

Some of them thought it would be advisable to remove the officers now in the district and replace them by others. I do not think so. Two changes have already taken place within a recent period, and if a third were now made, within less than two years of the last, a feeling of insecurity would be engendered, and a risk would be run of the Inspector in charge forming an opinion that activity on his part was a disqualification, and that not to do his duty was the surest way to consult his own interest. From what I have seen of Inspector Miles I have formed the opinion that he is a thoroughly conscientious officer, able and willing to do his duty, but not able to please everybody or caring to try, and, above all things, unable to eradicate the rabbits under impossible circumstances.

At Lawrence I also took evidence from a few gentlemen, holders of both large and small properties in the Tapanui District. Very little of any importance was elicited. Some of the settlers seemed to think that the officers of the department had not been strict enough with their neighbours, and some thought the rabbits could be exterminated if the Government would pay a high price for skins. But the charges against the officers were not serious; and, on the whole, I have no special report to make respecting this district.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

G. S. COOPER.

[*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, nil; printing (1,350 copies), £1 3s. 0d.]

By Authority: GEORGE DIDSBURY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1886.