

After a lapse of a few years, when the stumps became somewhat decayed and so more easy of removal, a "bee" would be made, when, to their credit be it recorded, all the neighbors for miles around would cheerfully gather with their ox-teams and again prove the truth of the old saying, "many hands make light work," and so accomplish what would otherwise be well nigh impossible, and add several acres of well cleared land to the farm.

Earliest Farming Implements.

Mowing machines, harvesters, and horserakes had not then been invented; but had they been in existence they would have been as useless as a smokestack upon a wheelbarrow, as the land was too rough to permit of their use, and the people for the most part were too poor to buy them. All hay and grain was cut with the scythe and sickle—a large part of the grain and the timothy grass for hayseed with the latter implement.

No threshing machines were then in existence and many weary days were spent wielding the hand flail to thresh the grain and hay seed.

Fanning mills of a crude type were coming into use, but only those in better circumstances could afford to buy them. The old hand fan, which many of the present day never saw, was then in common use—although even then some made use of the still more ancient method of a gale of wind for winnowing their grain.

Any farmer possessed of a modicum of mechanical genius could make a hand fan, but when this was beyond his ability he could get one made for him by a more ingenious neighbor in exchange for labor, some product of the farm, or other compensation.

It was made of thin hard wood, semicircular in shape and from five to six feet across the straight part, or what would be the diameter of the circle. Around the periphery was a rim some ten or twelve inches high provided with two handles much like handles on a basket, and which were located at convenient distances apart. Into this was put as much of the threshed grain and chaff as could be conveniently handled and an up