

at once, if lodged badly, and made into hay. Its food value is then at a maximum. If allowed to remain until the grain ripens, the heads will not be filled, and the straw will be worthless. If grass seeds have been sown, these will have been smothered by the lodged straw, and the labor of handling will certainly be increased if the grain is to be threshed. A greater food value would certainly be obtained by turning the crop into hay as soon as it falls down, and in many instances after the crop had been removed thus early another crop could be grown the same season.

There will also be less hazard when the crop is cut somewhat short of maturity. Even when crops do not fall down they sometimes rust. Sometimes they blight, and some are liable to mildew. If a crop threatened with rust were cut before the rust had made much progress, it would have a greater feeding value than if cut at any subsequent period. Grain badly smitten with rust is practically valueless, for both grain and straw are, in a great measure, lost. Sometimes a crop promises well till within a few days of ripening. Hot, dry winds sweep over the ground and sap the moisture out of it, and both straw and grain are injured exceedingly. Cutting at an earlier stage would have saved the crop, or very largely so, from injury from the source named. And when mildew first appears in earnest in a crop, as, for instance, in a crop of peas, it has then a greater feeding value than it will ever have again.

And the saving in labor is very great by feeding the crop without threshing it. Threshing not only requires much labor, but it is costly. If the straw is to be consumed, it will need, in many instances, to be run through a cutting box, whereas if cut at a stage not quite mature much of it would be eaten without being thus handled. If the grain is threshed, and then fed to live stock, much of it would have to be ground, whereas if fed in the straw the live stock would grind it quite effectively for themselves. All this saves labor and expense, and it is labor and expense that is certainly oftentimes needless.

Of course, the idea of thus cutting and feeding grain could certainly be carried too far. We must have matured grain, and we should have lots of it. But would it not be well to give more attention to watching our opportunities? When grain promises an abundant yield, we may allow it to ripen; and when it is likely to suffer, we should try to be equal to the occasion by cutting it with all promptness.

### Winter Barley and Winter Oats.

It does not seem prudent for the Ontario farmer to invest any money in winter barley or in winter oats in the present state of our knowledge. Many years ago the claims of winter oats were pressed upon the farmers in some localities of the province. They were tried, and in every instance proved a failure. Ever and anon some farmer meets with the claims of winter oats and also winter barley, and in the natural hope of getting something good he sends for seed. But thus far the results have been much the same wherever these crops have been tried.

The experiment stations at Ottawa and Guelph are the places really where such grains should be tested. And they are being tested at those stations, as is manifest from the reports made concerning them. Seed has been imported from Europe, the Southern States, and the Western States, and tried on the station grounds, and little or no success has hitherto resulted from the work.

Of course, we are not to conclude that winter barley and winter oats will never be grown in this country. Such a conclusion would not be justifiable. Far from it. Experimentation should go on. There is no saying what may not yet arise from such experimentation.

Other varieties may be introduced, more hardy than the sorts hitherto tried, and acclimatization may yet be made to work wonders with these crops. The young farmer of to-day may yet live long enough to see great revolutions brought about in the introduction and adaptation of crops other than those that we now have, but, in the meantime, the farmer should fight shy of winter oats and winter barley. Those who will persist in handling them will probably find that their fingers will be burned more or less.

### The Best Time to Market Hogs.

MR. JOHN STAPLETON, 11 Fenwick avenue, Toronto: I have seven sows to pig soon, and I feed them on refuse from city houses. The expense of gathering this is about \$14 a month, and I can get enough of it to feed all the young pigs to 150 pounds live weight. What is the best way to sell them, dead or alive? Is there profit in keeping pigs?

ANS.—Sell them on foot when they weigh alive from 160 to 200 pounds. Yes, a profit can be made in handling pigs; but, at present prices, it requires skill and judgment to do so.