

Whangarei. The holes were dug well ahead of planting to allow as much weathering of the sod as possible, and a small handful of fertiliser was mixed with the soil at the time of planting. A dry spell was experienced during the following summer, neces-

sitating watering twice at intervals, and the result was that 90 per cent. of the plants survived.

The accompanying photographs taken last February indicate that pampas grass, when established, will assist considerably in carrying stock during

the winter and early spring when cattle feed is particularly short on this class of country. The pampas is to be fed off this winter, and it will be interesting to note the recovery and annual growth following grazing.

Successful Establishment Needs Care

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ACCOMPANYING the first extensive plantings of pampas grass for fodder purposes were many disappointing strikes and failures, and decided reaction against further plantings followed. A careful stocktaking of the position revealed that the establishment of a pampas grass plantation was not quite so simple or so uniform as was once thought. Climatic conditions, time of planting, soil quality, use of fertilisers, preparation of the ground, and the actual method of planting are all single or combination factors influencing success or failure in obtaining a satisfactory strike. However, where pampas grass is successfully established, information is sufficient to show that it is useful for fodder purposes on the richer flat and easy lands. Further, immense possibilities can be visualised for its similar use on hill country where hay and ensilage cannot be saved.

It is on this latter type of land that less attention is usually given to certain important factors which accompany successful establishment. The first two illustrations are of a pampas grass area planted some years ago. More by accident than by design, two important aspects of management and planting stand out. The pampas was planted out among a rank growth of grass, fern, and blackberry. A hard fight for existence among the roughage occurred, and the plants did not thrive. Then, before the pampas plants had made sufficient top and bottom growth, cattle grazed the area with the exception of a small piece cut off by a deep drain. The plants which were grazed down closely before they were firmly established did not recover and were smothered by the fern and blackberry. Two factors in combination brought about the failure of this plantation.



Left.—A general view of a pampas grass plantation failure. The fern and blackberry have completely smothered the plants, which were also grazed hard down before becoming firmly established. *Right.*—A closer view of the plants seen in the background in Fig. 1. A deep drain prevented stock from access to these plants.



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