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American—are "The River" (Mississippi), "The Heritage We Guard" and "For Years to Come," the last showing a year's farming operations when conservation has been introduced.

We asked a member of the staff to tell us, very briefly, just what his ideas of conservation were. Here is what he said: The main idea is to have natural growth on the steeper slopes. If the land has been cleared, put in adequate vegetation cover according to slope, climate and soil. This will mean grass on gentle slopes and flats, and on steep, erodable country, natural vegetation. For intermediate country there should be a compromise between grass and trees . . . The films show all these things. Groves and spaced trees are best for unstable slopes, but trees alone are, in some cases, just a waste of time, on account of the cost and the time they take to grow.

Molesworth is Convalescing

Molesworth, of more than a quarter of a million acres, we were told, was a flourishing productive unit 25 years ago, carrying 50,000 sheep. In 1938 the Lands and Survey Department took under its care this anaemic and exhausted high country run in the mountains of Marlborough. It is one of a number of Crown leaseholds which the lessees were forced by economic conditions and soil erosion to abandon.

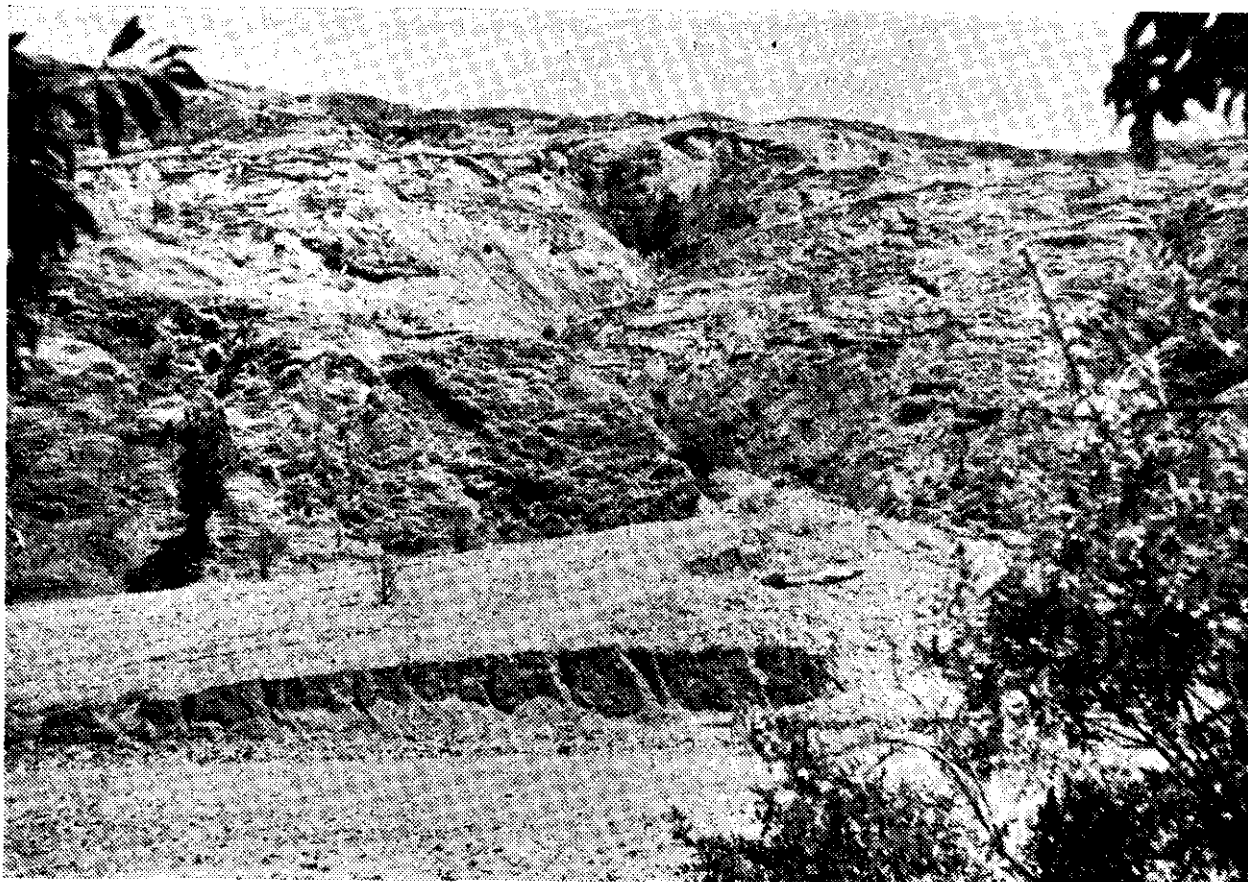
Now Molesworth is in the convalescent stage and steadily improving through being "spelled" and through intensive rabbiting. "It took a hundred years to wreck it," said an officer. "Who can forecast the date of its return to full productivity? To-day it is grazing 3000 cattle. But regeneration is now taking place, for Nature is being given the opportunity to demonstrate, in a practical experiment, effective methods of rehabilitating such areas."

To-day at Molesworth can be observed the virtues of "spelling" and natural seeding; the benefits of rabbit control and of reducing burning; the results of sowing with improved grasses; the way hardy pioneering plants assert themselves among the stones; how several very palatable grasses dominate certain areas; the effect of improved ground cover in checking soil erosion; the value of the production of supplementary feed, and of strictly controlled and deferred grazing by an optimum number of cattle.

Work to be Extended

The Soil Conservation Council proposes to extend its work considerably and to make many more films showing causes, effects and remedies, as well as to carry out practical demonstrations. Part of its publicity campaign is to send thousands of bulletins to all schools, catchment boards, farmers' unions, mercantile firms and banks. This form of propaganda is supplemented by films and film strips. As far as the colour films are concerned, everything but processing is done in New Zealand. The staff edits and compiles its own sound tracks, but the films are sent to Australia to be processed. The film strips are distributed to all film libraries of the various education boards. Moreover, more than 60 schools in New Zealand have their own movie projectors, so that every effort is being made, through these media, to enlist recruits in the fight against soil erosion.

NEW ZEALAND LISTENER, MAY 3



NOT the terminal moraine of a glacier, nor the tailings left by gold-dredging—this vast swathe of soil and shingle has slipped from the bare hillside in the background down into the river bed (Whakaangiangi, Poverty Bay).

NATIONAL ART TREASURES WERE SAFE AT HASTINGS

IF the people of Hastings (Hawke's Bay) had known during the war what we can now tell them through *The Listener*, their friendly rivalry with their sister town, Napier, might have made them crow lustily. For they were, in a sense, guardians of £25,000 worth of art works—the cream of the National Art Gallery collection. And that figure is more or less arbitrary, for money values in works of art can be only nominal. The secret was shared by very few people.

We discovered in a talk with E. D. Gore, secretary of the National Art Gallery, that, when the Japanese entered the war, and the armed forces took over a large part of the Dominion Museum and Art Gallery, the gallery authorities had to find a safe storage place for their exhibits. They selected 400 paintings, drawings and etchings for removal from Wellington, and the main considerations in choosing a safe refuge for them were a dry and reasonably cool building with, of course, an absolute minimum of publicity.

The Fire Brigade Knew

"Our troubles started with our search for premises, and ended," Mr. Gore told us, "when, through the courtesy of the Public Trustee, Wellington, a suitable room belonging to the Hastings branch of his office was lent to us." This was an ordinary room in a concrete building.

It was decided not to roll the canvases, but to take them out of their

frames (leaving them on their stretchers) and pack them flat. Sixteen cases were used; the frames and glass were left in Wellington.

"You managed to keep the whole thing secret?"

"Oh yes," said Mr. Gore. "We were pretty careful and very few people knew anything about it."

"Was there a guard, armed or otherwise?"

"No continuous guard, but the building was occupied all the time. One set of keys was kept by the fire brigade and another by a firm of accountants in Hastings."

"Were the works inspected regularly?"

"Very frequently, and I made periodic inspections myself."

"Where are the pictures now?"

"They were returned to Buckle Street at the end of November last and are still there in storage," said Mr. Gore. He said he had no idea when they would be on view again. Anyway, they could not be re-framed until their home was returned to them. A small proportion of the collection was placed on display in a temporary art gallery in the D.I.C. Building, Wellington.

Some of the Treasures

We asked Mr. Gore the names of some of the works sent to Hastings for safety. They included, he said, well-known paintings such as: "Interior of a Stable," by George Morland; "Self-Portrait," by Dame Laura Knight; "By



"The secret was shared by very few people"

Summer Seas," by Charles Sims; "Santa Maria della Salute," by Sir Frank Brangwyn; "Haymakers," by G. Clausen, and "The Waterfall," by P. Wilson Steer.

Works of some of the earlier New Zealand artists also went to Hastings. These included many water-colours by John Gully, and the collection of J. C. Richmond's, James Nairn's, N. Chevalier's, and William Swainson's works. Pictures by Margaret O. Stoddart, Francis Hodgkins, T. A. McCormack, A. F. Nicoll, N. Welch and other contemporary artists also took a trip to Hawke's Bay for their health's sake.

"And now," said Mr. Gore, "a great amount of work remains to be done before we can show them to the public again."