

to the Hermitage (Mount Cook), noting first of all how well the experimental planting of forest-trees near Omarama had succeeded; then we had an opportunity of seeing the Benmore country, and near Lake Pukaki, on Ben Ohau and Rhoboro Downs, the runs recently set aside for settlement of soldiers. Further on we observed the great swamp with its abundance of feed for cattle near the head of Lake Pukaki. The next day, as no witnesses appeared, we spent in visiting the high mountain grassland on the Sealey Range, which is in its absolutely virgin condition, with abundance of blue-grass and aniseed (*Angelica montana*), a herb eaten out of sheep-pastures in general. On the 14th May we proceeded to Lake Tekapo, where a public sitting was held and the evidence of Mr. G. Murray, of Braemar, who has greatly improved his country, was taken. Fairlie was reached the same evening by way of Burke's Pass. Between Tekapo and Burke's Pass we noticed that the depletion was the effect of the tussock dying out through some cause other than that of the rabbit or burning—possible the grass-grub. A good deal of depletion in dry areas arises from this cause. On the 15th May a well-attended public sitting was held at Fairlie, and much interesting evidence given regarding that part of Canterbury. In the afternoon of the same day we proceeded to Timaru. On the 17th May a public sitting was held there, and further valuable evidence given regarding the Mackenzie country. The next day we proceeded to Ashburton, holding a public sitting at Geraldine *en route*, where interesting evidence was given by two witnesses. The next day a public sitting was held at Ashburton, but only one witness was present. Later in the day we proceeded by train to Christchurch. The two following days public sittings were held at Christchurch, and valuable evidence on many subjects pertinent to our inquiry was elicited. On the 22nd May your Commission proceeded to the Biological Station of Canterbury College at Cass, under the guidance of Mr. C. E. Foweraker, M.A., F.L.S., Lecturer on Botany at Canterbury College, who explained the work being done at the station, and its bearing on the economic investigation of tussock-grassland. A public sitting was held, and interesting evidence given regarding the runs of that district, where, notwithstanding the absence of the rabbit and the apparent abundance of feed, the carrying-capacity is quite low. On the 24th May your Commission visited Lake Coleridge in order to see the hydro-electric works, and get some idea of the tussock-grassland of the Lake Coleridge Run. The next day we proceeded by train for Hanmer, and saw *en route* the fine tussock-grassland of the Waiau Valley. The next day a public sitting was held at Hanmer, and some important evidence given regarding the large sheep-stations of that district. The following day it had been intended to make an inspection of the Clarence Valley, but rain hindered, and it was only feasible to visit the lower part of the Jack's Pass Valley, where, in many places, European grasses have naturally replaced tussocks. On the 28th May your Commission proceeded to Culverden, where a public sitting was held, after which we proceeded to Waiau, where another sitting was conducted. The next day we proceeded to Kaikoura by way of the coastal road, snow having hindered us going by the Whalesback Road as originally intended. The great spread of fern and manuka near Hunderlee was noted. On the 31st May your Commission held a public sitting at Kaikoura, and gained interesting information regarding that district. On the 1st June we proceeded to Blenheim, calling at Seddon, where a public sitting was to be held, but only one witness appeared. Your Commission was greatly struck, both this day and during their stay in Marlborough, with the excellent lucerne and with the danthonia pastures, this grass having in many places replaced the tussock altogether. On the 2nd June a public sitting was held at Blenheim, and interesting information was given regarding the pastures of Marlborough, and details concerning the growing of lucerne. In the afternoon we proceeded by car as far as the township in the Waiau Valley, here again noting the value of close settlement on Erina and Hillersden. The next day your Commission divided into three sections—Messrs. Scott, Todd, and Jardine proceeding to Cheviot in order to hold a meeting there, Dr. Cockayne proceeding to Wellington in order to procure certain evidence and to spend some days collecting information not otherwise procurable, while the remainder of the Commission proceeded first