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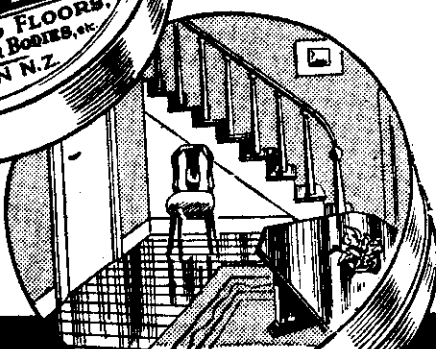
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ON HIGH COUNTRY AFTER THE FIRES

What Should Now Be Done

SO much interest was aroused by J. O. H. Tripp's first article on High Country Erosion that we asked him to add his constructive proposals for dealing with the problem. These now follow:

IN the hope that other hill men will give constructive opinions on this High Country erosion problem, I will conclude the previous remarks on erosion from uncontrolled burning with a few further suggestions.

Burning of tussock for grazing purposes should only be permitted on swampy or damp areas where there is thick tussock into which sheep never go, and where there is no erosion risk. These are the only types of tussock areas that do not appear to be adversely affected by burning, but which on the contrary do produce sheep feed.

In the lower rainfall areas, almost every "Run-Holder" that I have interviewed has admitted that his "Run" has "gone back" during the last 20 years, due to various causes such as high rents, burning, erosion, rabbits, etc., etc.

What chance has the individual "Run-Holder" of grappling successfully with all these problems?

A pooling of knowledge and considered opinions, together with scientific help, is necessary so that co-ordinated action can be taken to help the high country.

Agricultural areas and their problems have been well looked after by the Agricultural Colleges, but the teaching of high country knowledge, and research work with hill country seems to have been left severely alone.

For instance, a remedy for eroded hill country is wanted. My own opinion (which might be completely altered if opinions were pooled) is that every eroded sheep station should endeavour to shut up each eroded "block" in turn for a two-year period, until all eroded "blocks" had been dealt with.

A proportionate reduction in rents and stock would have to be made each year, as "blocks" vary greatly in size and feed

value. Surface sowing could be carried out during the first year, and grasses and tussocks would seed themselves.

The second year would see the young plants well established. The cost of seed could be shared by lessor and lessee.

Rabbits would have to be cleaned up, and in this connection it seems to me that a yearly progressive erection scheme of cheap subsidised netting (after the war) on all existing fences in very rabbit areas, is the only permanent solution to this problem.

It also seems a great pity that high country education of young prospective "Run-Holders" has been left exclusively to the young man's ability to pick up knowledge on the various sheep stations on which he may work.

First-class men in any occupation are often quite incapable of imparting their knowledge to others, and sheep men are no exception. The result is that when some young men take up hill country, much of their experience has to be gained the hard and expensive way; expensive not only to themselves, but sometimes to national assets as well.

This is where a High Country branch of an Agricultural College could be of great service, both as regards training young men and in helping to solve high country problems.

At least one such College owns high country.

Love Is The Season



DO not decry
The feast bordered with laugh-
ter,
Nor the fool letting his words fly
Like frantic birds. Do not frown
Mischief out of the bell-bewitched
town.

DO not interrupt even with your
tired thoughts
The old man in his ivied story:
Do none of these things lest you
build a road-block
Against the progress of glory.

FOR love is the season,
And it will suffice
If by roads of unreason
And the friendly gate of mirth
Goodwill discover the lonely
house of earth.

—J. R. Hervey