



*Mackenzie sheep-station : Men's quarters.*

memory of the district to which he gave his name is that it was settled mainly by men who were, like himself, Highland Scots. As Dr. Johnson and others have noted, the Highland Scots are accomplished legend-builders.

It is conjectured by some geologists that the Mackenzie Basin was at one time covered by glacial ice to a thickness of perhaps 5,000 ft. This mass, sometimes called the Great Waitaki Glacier, had its outlets through the Hakataramea, Mackenzie, and Burke's Passes; its remnants are the glaciers of the Mount Cook region. At some later time the Great Waitaki Glacier probably turned into a vast inland sea which receded leaving behind it Lakes Tekapo, Pukaki, and Ohau. Fed by glacier rivers, and themselves feeding the great Waitaki River, these three lakes assure to the Mackenzie country a permanent importance in the economy of New Zealand. The story of high country pastoralism has over the last half-century been a story of steady decline. Even in the Mackenzie country, where the decline has been least rapid, pastures no longer have the carrying-capacity they had before burning weakened the vegetation. But the hundreds of public-works huts dotted along the hillside at the outlet of Lake Tekapo announce the beginning of the second phase of the Mackenzie country's economic development. To-day it

is wool, to-morrow it will be power. Tekapo, Pukaki, and Ohau are reservoirs which could power the factories of a country many times larger than the South Island.

In the meantime life in the Mackenzie changes more slowly than it does in most parts of New Zealand. Machine shearing, tractors, motor transport, and wireless have had their effects; but the

economy of the high-country station has not changed in its fundamentals. Seeing the Mackenzie to-day, you see it much as Mackenzie the Freebooter would have seen it. The principal change is in the vegetation. Then the floor of the basin was covered with wild-irishman and bayonet-sharp spaniard through which horsemen forced their way with difficulty and even at some danger. The smoothly-rolling tussock downs are the product of fire.

Autumn and winter are the times to visit the Mackenzie. In autumn there is a fair chance of brilliant still days, with Tekapo milky blue and fringed with poplars which are more orange than gold. The winter cold is arctic but exhilarating, and every station has a skating-rink of some sort. If you have ever skated by moonlight in the Mackenzie, you will not forget it. If you have ever played ice hockey as they play it in the Mackenzie, you are even less likely to forget it. By comparison,



*The woolshed.*