

Rent, rates, and taxes would be the same in both cases. Farmyard manure would scarcely be needed for either crop so grown. No cost is allowed for getting up, carting, or storing the roots, because they may be supposed to be eaten upon the land by sheep. The results might be similarly compared as follows :—

VALUE OF THE SWEDE CROP	£ s. d.	VALUE OF THE OAT CROP	£ s. d.
18 tons of swedes at a consuming value of 7s. 6d per ton.....	6 15 0	50 bushels of oats at 2s. and 1½ tons of oat straw at 10s. a ton, feeding value.....	5 13 6

Further, we maintain that the land as left by the swedes eaten off would be ready to grow ten sacks of good wheat per acre, whereas the land as left by the oats would not be in a condition to grow more than six sacks of wheat to the acre. We do not object to these figures being recast by any fair critic, but we think he would find it difficult to reverse our result or to show that a corn crop is more profitable than a root crop.

TIME FOR CUTTING GRAIN-CROPS.

As soon as wheat is well filled it is time to cut. There is no advantage in allowing the crop to stand till it is goose-necked, and the straw is so brittle that it will scarcely make bands. While the straw is still slightly green and supple, and when the corn is as soft as fresh curd, it should be cut. (1) The ripening will proceed in the shock and the grain will harden and fill from the straw. Early cutting is in all respects better than waiting for the corn to become dead ripe. A better sample is secured and work is expedited. All the advantages are, in fact, upon the side of early cutting, and there are no drawbacks unless, indeed, our advice is carried beyond reason. We could not, as many have done, recommend cutting wheat "green." Such advice is misleading, but what we say is out before all the green has disappeared, and while the grain is still soft and pasty.

BARLEY.

If intended for malting, barley should be allowed to become thoroughly, or dead ripe. (2) If, however, through an unfortunate season or for any other reason, there is no chance of securing a malting sample, or a better price than for feeding, we think the same advice might be followed as is given above for oats, and that such barley might as well be cut before it is fully ripe. This season much barley is laid and twisted. It is often now on the ground, and green blades are rising up among the ripening barley, soon to develop those green ears which spoil the samples and make the field green a second time. What can be the advantage of letting such crops stand longer? Of course everyone must judge for himself, for such a condition of things may only be partial over a field. Where general, we are disposed to think that the best plan will be to secure the crops as it is for feeding purposes as soon as possible, and not to wait for a condition of ripeness which is only valuable to maltsters.

In late districts the question will not arise for some time, but in the earlier districts it is not too soon to take into consideration the best way to deal with badly laid crops of barley, which are evidently going back, and in many cases acting

(1) In 1853, I had a bet that I would sell the first lot of wheat on the London market of Mark Lane. I won my bet, and the sample fetched the highest price of the day, (August 7th). The wheat was cut when so green that the men said it was unfit to reap: but it was n't!

A. R. J. F.

(2) Otherwise the grain will not grow equally from the couch.

A. R. J. F.

injuriously upon young clover. Long before they are ripe this clover will have grown through the corn, while in other parts of the same field it will be by that time killed by the barley.

THE SEASON.

As the season rolls on and unfolds its story it does not improve much. What we want is that intense and uncomfortable heat to which we gladly submit for the good of the country. Where are the hot days and nights to which we can look back in past years? As yet winter clothing has not been unbearable, and certainly the light and airy costume of flannel shirt and trousers has been a little comfortable and chilly. We want no thermometer to tell us that the summer heat is below par. We look longingly at the empty fire-grates, and envy the warmth of the kitchen fire. There is no temptation to throw windows open night and day to get a breath of air, and with this chilly or at least cool air there is a continuation of damp which is anything but agreeable. In the face of such difficulties, how can we expect a full corn crop?

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SPARROWS.

Will some of your readers give their experience as to the effect of these birds on their farms. My crops of corn are simply frightful through the ravages of these pests, and I am completely beaten to know to prevent the loss, for, if shot at in one field, they merely fly away to another. They have already devoured and destroyed many quarters of good ripening corn. Is it true that Miss Ormerod has stated her belief that "these birds are of no value whatever, that they do not feed upon or destroy insects, &c."? If so, they should be regarded and treated as rats and mice. As the law stands farmers cannot poison them in the same way as they would these vermin. What then is to be the remedy? Cannot farmers approach Mr. Chaplin as to getting the law altered? In my district their number increases year by year.

Highfield, Newark.

W. O. QUIRELL.

SELECTING RAMS.

Reference to our advertising columns will show that ram sales are at present a principal topic of interest, and a few remarks on ram buying may not be thought out of place.

BENEFIT OF CHANGE OF BLOOD.

It is true that there are flocks which have been bred for long periods without importing new blood, either in the form of rams or of ewes, but such a system can only be depended upon in cases of superior excellence which in these days it is difficult, if not impossible, to attain. In the olden days a breeder might stick exclusively to his own flock, or be very chary of buying; but now exclusive dealing is not desirable even in one's own flock, and some reciprocity is demanded. The breeder, whose name never appears as a buyer at the sales of his brethren, can hardly expect to see a genial and fast-bidding company assemble around his own ring. The time for an egotistic belief in our own superiority has gone by, and it is scarcely reasonable to suppose that a sheep may not be found worthy of mating with some of the ewes even of the best possible flock. We decry "touting" of any kind. To buy merely to secure buyers, is not consistent with the highest standard of breeding, for the intrinsic merits of a sheep should be the true measure of his value. And yet we must not probe too deeply into motives, and certainly a breeder who stands aloof is not likely to succeed so well as one who turns up and shows sympathy in his neighbours' interests. This is, of course, only an indirect advantage of