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SHEPHERD'S CALENDAR

Fifty Thousand Deer

"T'S ridiculous," Charlie said,
"to spend money to tempt
tourists here, and then spend
more money to chase them away.
The Government should make up
its mind whether it wants them
or doesn't want them."

Charlie had been reading Lady Barker, and asked if I remembered the pig bunt without OCTOBER 8 dogs and Lady Bar-

ker's luck in knock-

ing a boar over with a boulder.
"That's the kind of thing to tempt tourists," he said; "wild life and free hunting."

"The tourists would have to be

"Well, it's the young people we want. What's the use of bringing the decrepit to look at us? We want more from the tourist than he carries in his pocket. We want his interest after he goes home and an inclination to come back. We want some tourists to come back permanently."

"But we can't offer what Lady Barker found here."

"I know that. But we can offer some of it, and some things that she didn't find. It's just crazy to spend tens of thousands killing pigs and deer when there are so many people eager to do it for nothing."

"But what happens in the meantime?

"But what happens in the meantime? If we preserve pigs and deer for visitors, what happens to our lambs and our bush?"
"Very little. Far less than the fan-

"Very little. Far less than the fanatics say. I am getting a little tired of the forest-savers and erosionists. Burning does more harm every year than pigs and deer have done in 100 years. In any case, I don't say preserve the deer. I stay stop spending thousands on a job that others are eager to do for nothing."

nothing."

"Do you know how many deer the cullers killed last year in the South Island?"

"No, but it would be a big number. Perhaps 100,000. Perhaps 500,000. But

by "SUNDOWNER"

I am not afraid of figures. The South Island is a big block of country."

"The number was 54,576. I find it slightly terrifying. If that was the number killed, the number still alive must be three or four times as many. We would need more tourists than New Zealand will ever see to check a host like that."

"It is certainly a big number. Perhaps tourists are not the answer. But I don't want a complete answer. I don't want pigs and deer to disappear altogether. I am not so young as I was, but fresh pig-rooting still excites me."

"It does me too. And tourists don't.

"It does me too. And tourists don't. Why should we beg them to come here with their money-bags? If we want more income let us call on our sheep and our cows."

"Yes, and on our soil and our muscles and our brains. The trouble is that I am well over 80 and you well over 70, and that makes us both old fools."

"We are certainly that. But if Lady Barker returned where would you take her for an outing?"

"Back to the foothills. Back to the matagouri and the scrub. Back to the flax bushes. Back to the paddocks without fences and gates. Back—"

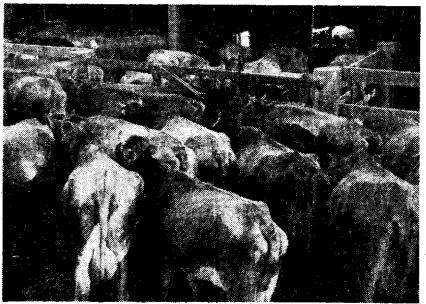
"Old fools, did you say, or young ones?"

"Perennials, both of us. How's your lumbago?"

IF I say that I started this note under the biggest matagouri in the world I don't know who can contradict me. It may not be true; but there was nobody

OCTOBER 10 there to prove me wrong, and I took some measurements.

The height I judged to be about 25 feet. The circumference of the trunk I proved to be a little over four feet, and a horse could (and did) graze comfortably under the branches. If there is a bigger matagouri still alive not many people have seen it, or ever will. The moas may have seen bigger



"INDUSTRIOUS COWS AND INDOLENT FARMERS," the first of three talks by Dick Williams under the general title of "A Countryman's Slant," will be heard during the coming week from 3YA (November 5, 7.15 p.m.) and 1YA (November 6, 7.15 p.m.). The other talks in the series—which will be heard later from other YA stations—are a countryman's musings on "Men and Dogs" and "Bulls—and Other Things."