carried out. A true fallow permits the thorough working out of such weeds as browntop and fog, both of which tend to thicken up in the sward and suppress the fescue. A run-out fescue paddock is usually ploughed in May with a swamp plough with undercut coulters; undercutting permits the furrow to be turned over quite flat. The land should then be fallowed and have sufficient working during summer to bring couch to the surface. Ridged turnips may follow as a cleaning crop, and grain the next season.

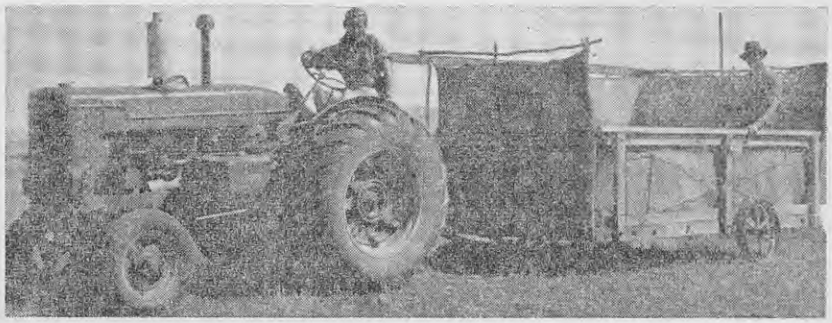
If the paddock is clean, the fescue seed may then be sown. This should not be attempted if the paddock is still dirty, but a further cleaning crop should be sown or the land fallowed again. Fescue may be sown with or without a cover crop, but usually lamb-fattening feed such as rape or rape and turnips is used.

The seed is usually sown in November. It may be drilled in or broadcast; seeding rates are about 14lb. of machine-dressed seed an acre for drilling and 18lb. to 20lb. an acre for sowing broadcast. If drilled in, the seed is sown through every coulter; it is advisable to use old coulters to avoid burying the seed too deeply.

Management

Usually fescue is not regarded as a good pasture grass, but if it is kept short, sheep graze it quite readily. On quite a number of farms the fescue paddocks are grazed and seeded in alternate seasons. Usually this method is used on land of rather high fertility, where it is found that the grazing animals tend to control weed growth and the aggressiveness of other grasses, both of which are most undesirable in a fescue seed-producing area. By this method the fescue stand is maintained for a longer period before any renovation is necessary.

The lower-fertility areas, where the fescue blocks are usually more extensive, may be grazed or not according to the vigour of grass or weed growth, but it is advisable to run a few sheep in a fescue block to control the seeding of catsear (*Hypochaeris radicata*). The sheep keep the heads of this objectionable weed nipped off and prevent its seeding. One sheep to 3 or 4 acres is usually sufficient, and to avoid damage to the crop they are taken out about a week before the flower goes off the fescue. Ryegrass in a fescue stand is mainly controlled in the same manner. The chief objection to catsear and ryegrass is the difficulty of separating their seeds from those of chewings fescue because of their similarity in size.



The type of sheaf trolley used for carting in fescue. The built-up sides protect the fescue from wind, reducing losses caused by shedding.

Topdressing

Results from topdressing are sufficiently controversial to prevent a definite recommendation being made. Some very profitable returns have been produced by an application of sulphate of ammonia or ammoniated superphosphate, and there have also been very disappointing results; much depends on the weather after the application, as there must be sufficient moisture to ensure benefit from the fertiliser.

It would seem that best results are obtained if the application is made in early spring.

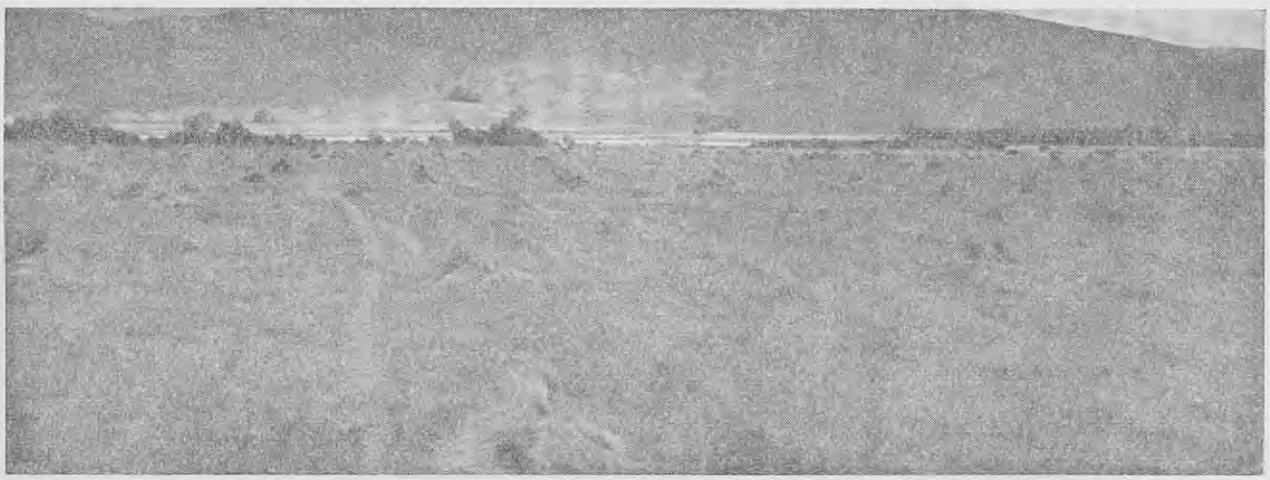
Harvesting

The harvesting of fescue requires skill, judgment, and experience, as the seed is very easily shaken. One of the disadvantages of the fescue country is that strong westerly gales during harvest time make the saving of the crop somewhat hazardous.

In an average season cutting is done in December, and the work must begin as soon as there is any evidence of the developed seed falling when touched. To secure a good sample it is necessary to permit the seed to be as ripe as possible before cutting it; the need for skill and judgment is obvious, and speed is essential.

Binder Cutting and Heading

Fescue is usually cut with the binder; direct heading, though it has been done, is not common. For direct heading, the crop has to be left until



Fescue in stook on Five Rivers Plain, Southland.