

tary of the Department of agriculture, who will forward to them, gratuitously, for the use of their members, certain pamphlets on agriculture, and all the information on that subject that the department is able to afford them.

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Pres. Council of Agriculture.

#### DE OMNIBUS REBUS.

August 5th, 1892.

According to all accounts, the harvest of this year is going to turn out a very large amount of food for man and beast. The hay-drop is, I hear, a wonderful one, the rain of the spring having caused both top and bottom grass to grow profusely, and the fine weather since July 12th must have lessened the cost of getting it in considerably. There have always been nice little breezes accompanying the hot sun of the 'haysel,' so that the usual burning up of the hay could not have taken place this season where ordinary care was taken to ted and cook it. Nine-tenths of the inferior hay brought to market in our towns has been spoiled by letting it lie exposed to the burning rays of the sun until it was raked up into win-rows and carried. Hay made like this will not make cows give much milk. Timothy is not milk hay at its best, and when allowed, as it usually is, to stand till the seed is formed and then mown and carried, without being even once turned, it is as 'flockless' a food as dried leaves.

A writer on agriculture in the *Montreal Witness*, whose communication will be found below, very sensitively observes that "hay should be cured, not dried. If it can be made in the shade, its quality will be better than if subjected to the fierce rays of the sun." We all know—at least our wives know—that when, in the fall, the pot-herbs, such as majoram, mint, &c., are gathered for the winter's consumption, they have to be dried, just as hay is dried. Now, if any one will try, this next October, the difference in flavour between two lots of herbs, one dried in the sun and the other in a shady place, they will soon see the effect the exposure of the former has had upon its savour.

The writer in the *Witness* recommends the use of *hay-caps* as a protection against the torrid rays of the sun as well as against rain, and I have no doubt that they are very useful for both purposes; but I have never used them, so I cannot say anything pro or con. In England, where I made every year some 40 or 50 acres of hay, about one-third of which was clover and ryegrass, the rest "upland meadow-hay," I never saw caps used for either kind of grass. We always tried to make the hay, by frequent turning, create its own shade, and as a general rule, that is, at least four times out of five, we, in the S. E. of England, were not much troubled by wet hay-harvests. Our process of hay-making by constantly moving it—at least four times a day—and cocking it every night, could hardly be carried out here, as our farmers have been too long accustomed to the old plan and many of them think the English way too expensive in hand-labour. Still, I think, an approximation to our process might be introduced here, without being over costly, and, in the neighbourhood of our great towns it would certainly pay, as, in Montreal for instance, there are many old countrymen among the buyers who know what good hay is, and are always ready to give a good price for a superior article. My plan would be something like this, —premiising that the grass is just in bloom—very green, in fact:

Begin to mow about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, letting the grass lie untouched all night. The following morning, as soon as the dew is off, let the *todder* to work, and let it go over the ground at least twice before noon and once during the afternoon. Towards 4 o'clock, horse-rake into large win-

rows, and get it into *moderate sized* cocks, taking care to rake all over the ground and clean up thoroughly round the cocks. In the morning if fine, open out the cocks into large, wide beds, and let the *todder* go over them as often as you can afford time. In the evening, *before the dew falls*, get the hay into win-rows and *large* cocks, which may be opened as soon as the weather looks suitable in the morning and carried to the barn or stack.

Thus, the grass mown on Monday afternoon, if all goes well, will be fit for the barn on Wednesday evening. With us, in England, it would not be fit to carry before Thursday, but our meadow grass is far more succulent than the timothy of this country.

And, do you ask, how does this constant moving about of the hay afford shade? The answer is; by constant moving, new surfaces are supplied that shade those parts previously exposed to the sun.

Clover is, of course, made in a different way. It should be stirred as seldom and as gently as possible. Mr. Gale, of Sherbrooke, as you will have seen by his letter in a late number of the *Journal*, is now determined to cut his clover in its early bloom—very green, in fact. I am *sure* he is right, for the greener it is cut, the less chance there is of knocking the leaves off, and although stems and heads are what compasses the principal contents of the clover brought into Montreal for sale, the leaves are what are desired by all good judges. It would pay any farmer to give a look at Mr. James Drummond's barns full of clover, on which he places such dependence for his milk-cows' support during winter. (1)

Clover should be mown in the early morning; raked into narrow win-rows before 1 P. M.; turned over lightly without the least shaking, once by 4 o'clock, and got into smallish cocks before the dew falls. The next morning, turn over the cocks very lightly, and, if the hay is at all "clung," turn once more, and then get it into large cocks to cure there until ready for carrying. All the turning required should be given in the early stages of clover-making, as the leaf then adheres more closely to the stems.

Where clover is mown with the scythe, I should wait till the upper surface of the swathes is fairly wilted, and then turn them over quickly with a long light pole, or with the handle of a rake. When the new surface becomes wilted, the clover can be put at once into large cocks to cure as before. For this reason I like mowing heavy crops of clover with the scythe; there is less moving required, and the leaf, in consequence is better preserved.

The second crop of clover should always go into the silo. It is much more difficult to make than the first crop, and the weather, when it is fit to cut, is generally very catching.

HAY-CAPS.—G. C., Mossboro, Ont.—Q—This has been a catching season for hay, and as I have lost some by excess of wet, I am seriously thinking of getting some hay-caps. What is your opinion of them? Also, what is the best way of making them, their cost, &c. Ans.—I think they are not only valuable to protect hay from rain, but worth all their cost in improving the quality of the hay by protecting it from the scorching rays of the sun. Hay should be cured, not dried. If it can be made in the shade, its quality will be better than if subjected to the fierce rays of the sun. As a protection against rain, they are a good investment. They are made of cotton sheeting, two yards square, with pins attached at the four corners with strong twine. A hundred, properly made, will cost about \$40. They will last many years, if taken care of, and are just as useful for sheltering grain as for protecting hay. Any farmer who wishes to raise

(1) Mr. Fisher, Knowlton, said, at the Dairymen's Mountmagny meeting. For hay, I always cut my clover very green.