

plane, and developing the right technique. It should not be assumed that only a heavy aircraft can do this work. It is possible that a light helicopter lifting about half a ton may prove suitable because of its adaptability for use from many farm centres or homesteads. This possibility should not be overlooked in the search for a suitable plane. We have said the main problem is distribution of fertilizer from the farm centre, homestead, or manure-dumps to the steep hill-faces. That point must not be lost sight of in this research work, and we commend it to the Air Force for consideration.

We consider that the Department of Agriculture should pursue its investigations into the granulation of fertilizer and the incorporation of seeds with fertilizer pellets for hand-sowing as well as for aerial top-dressing. We congratulate the Department on the work already done, which has shown the practicability of this method.

We were able to see, during our visit to the Wairarapa, one of the first trials of a lime-blower which was demonstrated to us by the engineer to the Wairarapa Catchment Board, Mr. Campbell. We consider that there are great possibilities for this machine, particularly as it can be mounted, so that it can either be dragged up the valleys to blow lime up the faces or, alternatively, dragged round the ridges with a tractor to blow lime down the faces. If this can be done successfully with lime it should be possible to develop a machine for spreading superphosphate in a similar way. The invention is one of considerable merit, and we understand that it is being developed for commercial production. It is a development that is worthy of attention, and we hope that continued efforts will be made to improve this blower.

## 6. FENCES

No farm can be run without fences, and, unfortunately, fences are not structures which will last for ever. Under earlier conditions in New Zealand when fences cost up to £80 per mile, the replacement of fencing was no great problem. At the present time, however, with fencing costing £500 a mile or more on hill country, the replacement of fences has become a very difficult problem.

Fences are essential round the boundary of a farm to keep stock on the property, and subdivisional fencing is necessary to give control of grazing. We agree with Mr. Bruce Levy's contention that smaller-sized paddocks give better grazing control which is beneficial to pastures. When new fencing costs £500 a mile and there is a questionable supply of materials even at that price, very little subdivisional fencing can be undertaken.

The position is serious, as most farm fences have been standing for forty to fifty years and many need replacement. A detailed investigation into the supply of permanent fencing-materials should be made immediately. On flat country the concrete post is a big advance, and though not perfect it is a big step forward and is being widely adopted. Concrete posts, however, are very heavy, and it is impracticable to transport them on to the line of many hill fences. Iron intermediates and standards have been used, particularly in the South Island, and these have proved ideal where stocking is mainly with sheep. However, they do not stand up well under cattle stocking. In the North Island there is at the present time no alternative to timber posts on steep hill country. Only certain timbers are suitably durable for use as posts, and, unfortunately, the supply of these timbers has become very short.