



Poor, run-out pasture. It does not pay to water weeds.

very common mistake arises through the fault of viewing irrigation as a standby for a drought. The true value of irrigation lies in the initiation and maintenance of high production, together with the building up of the food supplies and fertility of our soils. Past farming practices on these light lands have resulted in the draining out of the inherent fertility, thus lowering the productiveness of the farms. Farmers have capitalised on this fertility, and now they must put it back.

With irrigation, not only can the farms carry more stock, but by the maintenance of good pastures and clovers (the clovers are essential) and by the passing of these pastures back per medium of the stock to the soil, the farm lands can once again be built up. This can be done only by following a consistent programme of irrigation. Once a farmer begins to irrigate he must follow it through. The cultivation entailed in constantly renewing pastures is expensive, not to mention the cost of seeds and manures. If some of this money is now spent on water and the farmer ensures that the paddock does not become drought-stricken, then not only will the pastures produce considerably greater quantities of feed, but they will also hold for very many years longer.

### (3) Control Stock On the Pasture

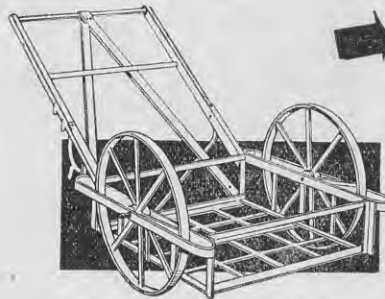
The third important principle is that a plant lives not only by its roots but also by its leaves, which perform the dual function of breathing and manufacturing plant food. This principle must be kept in mind when stocking the paddock. If too many sheep are crowded on to a pasture and left on too long, the plants are severely pun-

ished, and inevitably they are weakened and lose vigour. A continuation of this practice results in their complete ruination. This overstocking of pastures occurs too often under irrigation, and again one is forced to the conclusion that it is the result of using irrigation as a drought measure only.

The following is a common practice, and is essentially wrong. Because of drought conditions more prolonged and severe than usual, the farmer becomes short of feed. He turns to irrigation as a way out, and the paddock is ditched and irrigated. Immediately the grass begins to show green—it is just at a stage when it is recovering from a severe setback and requires careful nursing—on go the stock and they stay on. A little later it may

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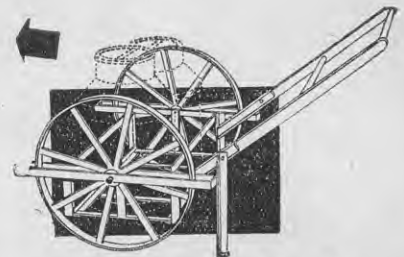


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