

HARVEST TIME ON THE FARM

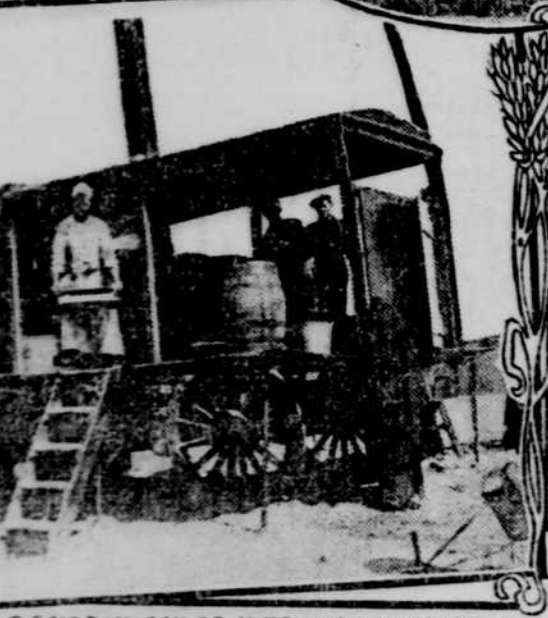


CONVEYING THE SACKED GRAIN TO THE CARS OR ELEVATOR

The most vivid recollections of every man and woman brought up on a farm must be of the golden harvest time. Even the persons whose farm experience has been limited to protracted visits to the country are likely to retain mental pictures of the gathering of the grain as the most lasting impressions of such intervals—provided, of course, they remained in the rural domain long enough to witness all phases of the harvest-time activity and long enough to contrast the rush and bustle of this busy period with the more placid existence of their normal lives "down on the farm."

The average city dweller whose early years were spent on a farm looks back to nothing so fondly as the picturesque annual drama of the bringing in of the sheaves. And the city dweller—country-bred or not—finds in the fascination of this phase of farm operations his longing to "pitch hay" when he is away from the agricultural region for his vacation. That is, he is enthusiastic about pitching hay until he finds it. Perhaps he would not deem it quite so much fun if he had to do it for a livelihood and if he could not quit his job whenever he happened to get tired.

So, too, the farmer boy, transformed into a city dweller who looks back so fondly at the good old harvest times on the old homestead, is very probably, after the fashion of the moment, remembering the pleasant things only and



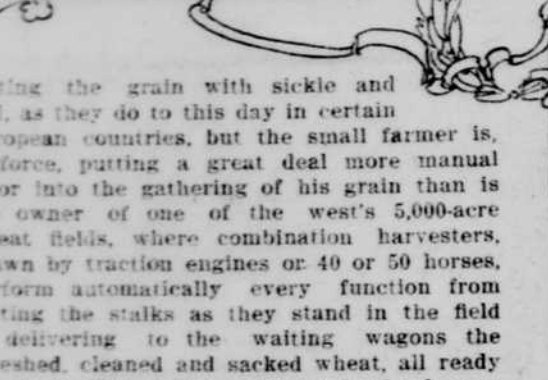
MODERN RANGE WAGON OR KITCHEN ON WHEELS



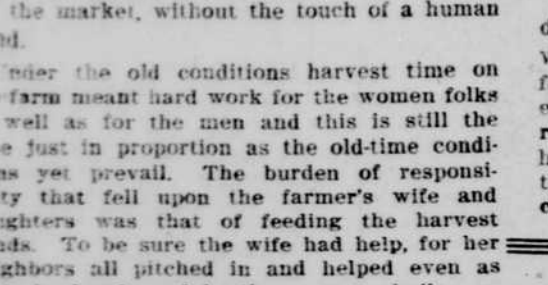
HARVEST SCENE IN THE WHEAT EMPIRE



HARVEST TIME ON A LARGE FARM



APPROVED TYPE OF STEAM HARVESTING OUTFIT



STEAM COOKER

forgetting the disadvantages of the harvest season. It has quite escaped his memory, most likely, how he was routed out of bed at daylight or earlier when there was harrowing to be done and how he turned in with the chickens and dogs like a log from sheer exhaustion. He has lost all recollection of the morning, shared by every member of the family, just before the harrowing was finished, and he passes lightly over the reminiscences of those weary hours under a scorching sun with no protection save a board-brimmed straw hat, his lanky neck filled with leaves to help break the force of old Sol's shafts.

Harvest time on the farm, past and present, suits the climate of the year in hard work and in worry—in short, in nerve and muscular strain generally. Of course, it still is understood that dependence is made on the season of the grain harvest. To be sure, there are what might be termed harvest seasons at intervals all through the season, from the time the stockmen start to the spring, only the farmer never thinks of designing the harvesting of these crops by the means of harvesters. In the eyes of the city dweller, the harvest time means the quietest part of the year, the time when the farmer is particularly at home, when he is away in barns and elevators, or spending his time in the city, or at the city mill, or at the city wharf which will carry it overseas to supply the bread-eaters of Europe and the Orient.

In the old days practically every farm in the land had its harvest time and it held the secret of the profits of the whole year's work on the farm. That this is true no longer is due simply to that tendency to specialization which has invaded the farmer's occupation as it has every other field. Nowadays we have chicken farms and truck farms and fruit farms and other kinds of farms, where attention is so concentrated upon the one product in hand that the proprietors do not raise enough grain for the needs of their own stock. On such special farms the once universal "harvest time" is unknown. It is to be made up for them by the vast farms in the west and on the Pacific slope, where wheat is the product specialized and in consequence we see on these big farms harvesting operations which in magnitude and picturesque features so far overshadow the corresponding operations on the old-fashioned farm out of the Mississippi that there is little to be compared.

One odd thing about harvesting is that almost all methods are yet in vogue in one section or another of the country. The explanation is found, of course, in the fact that the different sections of the country are so far removed that the corresponding operations on the old-fashioned farm out of the Mississippi that there is little to be compared.

vealing the grain with sickle and flail, as they do to this day in certain European countries, but the small farmer is, however, putting a great deal more manual labor into the gathering of his grain than is the owner of one of the west's 5,000-acre wheat fields, where combination harvesters, drawn by traction engines or 40 or 50 horses, perform automatically every function from cutting the stalks as they stand in the field to delivering to the waiting wagons the threshed, cleaned and sacked wheat, all ready for the market, without the touch of a human hand.

Under the old conditions harvest time on the farm meant hard work for the women folks as well as for the men and this is still the case just in proportion as the old-time conditions yet prevail. The burden of responsibility that fell upon the farmer's wife and daughters was that of feeding the harvest hands. To be sure the wife had help, for her neighbors all pitched in and helped even as their husbands and brothers, on a similar cooperative basis, were assisting the farmer in getting in his grain—a service that would be repaid in kind as the turn of each came in the round of harvesting activities that embraced the whole countryside. Under this plan, when harvest time meant a continual succession of neighborhood gatherings, there were compensations of the farmers' wives in the opportunities for gossiping gatherings that went the time-honored sewing circles one better, whereas the farmer's girls might behold romances grow under their eyes as the lads, fresh from the harvest fields, had most convincing evidence as to the progress in cookery of the local bachelors.

As a development of this system, that was scarcely an improvement from the feminine standpoint, came the plan of harvesting by means of hired hands—possibly through the medium of a "crew" that accompanied a portable steam harvester that made its rounds from farm to farm. Under this plan, which is yet the approved one in most sections, the farmer's wife and daughters have to get up three meals a day for a dozen or a score of husky harvest hands and yet they are not so sure of assistance from the other women of the neighborhood as was the case when these latter had no similar duties at home through the presence of the men folk at the common harvesting rendezvous. Worse yet, the young ladies have scarcely the interest that was manifested when the volunteer harvesters to be served were the eligibles of the neighborhood instead of, as now, nomadic laborers or, at best, college boys working for funds to put them through school.

Latterly there has been some relief from that phase of the harvesting system which has meant so much hard work for the fair sex. It has come through the introduction of cook wagons or kitchens on wheels which accompany the big threshing outfits from farm to farm and serve food to the harvest hands right at the scene of their work—thereby saving, by the way, the time that was formerly spent in

going to and from the farm house. This latter was a considerable item if the farm house was located several miles from the harvest field in which the men happened to be working at noon. These kitchen cars have been in use to some extent for several years past, but great improvements have been made in them of late. There are now provided for the use of the big traveling harvesting crews "range wagons," with several of the largest size kitchen ranges mounted on a truck, and more won-

derful yet is the "steam cooker," which looks very much like a fire engine, but which performs marvels in quick cooking. Why, in the early morning, for instance, coffee will be ready for all the members of the largest harvesting force within twelve minutes of the time the fires are lighted. This plan of cooking for the harvesting crews has virtually

WHEN THE SHAH TRAVELED

Each time the shah of Persia went to Europe, where he spent large sums, he procured the money needed for his journey not only by raising a loan, generally in Russia, but also by another method, which was both ingenious and businesslike.

"Before leaving his possessions," writes M. Paoli in McClure's, "he summoned his chief officers of state—ministers, provincial governors and the like—and proposed the following bargain to them: Those who wished to form part of his suite must first pay him a sum of money, which he fixed in accordance with the importance of their functions; it varied between 50,000 and 300,000 francs. In return, he authorized them to recoup themselves in any way they pleased."

"Here we find the explanation of the large number of persons who accompanied the shah on his travels, and the quaint and unexpected titles they bore, such as that of 'minister of the dock yard' (though Persia has never owned a navy), and one still more extraordinary, that of 'attorney to the heir apparent.'"

"Although they sometimes had romantic souls, they invariably had terribly practical minds. Eager to recover their outlay as quickly as possible, they practiced on a huge scale and without scruple or hesitation what I may describe as the bonus or commission system. This explained how on each of his trips to France the shah was able to spend from eight to twelve million francs in pocket money.

"He always carried a loaded pistol in his trousers pocket, though he never used it. On one of his journeys in France he even took it into his head to make a high court official walk before him when he left the theater carrying a revolver pointed at the peaceable sightseers who had gathered to see him come out. As soon as I saw this I ran up to the threatening bodyguard.

"Put that revolver away," I said. "It is not the custom here."

ing the light of the moon, if the latter be available. Drought and other causes may impede the western farmer to work his harvest crews double time in order to hurry in the harvest, but as a rule the grain grower in these favored sections of the country is not constantly menaced by thunder storms such as have, from time out of mind, caused anxiety in every eastern farming community until the precious grain is safely in the barn. The assurance of adequate help in harvest time is one of the big problems of almost every farmer east or west who raises much grain. The improved harvesting machines that cut down the

number of men required for the task have helped some, of course, but it requires a certain number of men to operate the machines and in times of prosperity when labor is scarce the farmer often finds that heavy inroads have been made in his season's profits by the fancy prices he has had to pay for the hired hands to handle the crop.

HER ONLY WEAKNESS

By M. DIBBELL

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"What I particularly admire about Isabelle Ivan is her perfect poise," remarked Allen Linthrop to Bert Harland, his special crony. "In all the months of our acquaintance I have never seen any exhibition of nerves. And I have been with her when a mouse, a cow, a snake and a heavy thunderstorm appeared on the scene—not all at once, of course, but upon four separate occasions. She was not in the least ruffled by one of them, but retained her usual calm."

His friend was becoming accustomed to these eulogies of the young woman mentioned, and answered good-humoredly:

"In fact you begin to think that at last you have found the perfect woman, and I suppose the next step is to discover if she will not change her final initial from I to L."

"It would be the best step I ever took in my life if I could win her consent to that change," declared Allen with decision.

When duty forced Bert to leave him, Allen started out for the Ivan home, and lost all sense of time in pondering over the perfection of the fearless Isabelle. So deep was he in this pleasant musing that it only gradually dawned upon him the usual quiet at that hour had become a pandemonium. Mingled human and canine howls and growls indicated a lively dog fight in progress nearby.

The aroused dreamer rushed around the corner of the high hedge just behind him, and beheld at a short distance two well-matched bull terriers in fierce combat. A very small boy held the end of one dog's leash,

give him an account of the dog fight, ending by saying triumphantly, "So you see, Bert, here is another bugaboo disposed of—nearly all women are afraid of bull dogs."

"It certainly looks as if Miss Ivan were the exception to the general rule of womankind," acknowledged Bert. "But how are you to play the role of protecting strength, if there is nothing from which to protect her?"

"I know she was glad of my help this afternoon," answered Allen. "But she did not have to go into hysterics to show it, and that is an unusual characteristic."

The following afternoon Allen stopped his handsome pair of bays at Isabelle's gate, and the couple were soon speeding on their way to the great Rose farm. The horses were fresh, and before the ten miles to their destination were covered Allen had another proof of his companion's fearlessness.

The railway cut through a deep gully at one point of their route, and as they neared the track a shrill "Toot! Toot!" sounded from an approaching train. The whistle startled the young horses, and together they bolted down the hill. Allen tried his best to check them, but failed; and they flew across the track at such close range that the engine almost grazed the rear wheels.

Gradually Allen regained control of his team, and at the first possible instant he turned to Isabelle. Her lips were firmly set, but she had not made a sound, nor was there any look of terror on her face. She met his gaze and smiled.

"You should be proud to own a pair of horses that can outrun a railroad train," she observed quietly.

Allen answered, "I am far prouder to be honored with the friendship of such a brave woman." He spoke so feelingly that Isabelle hastened to change the subject.

"Oh see! The roses are coming in sight on that next slope," she informed Allen with delight; and the mass of color was well worth their entire attention.

On reaching the farm the young people alighted and wandered through the beautiful place. Field after field, full of the most perfect roses, met their admiring eyes, and the assistant who went with them plucked for Isabelle a rose from each bush she thought particularly lovely, until his arms were filled.

As they turned back Isabelle said, "I should like to keep on gathering roses forever—this is my ideal of happiness."

Part of the roses were tucked under the seat of the light buggy, and the rest Isabelle insisted on carrying herself. "They are so beautiful I simply must look at them," she said as the obliging assistant handed her the bunch.

They started homeward with every indication of harmony. The bays evidently felt that they were now on their good behavior, and went with a smooth, even pace.

They had just passed over the railroad track and were ascending the hill down which the team had bolted when a cry of terror broke from Isabelle, and the bunch of roses she had been holding so tenderly, were scattered broadcast on the roadside.

"What has happened?" asked Allen in real alarm, and utterly at a loss to account for the look of horror on Isabelle's pale face.

"A big black spider!" she exclaimed. "It was coming right at me over the roses!"

Allen proved himself a real man; for he did not laugh, but said soothingly:

"A spider would not hurt you, child, and he is surely gone now with the roses."

Almost as swiftly as it had come, the fear vanished from Isabelle's eyes, and she walked. "I have always been afraid of spiders, and now you will think I am a coward!" She buried her face in her hands.

The horses were walking slowly up the steep ascent, and Allen dropped the reins to take Isabelle's hands. Gently he drew them away, and disclosed a very woe-begone countenance.

"I am truly glad to find that you have a little weakness, dearest, for I have been fearing you would never listen to such an ordinary person as myself. But that spider has given me courage to tell you I love you with all my heart, Isabelle, and to beg you will give me the right to protect you from the one thing you do dread."

The look of love in his eyes won the victory, for Isabelle answered softly, "If you had laughed, Allen, it would have hurt me more than you can guess. But you were so good, I know you would make an ideal protector."

Wanted a Burglar Alarm

Prospective Renter of an Apartment Desired a Fresh Air Flend for a Neighbor.

"Every renter has his own idea of what constitutes a desirable neighborhood," said the renting agent. "A tenant hung back from signing a lease for six hours the other day because I could not tell him whether anybody in the block was taking the fresh-air cure. He was so insistent that I finally made inquiry and learned from the janitor at No. 225 that a man on the third floor of his building sleeps every night with his head stuck out of the window, and then the tenant signed the lease."

"His precaution was due to fear of burglars. He has learned, he says, that the best burglar alarm ever invented is the fresh-air cure. Not even the doctors who advise it know so well as the second-story men how many people sleep with their heads out of the window. They know because the habit interferes with their business. Whole blocks that used to be profitable hunting grounds for burglars are now so much waste space because two or three persons in the block go to bed with the upper half of the body protruding beyond the window sill. Outdoor sleepers may sleep comfortably, but they sleep lightly. The second-story man cannot make a noise half a block away without waking them and giving the alarm."

Puccini Was Well Gulled

How the Famous Composer Came to be Gulled in an Arcade near the cathedral in Bologna, Italy, and then I strolled, cigar in hand, in the direction of La Scala. I saw a sign in the window of the restaurant in the street, and I called at La Scala for that matter, and, of course, I couldn't resist the temptation to go to a cafe.

cause I didn't clap and shout that she rebuked me, a frown wrinkling her pretty brow.

"Why don't you applaud this masterpiece?" she said.

"Masterpiece?" said I, and I laughed sarcastically. "Masterpiece? Oh, dear."

"Don't you like this music?" she demanded, in amazement.

"No," said I. "It's the work of an amateur."

"You know nothing of art," she cried, "or you wouldn't talk like that."

"Oh, don't!" said I. And then I proceeded to prove to her, according to the laws of thorough bass and counterpoint, how poor a work La Tosca was. I told her this aria suggested Verdi; that chorus was a reminiscence of Bizet. In a word, I knocked my own music into a cocked hat.

"When I finished, the young lady said:

"Is that your real opinion—your sincere conviction?"

"Absolutely," said I.

"Very well," said she, with an odd

little laugh, and at breakfast the next morning the first thing I saw in my newspaper was the headline "Puccini on Tosca." And there I read, word for word, my remarks of the night before. The young lady, a musical critic, had recognized me. When I thought I was gulling her, she was gulling me."

To say that a man's heart is in the right place is a back-handed compliment. It seems to imply that there may be something the matter with his head.