



Fig. 43.—When sown pure or almost pure and grazed lightly in the early stages, cocksfoot will often establish rapidly and successfully

[S. H. Saxby, photo.]

Crested Dogtail

Crested Dogtail (*Cynosurus cristatus*) is a comparatively low-producing grass. In some cases it is perennial, but remains permanent in pastures chiefly on account of its prolific seeding habit and the fact that stock will not eat the seed heads readily. Its soil fertility and moisture requirements are between those of ryegrass and browntop, being very similar to cocksfoot in these respects. For these reasons crested dogtail forms a prominent position in many sheep pastures on second-class country.

Before the introduction of permanent strains of ryegrass, dogtail was, together with browntop, a valuable constituent of second-class country pastures. With the use of a permanent strain of ryegrass and topdressing the value of dogtail on ploughable country has been greatly lessened.

On hill country where it is firmly established, dogtail is still a valuable grass. It produces its feed, which is very attractive to stock, early in the season, and is usually earlier than ryegrass in this respect.

Crested dogtail will not thrive under shading from other grasses and, although similar to cocksfoot in fertility requirements, will not associate with it when the cocksfoot is regularly allowed to become rank.

Crested dogtail and perennial ryegrass are very easy to confuse in the vegetative state, but may be readily distinguished by the colouration at the

base of the stems, which is red in ryegrass and canary-yellow in dogtail.

For Special Purposes

Phalaris Tuberosa is more generally known by its botanical name than by its "common" name of Toowoomba grass. Its greatest virtues are in its adaptability to a wide range of soil conditions and to its winter production. It has been grown at odd times in New Zealand for many years with varying success. The reason for this varying success is due partly to the sowing of the comparatively worth-

less annual *Phalaris minor* in error, and partly to the lack of knowledge regarding the type of management necessary in order to obtain a satisfactory sward.

Since the certification of *phalaris tuberosa* was begun in Australia, a greater interest has been taken in this grass in New Zealand.

The cardinal points in the establishment of this grass are:—

(1) The sowing of high germinating seed which is true to type.

(2) A fine, firm, and clean seed bed is essential for a good establishment.

(3) Early autumn sowing in order to have the slow establishing plants well rooted before the winter.

(4) Very lenient management in the first year. If possible, a complete avoidance of grazing is advisable during this time.

Competition

Competition from other strong-growing grasses and weeds in the early stages is almost certain to result in a very patchy sward. Because of this, the sowing of *phalaris tuberosa* in a general mixture of grasses and clovers should not be attempted.

Briefly, *phalaris tuberosa* must be regarded as a special purpose pasture grass suitable for the production of winter grass. On this account its use is somewhat limited, and only small paddocks of it should be sown. Once established, *phalaris tuberosa* will stand heavy grazing, especially by



Fig. 44.—Crested dogtail takes a prominent position in many sheep pastures in rolling or hilly sheep pastures.

[H. Drake, photo.]