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ASPECTS OF THE GROWTH AND CLIMATE OF TUSSOCK GRASSLANDS

IN MONTANE NEWGUINEA AND SUB-ANTARCTIC ISLANDS

by

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'In the Paramo there is no spring, no autumn, no summer, and no winter there is only eternal sameness. Two-thirds of the leaves of the grass are always dry and of a brownish-yellow color which, with the new blue-green leaves, forms that olive-green garment which covers all the mountains and is termed 'pajonal'. Complete desert does not give the traveller so sad and melancholy an impression as the wastes of the Pajonales.'

(Wolf, 1890, ex Troll, p. 19, 1959)

'... the gloomy aspect of the Pajonales (bunch grass meadows) of the Paramos, in which withered plants defy destruction and with their dismal remains dim and deform the splendour of the new generation.'

(Sodiro, 1874, ex Troll, p.19, 1959)

'... a banquet of beauty, a glory
Of fair mountain pasture, a glory of grasses

From the bed of the stream to the fringe of the shingle,
Stretching mile upon mile in a splendour unbroken,
Where the golds and the greys and grey-green commingle
In a beauty immaculate, mystic, unspoken.'

(A.Wall, ex Connor & Macrae, p.168, 1969)

I believe we know only a little about tussock grasslands,
and what we feel about them is not a common emotion.