

LAST OF THE LINGERING BROWN OCTOBER



Crows wheeling and Wild Geese honking southward, the meditative farmer crawls over the landscape, fall ploughing now for wheat next year.

THE VISTA AUTUMNAL

By S. RUPERT BROADFOOT.

IN a cedar hedge
By the forest's edge
The Spirit of Autumn dwells,
And the weird note, long
Of her coronach song
O'er plain and hill-crest swells.

The wood-folks know
Its cadence low,
And silence hushes all;
For Nature grieves
When the falling leaves
Presage her own death-call.

See the slant rays gleam
On the sullen stream,
With fleets of dead leaves freighted,
And the slightest breeze
Robs the skeleton trees
Of the beech-nut crop belated.

The Chinook blows
On the serried rows
Of the rusty, rustling corn;
And a mystic haze
Thro' the warm air plays
On the fields of their harvest shorn.

To the eye's last sight
In the soft half-light
The tilled land stretches away,
Like a checker-board,
Upon it poured
The red sun's misty rays.

Thro' shade and shine
Old Nineteen-Nine
Has come to its witching mood,
And, its Autumn style
Has the fruitful smile
Of maturer womanhood.



As the fall of the year swings along into late October, the Turkeys get out further from the farm-yard, picking the wheat-heads dropped in July by the Binder.



In Thanksgiving time the cattle linger longer at the barn in the morning; waiting for the pumpkin-feed before winding out to the well-nibbled clover field.



In October the flax-fields turn brown for the old-style reapers, and in some little town a few miles away stands a cordage-mill, the flax-grower's market.



Sheep are not so common in Canadian fields as they used to be. In days of old down in Quebec the authorities used to hang men for stealing sheep.



And as long as snow hangs off in the fall, the threshers stay at the last big job of the year. The hum of the threshing-machine is part of the melancholy but joyful music of the Canadian out-of-doors.