

Manitobans, were added to our train, and it was found necessary to cut us into two sections, in which manner we ran to Winnipeg without mishap, reaching that city at eight p.m. on Thursday evening, two thousand one hundred and eighty miles from our starting point. At Winnipeg everything possible is done for the comfort of the newly-arrived colonists—a fine large building, kept beautifully clean by one of the most trustworthy Scotchmen, is open for the free use of arrivals, excellent baths are placed at their disposal, and a general air of "Welcome to Manitoba" pervades the place. In our case we were permitted to occupy the cars given us and the lads were well and economically fed at the Salvation Army Shelter, which is doing a great work in the Province of Manitoba.

We are now in the land of plenty, and although it was dark and none of our party saw the great storehouses, as we passed through Fort William we ran alongside of elevators stored with magnificent hard wheat to the volume of between four and five million bushels. Leaving Winnipeg on Saturday, 18th, by the Manitoba and North-Western Railway, we duly reached Russell and finally the Manitoba Farm, two thousand four hundred and two miles from the dock of the huge steamer at Halifax, and here received a right royal and hearty welcome from the lads of last year who are now looking forward to going out into the world on their own account. This little itinerary of our trip illustrates and brings clearly before us the extent of our great country, for at Russell we are but little past the centre of the continent and nearly the same time would be required if we desired to dip our hands into the waters of the grand old Pacific, to reach her coast, as was consumed in reaching the present scene of our labours from the shores of the sister ocean.

G. Ward

NOW AND THEN, OR FARMING MADE EASY.

Written for UPS AND DOWNS by George Ward.

NOW, of course, may mean this minute; *then* may mean half an hour ago, or less, or it may mean what the Quaker meant when he hired a boy to do odd jobs. "*Fack of all trades*," as we say in England; when in Canada we use the strange word "*Chores*."

Among the Quaker's "*chores*" was the item of helping to milk the cows, and when this item in the account was reached it nearly upset the coach, as *then* it was deemed womanish work; and but few young men tall enough to reach fourteen or fifteen years of age, can endure the thought of doing anything considered girlish or womanish. The boy in question, however, was prudent, so before closing the bargain, though he wanted the place, he asked whether he would always have to milk; or only now and then? "Now and then" was the satisfactory reply;

In due time Jack was installed in office, and all went on well at first. But when every morning and evening, week in week out, he had, like the merry Swiss-boy in the song, to

"Take his pail and away to his milking, away," he was disgusted at having been "taken in," and charged Mr. Broadbrim with a breach of faith.

"When you engaged me," said he, "you told me I should only have to milk *now* and *then*."

"Did I tell thee so?" "You did."

"How often hast thou to milk?"

"Every morning and night ever since I came."

"Then," said the Quaker, "thou hast only to milk now and then; *now* in the morning, *then* at night." My now and then will not be of the same cunning class as this, but of a more distinctive character.

Then ploughs consisted of tails, beams, jigs, etc., strong, heavy, clumsy things. To regulate the depth of the furrow to make even work, there were holes in the beam at regular distances. By this means a chain, about two feet long, was fixed to the iron top of the jig, with a bolt at the end; the beam was raised or lowered, and with it the *share* to meet the case. The jigs ran upon two wheels; one of larger diameter to run in the furrow to keep even balance. Ploughs had single and double tails, the latter for heavy land. A good ploughman preferred one tailed ploughs. Some of the tails would stick out straight as a "yard of pump water," while others were nicely carried and easier to handle. The shares, cutter and breastplate were much the same then as now. With his long whip—specially made to reach and tickle up the "lag-gards"—over his shoulder, no king swaying a sceptre over his subjects ever felt half so happy or so completely a monarch as I have known the English Ploughman, nor had subjects so ready to obey him. His cheery "Haw-gee-wo-o-op;" his lively whistle, or plaintive song at the plough then in dear old merry England and bonny Scotland—cannot be surpassed by anything heard now, here, there, nor any where else on the face of God's beautiful earth.

Then harrows and rollers, like the ploughs, were as unlike the present as the song of the lark is unlike the "to-wit-te-wo-o-o-ing" of a barn owl. The harrows were generally of strong, heavy wood, with iron bracings, with thick iron prongs or "tines;" the rollers were of oak and, like the harrows, of varying weights to suit soil, etc.

Now we have steam—it may be electric—ploughs and improved harrows and rollers, such as my grandfather never dreamed of.

Then the sowing and seeding was done in a very primitive manner, in most cases sowing broadcast; so far as wheat was concerned this had been supplemented before I can remember by "dibbling." But this, though considered superior to sowing broadcast, both on the score of economy in seed, and superior yield on threshing, was much more costly; and many farmers could not or would not afford it. The "dibbles" consisted of an iron shank. The top like the "cot" or handle of wood like a spade; the bottom, or dibbles proper, was solid iron, egg-shaped; with these the holes were made into which the wheat was dropped. The labour was divided between the dibblers, mostly men, using two dibbles each, and the "droppers," women, boys and girls; each dibbler employing two droppers. Altogether these made very picturesque groups.

Now we have the drill, or seeder, which, long ago, supplanted the "dibble," though not the sowing broadcast. I am just old enough to remember the early history of this and some other machinery introduced into my native county of Norfolk, England, which caused the first and only riot I ever knew in connection with farming in that County, or indeed in England. The riot was soon quelled, and the leader, a large but mischief-making farmer, was sent to jail for six months, and three other notoriety hunters for shorter periods. Drills went ahead from then till now, improved and still improving in Old England as well as in her fairest daughter land—Canada.

From seed-time to harvest may seem a long bound, but for my purpose it is quite natural.

Then we had sickle or reaping hook for wheat, and the scythe for barley and oats; but when I was a very little boy the scythe began to be used for wheat as well, only in a short time to give was to what was considered the wonder of wonders—the reaping machine, when everybody said, "There, dash my buttons if that aint as far as ever they—the inventors—can go!" But one sage old farmer replied, "I don't know what to say. I think the minventors are up to anything, and nobody knows what they can and will do?" And he was right.

Now—that is, soon after we get the first somewhat rough and ready reapers—we have the "combine" machine for hay as well as all sorts of grain. Need I say improvements upon old or inventions of new machinery did not stop here? The old drag-rake was a clumsy device drawn by a strong strap over a man's shoulder. This has given way to the horse dragrakes.

Thrashing naturally follows harvest.

Then the grain used to be trodden out by oxen. "Thou should not muzzle the mouth of the ox which treadeth out the corn," is a Divine command. I have myself seen unshod colts used for the same, but when I was a boy the flail was the universal thrashing implement. This consisted of two parts. The shaft about 3½ feet long, and "swingel" one-half length of shaft, the latter having a swivel at the top and the swingel a strong leather cup through which the coupling—supple leather thongs—eelskins preferred, but not always to be got. The shaft was generally of ash, the swingel of white thorn, because it is very heavy, smoothed and rubbed with sand-paper. Thrashers were divided into wheat-barnmen and barley and oat-barnmen; the wheat-barnman having precedence of all the other men, and was always called "My lord" as leader in the harvest field.

The size of the farm regulated the number of thrashers, as it did of horses. The flails were solos, duets, trios or quartettes, as the case might be. The two first were easy enough as soon as the thrasher had learned to swing his swingel round so as not to thrash his head instead of the grain, as I well remember doing mine with a little flail, my dear father made for my amusement when I was of the venerable age of five years. The trios and quartettes required a good deal of practice to acquire the necessary skill to enable the flails to play on the same sheaf without coming in contact, which might have been as dangerous as an Irishman's well knotted blackthorn at Donnybrook fair. Having become skillful the blows fell on the sheaves with the regularity of clock ticks, if not as musically as a quartette on the village bells.

The next step forward was a thrashing machine on the model of the "tread mill" for the punishment of criminals. The fact that it was made after such pattern made it unpopular. Men who were honest, or wished the world to think so, would not work on the tread-mill as they called the machines. I recollect watching the men the first time my father used one of them, and wondering why it was the men appeared always to be going upwards yet never got any higher.

Now we have the horse-thresher much on the same principle as the originals which followed the tread-mill pattern. These have been supplemented—almost superseded—in England by the steam-thresher, which at the same time not only threshed out, but winnowed the grain, filled the sacks, and conveyed the straw to the stack.

Comparing—in many things, contrasting—*then* and *now*, if we find, in some instances, the charm of simple rusticity, the picturesqueness of the groups of men, horses and ploughs, with the merry songs and whistles of the men, the gangs of equally lively and still more numerous dibblers and droppers; and far exceeding these in interest and picturesqueness, the gangs of harvest-men with sickle or scythe, reaping or mowing down the corn, with the still larger gangs of merry-hearted, laughter-loving gleaners,—I say, if we miss all these rustic charms and more, I think I am justified in saying the sentimental loss—the loss to the eye and the ear, however much to be regretted—is, from the practical point of view, more than balanced by modern inventions and improvements by which, so far as man's part is concerned, farming has been made comparatively easy.