration of the department in regard to Crown lands?—I omitted to state that. Yes; I think that some steps should be taken in regard to Crown lands. The same attention has not been paid to them that has been paid to private lands: the consequence is that a good deal of injury has been suffered.

382. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Have you any experience of any other method than poisoning with phosphorus, and ferrets?—No; except the rabbiters.

383. Have you never tried bi-sulphide of carbon?—It has a very good effect, but it destroys the natural enemies as well.

384. Formerly the Act was administered by trustees. Is it your opinion that the Act would be better administered locally, as it was then, than as it is now?—I think it is better to administer it as it is now.

385. You do not believe in local administration as it existed in the Act previous to this one?—No.

386. *Mr. J. McKenzie.*] There are frequently cases in Court for the infraction of the Rabbit Act?—Yes.

387. As a general rule do convictions follow?—Not so frequently as they should, I imagine.

388. *Hon. Mr. Robinson.*] Are landowners subjected to penalties?—They should be.

389. After the Inspectors have taken the matter into their own hands and insisted upon the employment of rabbiters, are the owners subject to be fined?—I have not known any cases where they have been compelled to employ rabbiters; but the Inspectors have given instructions that rabbiters must be cleared off.

390. *Mr. Buchanan.*] Is it your opinion that rabbits have diminished in number in Wairarapa?—Very much.

391. Is it your opinion that, under the present Act as it is administered now, the district will, within a reasonable time, be practically free from rabbits?—I believe it will be. I think that great assistance in that direction would be given by making it easy for the Inspectors to deal with Native lands as well as Crown lands.

392. Have not the Inspectors power to deal with Native lands?—There seems to be considerable difficulty in dealing with them. I imagined that there were powers given to deal with them, but they do not seem to be treated in the same way.

393. Do the Natives object?—I think they do; there seems to be some difficulty in the way.

394. I would ask you whether it is within your knowledge that people catch wild rabbits and keep them in hutches, or send them away to other places?—I have no information.

395. In the Hawke's Bay District it is said by the Inspector that, under the Act, he can do nothing in regard to rabbits in hutches; that persons send wild rabbits over there in hutches; that these get loose sometimes and spread throughout the country?—I have no knowledge; a person travelling might catch one or two wild rabbits, and keep them in that way.

396. *Hon. Mr. Williamson.*] Do the Natives eat rabbits?—Yes; they do not care very much about them, but they will eat them.

Mr. C. J. TULLY, examined.

397. *Hon. the Chairman.*] You live in Wairarapa?—Yes.

398. Have you had much experience of rabbits?—Yes; seven years.