

1890.
NEW ZEALAND.

THE RABBIT NUISANCE

(ANNUAL REPORTS ON).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

REPORTS forwarded by Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors to the Hon. the Minister of Lands (Stock Department) in reply to the following circular :—

- (1.) What means have been adopted for destroying rabbits?
- (2.) Have you any recommendations to make?
- (3.) What progress has there been made?
- (4.) How many tenders have been accepted?
- (5.) What did the whole of them amount to?
- (6.) Number and description of reserves you will require to deal with, and the approximate area of such available for grazing purposes?
- (7.) What quantity of phosphorus was used for Government purposes?
- (8.) What quantity was sold to private individuals?
- (9.) What was the quantity on hand on the 31st March, 1890?
- (10.) Number of prosecutions?
- (11.) Number of convictions?
- (12.) Number of dismissals?
- (13.) Names of owners of properties dealt with under section 11?
- (14.) Number of ferret-breeders?
- (15.) Have any ferrets been turned out by Government; if so, how many, and with what results?
- (16.) Have any ferrets been turned out by private owners; if so, about how many, and with what results?

General Remarks :

AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

SIR,—

Sheep Inspector's Office, Auckland, 3rd April, 1890.

I have the honour to forward herewith the annual rabbit report of the Auckland District for the year ended the 31st March, 1890, together with replies from myself and Sub-Inspectors to the queries referred to in circular.

It is a most difficult question to decide how best to deal with this nuisance here, for on Native lands poisoning cannot be undertaken, and public opinion is adverse to the liberation of the natural enemy; so that, until the Native lands become occupied or the property of individuals and not the common property of a tribe, and public opinion reconciled to the presence of the natural enemy, the means adopted as the most useful in the rest of the colony are actually prohibited here, so far as the greater area of rabbit-infested country—the King-country—is concerned. These rabbits appear inclined to spread to the east of the Waikato, between Cambridge and Oatu. At present very few can be seen. The owners here will be induced to take the most effective means of destroying rabbits during the coming winter. I propose to watch the work and the condition of the nuisance; for it is said by many here that rabbits are not increasing. The wet spring may have some effect; but my own opinion is that, unless great efforts are made, the pest must become here, as elsewhere, a serious nuisance. No harm can come of the course suggested—viz., owners immediately east of Waikato to be induced to take effective means, condition of pest carefully watched, the bonus to Natives in King-country to be continued. I have not been able to attend to this as much as I should have liked: the Miranda infected sheep have occupied a great deal of my time, and, besides, I have to learn the country.

I have, &c.,

E. CLIFTON, Inspector.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands (Stock Department), Wellington.

(1.) Trapping, shooting, digging out, and fumigating burrows. (2.) That Crown should acquire the Native lands known as King-country, and encourage settlement there. (3.) Rabbits are nowhere in this district in destructive numbers, but the infested area is slowly increasing. (4.), (5.) Nil. (6.) In Waikato, fifteen, besides the infested Native lands in King-country; infested area