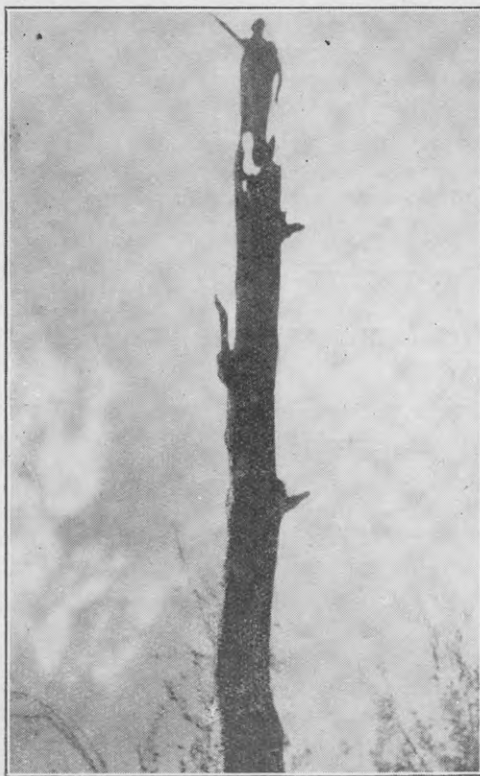


A WARNING TO DESTROYERS.

Here is an exact reproduction of a photograph taken many years ago on the South Island's West Coast, where a forest was hacked down and burnt in the vain hope that its place would be taken by profitable pasture.



The imaginative mind of an old-time Maori could easily believe that the forest god, Tane Mahuta, had forced the fire to trace out the figure of a prophet of dire penalties for the stupid destruction of his children. Similar pitiful monuments to man's folly may be seen in many parts of New Zealand, remnants lying black or bleached on steep slopes. Visions of such hideous ruin evidently inspired the poem "The Avengers," written by O. N. Gillespie. Here is a selection of verses:—

Like some huge earth god sprawling motionless
And staring at the sea, the long hill lay,
While busy centuries wrought him a dress
Of splendid green to cloak the dingy clay.

* * *

Tuis sat gravely, little singing nuns,
Of some old pagan fane of long ago;
And swift small birds like tiny coloured suns
Flashed up from pools and sparkled to and fro.