asked me in November, 1940, to visit the area under the guidance of Mr. McGillivray and arrange for a survey to be made. After preliminary investigations and discussions with the farmers concerned, an interim report was furnished, and arrangements were made for a more detailed examination. This could not be done at once, as the officer deputed for the work was on military service, but further examination of part of the area affected was made.

The Minister for Agriculture visited Waipara early in May, 1941, and met representative farmers, and saw some of the badly infested areas. As a result he promised that a survey should be undertaken at once. Mr. R. P. Connell, Acting Fields Superintendent, Christchurch, and the writer, who had accompanied the Minister, drew up a plan of work, and Messrs. A. J. Healy, Botany Division, and P. Barrer, Department of Agriculture, are now engaged on the survey. They have already found that the tussock is even more widely spread than was known.

Characteristics Of Nassella

An adult plant, growing free to develop fully, forms a dense tussock, with a fairly deep rooting system, a base of some six inches in diameter, a height of 20 inches, and a spread of 18 inches or more. At flowering time numerous inflorescences are produced, reaching about 40 inches in length. The foliage is very fine, harsh and tough, bright green and erect when young, paler and drooping when older. There is usually much dead, slowly decaying foliage covering the ground at the base. The flower stalks are slender and much branched above, with the final spreading branchlets each carrying a single flower, recognisable by the long, slender bristle terminating the seed and the purplish colour. An average plant will bear approximately 1,000 seeds. At maturity the whole inflorescence, with the seeds attached, separates from the plant, and acts as a "tumble weed"—that is, it is blown for long distances along the ground until it is arrested by some obstacle. During strong winds it may be carried high in the air for still greater distances.

The essential features which make the grass objectionable are:—

(1) The fine, harsh, tough, fibrous, inedible foliage.

(2) The capacity to grow in extremely dense communities, to the practical exclusion of other herbage.