

Undaunted, Osborne moved to new premises. When the '56 flood struck he was ready for it.

Now, when the "abandon shop" warning comes through, he cranks a handle on a small reduction box and a glass display case rolls smoothly up the wall. He can raise two 27 ft. display cases, packed with stock, 5 ft. 3 in. in 30 minutes.

This equipment designed by a local shopfitting firm cost £700 but will save him thousands. "Flood loss is not only in stock destroyed," says Osborne, "it's in time spent cleaning up before you open your doors again."

His dispensary is now six feet above ground and has 60 feet of laminex-topped benches for holding stock. The staff uses big clothes baskets to gather up drugs in alphabetical order.

A few doors away, Cox Brothers, department store owners, plan to put the Richmond to work next time it comes to town. The local manager, Herbert R. Cornford, explained the method for taking a rise out of this irate river.

The store interior is designed so that the staff can pull it apart and wheel it upstairs. All counters are on castors. When flood warning is broadcast, these are rolled to the elevator and hauled to the upper floor. With counters gone only the display racks are left.

Here ingenuity reaches its peak. These are ten 14 ft. racks, of which the bottom "stock compartments" are really big copper buoyancy tanks. As water rises on the sales floor, the stock, safe on the racks, merely floats ceilingwards.

"In the 1956 flood, we started moving stock at 1.30 on a Saturday afternoon. The water rose 30 inches and went down overnight. We were open for business as usual on Monday morning," smiled Cornford happily.

Some stores use metal tubes to construct meccano-style racks for holding stock above floodwater level. Others use big meat hooks to hang goods on. A few new offices are built above flood level and approached by flights of stairs. One way or another they are out to beat the Richmond.

I left town next morning.

The rain had ceased, the cyclone, the last of the season, had broken up, but overnight the river had risen alarmingly. The furtiveness displayed as it hurried past the bridge 24 hours ago had gone. Now this yellow flood had seething power and authority. It had cut the back roads, put the Byangum bridge four feet under, and had come within hours of lapping into Lismore.

Next year, when the cyclones come, the Richmond will be back, but Lismore will be waiting for him.

NEW APPOINTMENTS

It is advised that the following appointments have recently been made :—

MOREE : Mr. S. Preston Walker—Appointed Welfare Officer.

BURRA BEE DEE : Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Nicholls—Appointed as Manager and Matron.

KINCHELA : Mr. and Mrs. W. T. French Appointed as Attendants.



John Bates and Jeff Hunter looked really fierce on their prizewinning float at the Wilcannia Show