

## THE RAVING OF DUMB-BELL.

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary,

Over many a monstrous volume full of agricultural lore ;  
While I sat there vainly grumbling, suddenly there came a  
rumbling

As of something rolling, tumbling, thundering past my  
chamber door.

" 'Tis some lunatic," I muttered, " firing dumb-bells past  
my door—

Only this and nothing more !"

Once more I resumed my labor, when some vile mysterious  
neighbor,

Started out that furious dumb-bell on its mission as be-  
fore ;

And the dumb-bell fiercely tearing, thumping, bumping,  
onward bearing,

Neither wood nor plaster sparing— madly ranged the hall  
once more,

While a laugh of fiendish import echoed from a distant  
door,

Nameless here forever more.

Suddenly a footstep stealthy, warned transgressors 'twas  
not healthy

At that hour to pass beyond the threshold of their cham-  
ber door ;

And a voice of stern commanding, of each one was heard  
demanding,

Whether his sleepy understanding could account for all  
this roar,

And requesting that the dumb-bell be forthwith delivered  
o'er.

Quoth the dumb-bell, " Nevermore."

And the dumb-bell still is hiding, in some obscure spot  
abiding,

And no more its thunder echoes as it did in days of yore ;  
While the veil which hides the dumb-bell—that iniquitous  
old dumb-bell,

That obscure uproarious dumb-bell, that intolerable bore  
That used to mar our slumbers as along the hall it tore,  
Shall be lifted nevermore.

H. ASH.



*Hallet—*

" We greatly marvel how you still go free."

*Servant Girl—*

" A weary lot is thine, fair maid,  
A weary lot is thine."

*Fmlday—*

" My camp resounds with fearful shocks of war,  
Yet in my heart more dangerous conflicts are."

*Creaty—*

" Sweet bird that shunn'st the noise of folly,  
Most musical, most melancholy!"

*Kennedy, P. B.—*

" Who gave consent to steal away my heart  
And set my breast, his lodging, on a fire?"

*Dean—*

" I love thee ! I love thee !  
'Tis all that I can say,—"

*Bobby's puns—*

" A good that never satisfies the mind."

*Lehmann (in House of Commons)—*

" Nature's sweet restorer—Balmy sleep."



Sprigs and shoots from my moustache. Will grow in any  
place, however unpromising the soil may be. Stock al-  
most exhausted.—NEWMAN.

## FARMING IN MUSKOKA.



MUSKOKA, though looked upon and spoken of  
by so many outsiders, especially foreigners,  
with so much awe and curiosity, and thought  
to be a vast, howling wilderness, inhabited  
almost solely by wolves and other ravenous  
animals, and unfit for human habitation other than Indians  
and Esquimaux, is nevertheless fairly well settled by  
human beings who think and act like most other white  
men ; and whose chief occupation is the tillage of the soil ;  
though lumbering has been and is yet a very important  
branch of industry.

The country being of a rocky and lilly configuration  
farms are more or less broken and scattered, so that  
farmers cannot always work their soil to the best  
advantage. The land is not stony, as so many seem to  
think it is, but the rock is in the form of solid hills and  
ridges, and sometimes one may travel over many miles and  
not find an acre of good arable land. The soil is for the  
most part light, but varies from a light sandy and gravelly  
soil to a stiff clay ; and taken as a whole there seems to be  
a deficiency of limestone.

The climate is rather more severe than in the south-  
western part of the province ; the winter being somewhat  
longer, and there is generally a heavier fall of snow ; but  
the summer is warm and often inclined to be excessively  
dry in July and August, though last season was a very wet  
one.

Farms are as a rule small, consisting of a hundred acres  
in all, of which there are on the average probably not more  
than twenty acres under cultivation, the rest being bush-  
land. As the country is comparatively new yet, and the  
fields for the most part rough and stumpy, complicated  
machinery is not much used ; but mowing machines and  
reapers are rapidly finding their way into the country.

The chief crop grown is hay, which is generally abundant  
on the heavier soils, and of excellent quality. The most  
important grain crop is oats ; but peas, barley, and spring  
wheat are also grown, though to a less extent. Fall wheat,  
it seems, cannot be successfully raised. Roots and pota-  
toes are not extensively grown, though the latter is gener-  
ally an excellent crop. For most of the above crops there  
is generally a fair demand and comparatively good prices,  
more especially for hay and oats, of which large quantities  
are used by the lumbermen. Of growing and curing green  
fodder crops very little is known, and in all Muskoka there  
is but one silo that we know of ; but the owner of it is  
extremely well satisfied with the results obtained. If early  
maturing varieties are planted and well cared for, fodder  
corn can be grown to good advantage, and it is the opinion  
that within a few years silos will be more numerous, and  
the feeding of stock will receive more attention.

Of pure-bred stock we find but little ; a small number of  
Durham bulls, and one or two Jerseys and Holsteins, but  
few, if any, pure-bred cows. The cattle are, for the most  
part, scrubs which scarcely pay for their feed. Sheep and  
swine are mostly of mixed breeding, and horses are plenti-  
ful, but also of very mixed breeding.

In the past, and even at the present time, the majority  
of the so-called farmers of Muskoka spend a large portion,  
if not the greater part of their time, in the lumber-woods ;  
looking upon the farm as a sort of summer residence, as  
they go to the woods early in the autumn and only return  
in the spring, when work in the bush ceases, to do a litt'e  
plowing and hurry in a bit of crop, which they scarcely  
wait to harvest properly before they again go to the bush.  
Thus it may easily be seen that farms are sadly neglected,  
and cannot be expected to yield any profit. But as the  
lumber trade is fast becoming exhausted, and people will,  
sooner or later, have to depend on the farm for a livelihood,  
matters will necessarily have to assume a different aspect.  
The soil must receive better cultivation, farms will become  
larger, stock will be increased, pure-breds will be intro-  
duced, and the feeding and handling of cattle for beef and