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The Poetry of the Farm.

SPRING.

Green grow the grasses and the buds out-swell,
The bashful trilliums hide near brush-heaps damp,
Hepaticas exude their woodsey smell
And snowy bloodroots in fence-corners camp,
And in the sod field o'er the fences near
The splendid horses at the trace-chains draw.
At every headland strong and full and clear
You hear the plow boy calling: "Whoa, back, haw!"

The cows go slouching thro' the meadows low,
The lambs are frisking on the sunlit hill,
The cranes are fishing where the streams overflow,
And every robin's building with a will.
Behind the plow there stalks a stately crow,
He circles round the team with fearless "caw."
That dinner's ready all the blackbirds know
As soon as ere they hear the, "Whoa, back, haw!"

The brood mare dozes in the noonday sun,
The foal doth frolic up and down the lane,
The clover knoweth springtime hath begun,
The winter wheat grows green and thick again.
A thrush is piping in a basswood tree,
No music-master taught him do, sol, fa,
And far away across the echoing lea
You hear the plow boy singing, "Whoa, back, haw!"

The lilacs splendor all the big front yard,
The scented currants 'gainst the fences swoon,
And tulips bright beglitter all the sward,
A splendid sight 'neath either noon or moon.
Inside the homestead where the women are—
Housecleaning over—there's no speck or flaw,
And standing on the stoop they hear afar
Their cheery brother chanting, "Whoa, back, haw!"

SUMMER.

The mower twitters in the meadow wide,
It challenged thrushes at the rise of day,
And o'er the hills and fields there floats a tide
Of incense—fragrant breath of new-mown hay.
The rippling, swaying, winter wheat is golden,
Awaits no more the "cradle" whetted keen,
The turkey wing and muley quaint and olden
Have given place to yon most strange machine.

At morn and eve the separator hums,
Then spouts the cream—a golden sight to see,—
And clanging up the lane the milkman comes,
To bear the treasure to the creamery;
And in the afternoon a maiden goes
Lightly and swift adown the clover way,
To bear a pie and cooling drinks to those
Who in the shadeless meadows make the hay.

AUTUMN.

At daylight you can hear the thrilling shriek,
The engine's warning: "We will thresh to-day!"
To help their neighbor, men their pitchforks seek,
And o'er the fields for short-cut take their way.
With scented steam the kitchen is a-mirk,
The floor resounds with busy women's feet,
The housewives know the Canuck fears not work,
They also know he doth not fear to eat.

Like bright green patches on a cabin quilt
The winter wheat and mangels gleam and glow,
And where the big potato-pit is built
The hired man is digging row on row.
The golden corn is shocked in line on line,
Facing each other o'er the wide expanse;
Short-waisted are they in their crinoline,
Like old-time ladies in a country dance.

Our friend is back again—the crow doth know
Fall plowing aye unearths the toothsome worm—
Fat, black and happy, all his heart aglow,
He feels he's part and parcel of the firm.
The furrows fall, the stubble disappears,
The tireless horses at the trace-chains draw,
And o'er the sounding swamp the blackbird hears
The "supper's-ready" signal, "Whoa, back, haw!"

WINTER.

The Winter Time!—the best of all the year;
East, west, north, south, let all men know
That while we thank our God for summer dear
We offer up Thanksgiving for His snow!
And every farmer should be glad to tell,
And I am proud to put it into rhyme,
For he and I and all of us know well
The greatest of His gifts is Winter Time!

The basement barn is cosy, sweet and warm;
Safe are the cattle from all draft and gloom;
Safe are the cattle from all frost and harm,
As comfy ladies in their drawing-room.
For food old bossy hath not far to roam,
The silo furnishes her breakfast prime;
She'll tell you winter in her happy home
Is better than the good old summer time.

The grateful fields in summer fill the barn;
The barn in winter 'riches all the fields;
When frost-time comes the cattle he doth warn
To come to him, where his big shelter shields.
Throned in the barn the farmer, winter long,
His friends, four-footed, round him he doth bring,
And 'mid them he is helpful, wise and strong,
He serves, yet rules; companion kind, yet king.

The house, the home in Winter time how sweet,
How full of warmth and weal no wealth can buy;
The pantries full of toothsome things to eat,
Behold the precious Pudding and the Pie!
Dumplings and doughnuts, biscuits, buns and bread,
Wait on yourself, stretch forth your hand and take;
Who than the farmer more grandly fed?
Bacon, potatoes, apple sauce and cake.

Blankets and feather beds and quilts of down;
Snug hit-and-miss rag carpets on the floors;
Who cares for January's frosty frown,
Or for the whirl of snowstorm out of doors?
Breakfast ere morning light, while roosters crow,
Butter your buckwheat cakes, ply knife and fork,
Then cheerily across the crisping snow
To barn or wood-lot each one seeks his work.

And when the blinds are drawn thro' evenings long,
Within the book-full sitting-room, alight,
We hear the anthem and the lilting song,
The ringing chorus or the chanson bright.
Thro' fields of music stroll they far and wide,
Until the evening is too early sped;
"Abide with me, fast falls the eventide,"
And then the happy people go to bed!

L' ENVOI.

Once on a time the farmer heard the sneer
Of "Mossback," "Hayseed," "Reuben," "Whiskers,"
"Jay,"

The foolish insult weakens year by year,
It scarcely fits the farmer of to-day.
The roads of corduroy, the stumpy fields
Are gone; the house and barn of logs are prone;
The city to the farmer honor yields,
And he triumphant comes into his own!

An hundred thousand homes—and homes indeed—
Pillars of peace and plenty every one;
There shall the saviors of our nation breed,
To bless our country till Old Time is run;
And every road shall be a boulevard,
Lined with fair villas, in sweet parks enshrined,
With flowers and fountains glimmering in the sward;
Could hearts a fairer picture seek or find?

Back to the soil, ye wastrels, hasten back!
I lift my voice the crowded town to warn.
He is the gentleman who owns the stock,
The wheat field, wood-lot, milk house and the barn!
For he who tills the land shall rule it—so
The world all honor to him must accord;
His noble worth the jealous town shall know,
King of the Acres, Sultan, Chief and Lord!
"The Wigwam," Rushdale Farm. THE KHAN.