

THE CANADA FARMER



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NEW SERIES.

The Field.

Haymaking.

What is the use of saying anything upon this trite and well-worn subject? we think many will ask; but the truth is, it is a matter of fact that farmers generally understand comparatively little about it yet. But few of them have yet got so far as to study the science of their profession, and until that is thoroughly understood, they will continue to go astray in matters of practice.

Now, there is as much difference in the times of maturity of the several varieties of grasses as there is in varieties of grain.

The object of making grass into hay ought to be, to cut and save it at such times, and in such a manner as will ensure the saving and retention of all the nutritious qualities it contains, at the time when they are most fully developed. Clover should be cut when in full bloom, and cured without an undue exposure to the heat of the sun. To make a really good article of clover hay, nice, sweet and green, it should be cut at the right time, when the plant is full of saccharine juices, and those juices retained in the hay by curing it in a proper manner, which is best attained by shaking out the grass after cutting, so as to give it a drying without putting it through a process of evaporating its rich juices by long exposure to solar heat. To save clover hay in first-rate condition a slight amount of fermentation is necessary, and this is best obtained by putting it up in small cocks at first, then in larger ones, and thus gradually curing it in the shade. When it has been cured in this manner it will not be liable to a second fermentation in the mow or stack, especially if it is salted when stored, or lime in a small quantity scattered among it when it is put away under cover.

Timothy, which is about the only other grass that is largely saved for hay here, is at its greatest perfection to be cut and saved

for hay when the first joint above the root has turned yellow and become hard. If left to ripen its seed, as is too often the case, the juices become turned into woody fibre, and although in that state it will perhaps yield a heavier crop of hay, the hay is of considerably less nutritious value to feed stock than if it had been cut earlier, when the grass was full of saccharine juices. In this respect, however, the fault in a measure lies with the city or town consumers of hay, who, knowing nothing about the chemistry of nutritive values, continue to pay the highest price for that article of timothy hay which contains the most stiff stalks and ripened seeds. When the prejudice existing against early cut hay has become dissipated, through a better understanding on the part of the general public of its nutritive value, as compared with late cut woody fibre, we may expect to see a change for the better in the *modus operandi* of haymaking, and in the mean time let the farmer save the early cut well cured hay for his own use, and sell the other to city consumers.

Hay Tedders.

Have any of our readers ever seen one of these implements at work? They are a new thing as yet here, although it is some time, we believe, since they were introduced in Great Britain, where they have proved of great use both in saving labour, and making hay of a better quality in a shorter time. We do not know of any of these implements having been manufactured here, and to judge by the appearances of the hay fields at this date, (May 28th), few farmers will have a crop on the ground heavy enough to require the use of any machine to spread it out to dry. No doubt these implements are really excellent, but before we can afford to buy, and use these expensive labour-saving machines, we must make the land produce crops of hay that are worth expending the labour on. An English tenant farmer, who generally cuts from two to four tons of meadow hay, and four to six tons of clover per acre, would

laugh to see a hay tedder playing at hay making on our half seeded lightly covered grass fields, averaging at best one and a half to two tons of hay per acre. On most of our hay fields, the ordinary mowing machine leaves the grass scattered so thinly, that under our hot July sun it gets dry enough to rake what is cut in the morning into windrows and put into cocks the afternoon of the same day. Let us have hay tedders by all means, if we can afford to use them, but give us first heavy crops of hay to use them on to advantage.

Gang Ploughs.

These useful and labour-saving implements are coming very much into fashion in the Western States, and we noticed in the *California Farmer* that they are very generally used in that country, where great crops of wheat are raised, and labour, both of men and horses, is scarce and expensive. They do the work of several ploughs at once, requiring generally three horses abreast to perform fair work. They will not of course do good work on any soils that are in grass or that are inclined to be tenacious, but on the rich volcanic soils of California, or on the western prairies after they have once had the top crust made friable, they are just the thing needed, and we think they might be more used here, especially in preparing summer fallows, and for breaking up stubbles preparatory to sowing a stolen crop, i. e. a crop of late corn, turnips, rye, or anything intended to answer as fall feed for stock, or to be turned in as a green crop in the autumn. They might well be used to give the last dressing to the soil before sowing fall wheat, or even to cover it in, when it can be sown tolerably early. They are not costly, and can be regulated to cover in seed almost as well as a drill machine, and are much less expensive. If those who manufacture them would advertise in our columns in good time, many more farmers would use them than are now doing.