

Westward

happier woman in the North than myself, I have never heard of her. I quite agree with you; our pouter-pigeon serves the public far more effectually than do the cabinetees, or even the bishops.

We are yet in the wheat belt and the wheat is at flood-tide. When I see a large stand of grain that is breast-high I say, "Well done, Good Fellows!" and, "Haste to the in-gathering!" The field hears my salutation to the sowers and bows a million heads to me. And it says, *shibboleth!* (If you would pick up the talk of the fields you must be still and listen.)

The Hebrews, with ears a-tilt, caught this whisper, and so their word for an ear of wheat was "*shibboleth*." It was this word the Ephraimites lisped and so betrayed themselves to Jephthah. The difference was only one of an aspirate. What they said was "*sibboleth*."

Now, while one can tell the sound of ripe wheat, no word is exactly descriptive of the odour thereof. When I am not tired my pen almost catches it. The odour is an intangible something between dryness and colour, and the sign that expresses it can only be revealed.

It is the mental habit of people to think of wheat as only so many bushels of inert matter that is bought and sold on margins by half-mad men,

