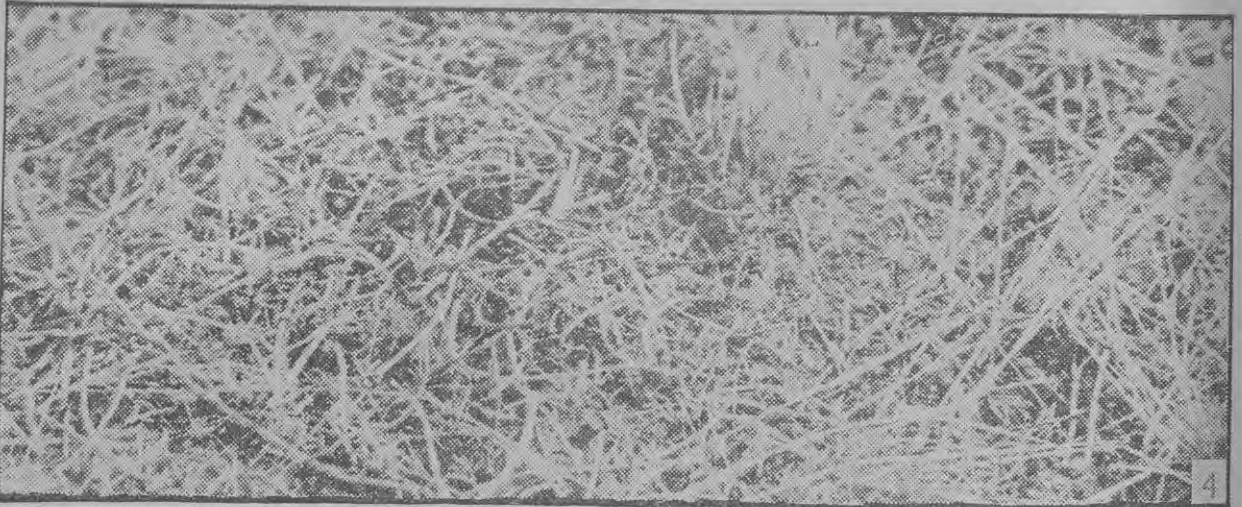


Subterranean Clover

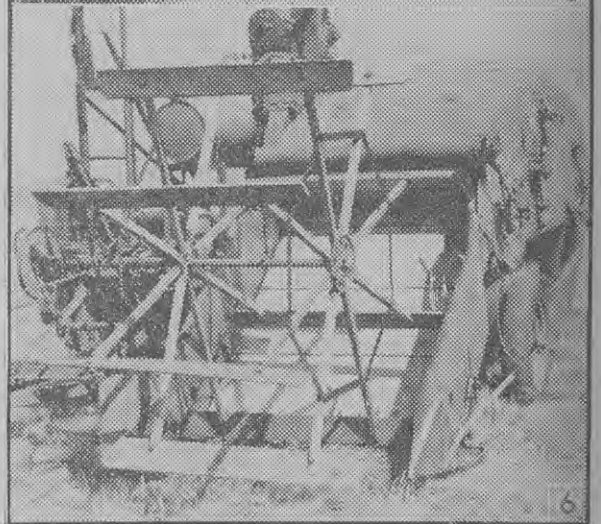
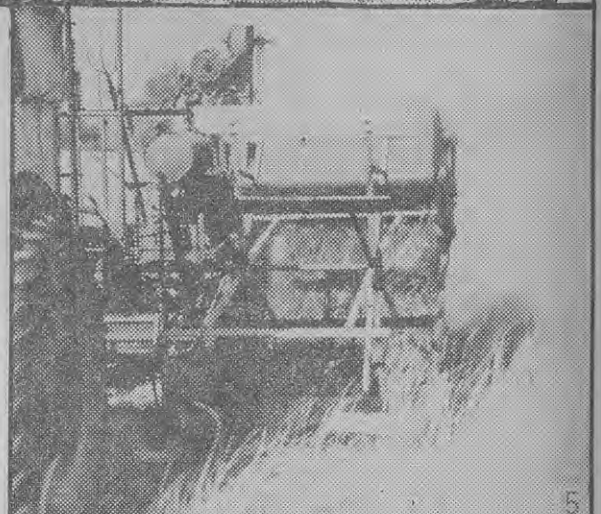


harvesting there was still a little sap in the runners. Although there was a fair proportion of grass in the paddock, that did not materially affect the harvesting operation, as it would have had a hayrake, for instance, been used.

Subterranean clover is difficult to thresh, and it has been found advisable to put most crops through the thresher twice to get all the seed out. Nor can the seed be hit too hard, as it is then liable to crack. These difficulties must be overcome if direct heading is to be a success. With this method it is not practicable to put any of the crop through the machine twice, so some modification of the header is necessary. An extra concave made up of clover-huller rasps was used to rub out the seed. At first the rasps proved a little too severe, and between 10 and 15 per cent. of the seed was badly cracked. Though the sample was clean, it was losing both quality and value. It was thought that the trouble lay in the new rasps, and that when they were worn slightly the result would be more satisfactory. That proved correct. After the machine had had about a season's wear it threshed subterranean clover cleanly and without excessive damage to the seed.

The crop harvested in that instance was of the Tallarook variety, which does not force its seed into the ground quite as firmly as the more common Mt. Barker strain. It was thought that though the method was satisfactory with Tallarook, it might not be feasible with the deeper-seeding strain. However, a neighbouring farmer, Mr. W. Paynter, refuted that theory, as he gathered a satisfactory harvest of Mt. Barker seed by direct heading.

However, it is apparent that a good growth of clover is necessary before the header can be used. There must be sufficient foliage and runners to allow the lifters to get a grip on the crop. Direct heading would be impracticable in a very short crop, but where there is enough top growth it offers a relatively simple and effective means of harvesting a seed crop which hitherto has been very difficult to handle.



4. An advantage of direct heading is that very little seed is left.
5. Another view of the direct heading process. The grass in the paddock proved no deterrent.
6. The machine ready for cutting.