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## ON THE PROPER TIME FOR CUTTING GRAIN AND HAY.

As the season for hay-making will have arrived by the time this number reaches most of our subscribers, and that of the grain harvest will follow in quick succession, we think a few observations on the *proper time for cutting*, will be deemed neither unimportant nor unseasonable.

It may now be stated as a well ascertained fact, that farmers in general do not commence the operation of cutting either grass or grain sufficiently early to secure the maximum of quality with quantity. In a climate like ours, which admits of only a short season for the growth and maturity of crops, this is a matter of much economical importance. By commencing cutting a week or so earlier than is commonly practised, not only is that time saved, and the harvest season thereby lengthened—an object which the practical man can appreciate,—but as we shall proceed to shew, the quality of the grain is superior and the quantity larger.

Mr. John Hannam of North Deighton, Yorkshire, was the first, we believe, to submit this subject to the test of careful and varied experiment. We have not space to enter into details, as they are given in the Scottish Journal of Agriculture for 1841-2, but it will be sufficient for our present purpose simply to state the results. We may observe, however, that subsequent observations both in Europe and America have very powerfully strengthened Mr. Hannam's conclusions.

Of wheat reaped at various times, the following were the advantages and disadvantages derived:—

No. 1.—reaped *quite green* on 12th August, and stacked 26th August, gave a return of £11 17 0 per acre.

No. 2.—reaped *green* on 19th August, and stacked 31st August, gave a return of £13 6 0 per acre.

No. 3.—reaped *raw* on the 26th Aug., and stacked 5th Sept., gave a return of £14 18 0 per acre.

No. 4.—reaped *not quite so raw* on 30th August, and stacked 9th September, gave a return of £14 17 4 per acre.

No. 5.—reaped *ripe* on 9th Sept., and stacked 16th Sept., gave a return of £13 11 8 per acre.

Hence a loss of £1 14 8 per acre upon No. 1 as comp'd with No. 5  
 " " " 0 5 8 " " " No. 2 " " " No. 5  
 " " gain " 1 6 4 " " " No. 3 " " " No. 5  
 " " " " 1 5 8 " " " No. 4 " " " No. 5  
 " " " " 3 1 0 " " " No. 3 " " " No. 1

Hence, also, wheat reaped a fortnight\* before it is ripe gives an advantage on every point, namely:—

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| In weight of gross produce of . . . . .       | 13½ per cent. |
| " " " equal measures, nearly . . . . .        | " " "         |
| " " " equal number of grains, nearly 2½ " " " | " " "         |
| " " " quality and value, above . . . . .      | 3¼ " " "      |
| " " " weight of straw, above . . . . .        | 5 " " "       |

On the other hand, wheat, reaped a *month* before it is ripe, gives an advantage of 22 per cent. in weight of straw compared with the ripe, but suffers disadvantages in every other point, particularly in the weight of the grain. From 3 equal patches of the same field of wheat upon a thin limestone soil, cut respectively 20 days before the crop was fully ripe, 10 days before ripeness, and when fully ripe, Mr. Hannam ascertained the produce to be in *grain* as follows:—

|                 |                 |             |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 20 days before. | 10 days before. | fully ripe. |
| 166 lbs.        | 220 lbs.        | 209 lbs.    |

Professor Johnston found upon analysis that the per-centage of flour, sharps, and bran, yielded by each, and of water and gluten in the flour, was as follows:—

| When cut.                   | In the grain per cent. |         |       | In the flour per ct. |         |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|---------|-------|----------------------|---------|
|                             | Flour.                 | Sharps. | Bran. | Water.               | Gluten. |
| 20 days before it was ripe. | 74.7                   | 7.2     | 17.5  | 15.7                 | 9.3     |
| 10 days before.             | 79.1                   | 5.5     | 13.2  | 15.5                 | 9.9     |
| Fully ripe.                 | 72.2                   | 11.0    | 16.0  | 15.9                 | 9.6     |

\* In so far as these experiments go, therefore, it appears that when cut a fortnight before it is ripe, the entire produce of grain is greater, the yield of flour is larger, and of bran considerably less, while the proportion of gluten contained in the flour appears also to be in favour of that which was reaped before the corn was fully ripe."

Independent of the increased weight and quality of grain by early cutting, and the extension of time which such a practice gives to the period of harvest, there are other circumstances deserving considera-

\* This period it should be observed applies to England, where the harvest is much slower in ripening than in Canada. The time must be considerably abridged to suit the climate of this country.