

Since my great sale in October last, I concluded not to breed Durhams on my farm for sale, as I made that announcement in my advertisement, if the cattle sold at prices satisfactory. Mr. S. P. Chapman, of Madison Co., N.Y., had previously purchased his stock from me, and desired to purchase four animals at the sale, but they went so high he did not purchase them. He is a good breeder, and on his return home I offered to import for him, or for his use, four Durham heifers from Mr. Bell, the tenant and friend of the late Mr. Bates, who had his stock from Mr. Bates. He desired me to do so, and these four heifers, in calf by some of the late Mr. Bates' bulls, are now on their passage in the ship "Mary Carson," bound to Philadelphia; and as I wanted a few nice cattle on my farm, I ordered two Devon heifers and one bull of that breed—these latter accompany the four Durhams. The Devon heifers are from the celebrated herd of Lord Leicester. Mr. Bell writes me, under date of 15th June, that there is a great demand for Short-horns in England, and that it is computed that about £12,000 sterling worth will cross the Atlantic this season for America. I mention these facts that you may, if it should be of sufficient interest to your agriculturists, glean something from them.

Very respectfully yours, &c.,
GEO. VAIL.

WHEN SHOULD GRAIN BE CUT?

A most important question, just at this time, for the Northern farmer. Careful observation, and some little experience during twenty years' residence in a great wheat-growing country, has convinced the writer that it is fully ten per cent. profit on the crop to the farmer, to cut his wheat before the grain is fully ripe. Our rule is to commence cutting as soon as the earliest part of the crop has passed from the milky into the dough state. There is no occasion to let it lie to cure, when cut while the straw is still partially green. Bind it up as fast as cut, and set the bundles in stooks, "Dutch fashion,"—that is, two and two leaning together, in dozens, or twenties, or any given number, so as to give an even count. Set in this way, the most unripe grain will cure and perfect itself.

The advantages,—the grain is heavier, sweeter and whiter; there is less loss of shattered grain; the straw, where that is an object, is so much better feed as to make it worth while to cut early, even if there were a loss on the grain, which is not the case.

For seed, the best portion of the field should be set apart and left to mature until fully ripe, and then carefully cut by hand, and very carefully handled, because the very grains which should be saved for seed, are the ones most easily shattered. Give these bundles a slight thrashing, and give the grain a thorough winnowing; screen out all but the most plump kernels, and sow those for your next crop, and you will succeed in improving both quality and product.

This question of "when should grain be cut," has been agitated for many years, both in this country and Europe, and no doubt many a reader will exclaim, "what is the use of writing any-

"thing more than that—don't everybody know 'all about it'?" No, sir. You know, perhaps, or what is the same thing to you, you think you do, and won't learn any more, but somebody else will. You forget, or else, in your self-conceited folly, you don't think, that about ten per cent. of all the farmers who ever make any advance in the science of farming, are not to the manor born; do not possess a sort of intuitive knowledge how to do just, "as father did," and never do or think of, doing anything else.

The question has been for some time agitated regarding the state of ripeness in which grain should be reaped; and it has been recommended, as a general rule of practice, to cut down the crop before the uppermost grain can be shaken out. Taking all things into consideration, it seems to be the most prudent plan to have the grain cut before it is fully ripe; but in this a medium course should be adopted; for, although grain, if allowed to become too ripe, assumes a dull, husky hue in the sample, yet, if not ripened enough, it shrivels in the drying.

Cadet de Vaux asserts that "Grain reaped eight days before the usual time, has the berries larger, fuller and finer, and better calculated to resist the attacks of the weevil. An equal quantity of the corn thus reaped, with corn reaped at maturity, gave more bread and of a better quality. The proper time for reaping, is that when the grain, on being pressed between the fingers, has a dough appearance, like a crumb of bread just hot from the oven."

Mr Howard, in the report, on Select Farms says:—"Wheat ought never to be allowed to remain uncut until it is fully ripe. Experiments, easily made, will prove to every cultivator of it, that by permitting it to stand until the straw has lost its succulency, he gains nothing in plumpness or bulk of grain, but loses much in its color and fineness of skin; besides which, he incurs the risk of shelling, by the high wind, or by its being cut under the influence of a burning sun."

"When fully ripened by standing in the shocks no dry hour should be lost in getting it well secured."

London observes, that "in harvesting Wheat, the best farmers, both in England and on the continent, agree that it ought to be cut before it becomes dead ripe. When this is the case, the loss is considerable, both in the field and in the stack-yard; and the grain, according to Von Thaeer, produces an inferior flour."

An experienced Pennsylvania farmer of our acquaintance always cuts his oats while the straw is green. This he learned to do, contrary to all old practices of his father and all his neighbors, by accident. His hay crop was short one year, and he determined to cut his oats green; that is, five or six days too soon, as he thought, losing the grain for the sake of the straw. For seed he left a strip through the middle of the field, where the oats were best. The grain of those cut was just in the dough and milling state, and he expected they would all shrivel up. What was his surprise when he came to thrash to find the early cut straw yielding as much and as plump grain as that which stood till it was dead ripe, while the straw was incomparably better—in fact, the stock ate it as rapidly as they would timothy hay.