

# HARVESTER AT WORK

Uncounted Miles of Bountiful Crops Make Glad the Farmers of Western Canada.

YIELD WILL BE RECORD ONE

Practically Beyond Reach of Accident, the Fruit of the Fertile Fields is Being Gathered—Elevators and Railroads Will Be Taxed to Their Capacity.

On a beautiful Saturday afternoon, four weeks ago, the writer started for a twenty-mile drive into the country, from one of the hundred or more new towns that have been well started during the past spring, in the Province of Saskatchewan, in Western Canada. Mile after mile, and mile after mile, was traversed through what was one continuous wheat field, the only relief to the scene being the roadways that led back into other settlements, where would have been repeated the same great vista of wheat.

What a wealth! Here were hundreds and thousands, and millions of bushels of what was declared to be a quality of grain equal to any that has ever been grown in the province. As we drove on and on I thought of those fellows down on the Board of Trade at Chicago, St. Louis, Minneapolis and Duluth. While they were exploiting each other's energies the farmer of Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba was contemplating how much he would realize out of his crop, now past any danger of accident, over what his anticipations were two months ago. One man said to me: "The profits of that field of wheat will give me sufficient money to purchase 320 acres of land, for which the railway company is asking \$6,400, and pay it in cash." Another, with a field of flax—it was only 320 acres—said

splendid country, all one beautiful picture, and such an opportunity to use one's imagination in figuring up the amount of the wealth of the crops through which the trip into town took us, was not to be enjoyed every day. And away we started.

It was delightful. We drove and drove through avenues of wheat, which today, having yellowed with the beneficent sun, is being laid low by the reaper, stacked and threshed by the thousands of hands required to do it, and in great wagons is being taken to the elevator.

A night's ride by train took us through 225 miles of this great province of Saskatchewan—into the southwestern part—and from appearances it might have been as though a transfer had been made across a township. There were wheat fields, oat fields, barley fields and flax fields, and many more that could not be seen. Yet there they were, and during the night we had passed through a country similarly cultivated.

It will all secure a market and get its way to ocean or local mill by means of the great railways whose well-arranged systems are penetrating everywhere into the agricultural parts. Prosperous Alberta.

We afterward went over into Alberta, and here again it was grain and cattle, cattle and grain, comfortable farm homes, splendidly built cities and towns, the best of churches and the most thoroughly equipped schools.

While talking with a Southern Saskatchewan farmer he said that the land he was working, and for which he had been offered \$60 an acre, had been purchased five years ago for \$12 an acre, but he won't sell. He is making a good profit on his land at \$60 an acre, and why should he sell? Farther north, land was selling at from \$16 to \$18 and \$20 an acre. It was learned afterward that the soil was similar to that in the south, the price of which today is \$60 an acre. The climate was similar and the markets as good. In fact the only difference was that today these northern lands occupy the same position that the more southerly ones did five years ago, and there are found many who



Steam Plowing in Western Canada.

he could do the same and still have a balance in the bank. Flax produces wonderfully well, and the current price is about \$2.50 per bushel. We then drove over into another township, getting further back from the railway, and the main traveled road. Here we found ourselves in the center of a Swedish settlement. Those forming the settlement were originally from Nebraska. Invited to put up our horses and buy over for dinner, and a dinner that was enjoyed not only on account of the generous appetite created by the exhilarating drive but also because of the clean lines, the well-prepared dishes of roast fowl, potatoes, cabbage, and a delightful desert, some of the history of the settlement was learned. The host and hostess were modest in describing their own achievements, and equally modest as to those of their friends, but enough was learned to satisfy us that they had come there about three years ago, in moderate, almost poor, circumstances. Most of them had received their homesteads as a gift from the government, and by careful diligence had purchased and paid for adjoining land. They had plenty of cattle and horses, some sheep and hogs, and large well-kept gardens, showing an abundance of potatoes and cabbage and other vegetables. Their buildings were good. Schools were in the neighborhood and there was evidence of comfort everywhere.

On to the Park Country. Reluctant to leave these interesting people, the horses thoroughly rested, were "hooked up" and driven on, under a sun still high in the heavens, with the horses pulling on the bit and traveling at a 12-mile an hour gait over a road that would put to shame many of the macadamized streets we were whirled along in a plucky drive through the woods and then but in the park country.

Here was another scene of beauty, groves of poplar, herds of cattle, fenced fields of wheat and oats and barley, and flax. Here was wealth, and happiness and surely contentment. The crops were magnificent. The settlers, most of them, by the way, from Iowa, had selected this location because of its beauty. Its entire charm was wholesome. Fuel was in abundance, the soil was the best, the shelter for the cattle afforded by the groves gave a splendid supply of food, while hay was easy to get. They liked it. Here was a sturdy farmer, with his three boys. He had formerly been a merchant in an Iowa town, his children had been given a college education and one of the boys was about to marry the accomplished daughter of a neighboring farmer.

Through Land of Wealth. The invitation to remain to supper was accepted, but I had to remain over night was given. It was only a short drive into town, over the best of roads, through such a

say they will come into a price nearer their legitimate value of \$50 or set an acre quite as quickly as the southerly lands. And I believe it.

Throughout all this great country, practically 500 by 800 miles square, there are still a great many homesteads which are given free to actual settlers. Many who have secured patents for their homesteads consider their land worth from \$18 to \$25 per acre.

Immense Crops Assured. Throughout the southern portion of Alberta, a district that suffered more or less last year from drouth, there will be harvested this year one of the best crops of fall wheat, winter wheat, oats, flax and alfalfa that has ever been taken off these highly productive lands.

In Central Alberta, which comprises the district north of Calgary and east two hundred miles, through Camrose, Sedgewick, Castor, Red Deer, Wetaskiwin, Edmonton, Lacombe, Vegreville, Toftield, Vermillion and a score of other localities, where are settled large numbers of Americans, the wheat, oats and flax, three weeks ago, was standing strong and erect, large heads and promising from 30 to 36 bushels of wheat and as high as 100 bushels of oats on carefully tilled fields, while flax would probably yield from 15 to 18 bushels per acre. In these parts the harvesters are busy today garnering this great crop and it will shortly be known whether the great anticipations are to be realized.

Throughout all parts of Saskatchewan, whether north, south, east or west, the same story was heard, and the evidence was seen of the splendid and bountiful crop.

High Yield in Manitoba. In Manitoba it was the same. The fields of grain that were passed through in this province promised to give to the growers a bumper yield, and as high as 35 bushels of wheat and 60 bushels of oats was freely discussed.

It would appear as if the expectation of an average of 25 bushels of wheat throughout the three provinces would be met.

In a few days the 40,000,000-bushel elevator capacity throughout the country will be taxed, the 25,000,000 bushels capacity at Fort William and Port Arthur will be taken up, and the railways and their equipment will be called upon for their best. Today the great, broad, yellow fields are industrial haunts, the self-binder is at work in its giant task of reducing into sheaves the standing grain, the harvesters are busy stocking and stacking, the threshing machines are being fed the sheaves, the large box wagons are taking it to the elevators, and no matter where you go it is the same story and a picture such as can only be seen in the great grain fields of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.



# SCOTCH HEATHER

By MARY WESTCOTT

John Bowditch, botanical-case on shoulder, hurried along the wood path to test his pet experiment. For years he had been filling hidden places in these Maine woods with foreign plants which, left to work out their own salvation for a time, he later revisited with almost fatherly delight. Today he would see how some Scotch heather had weathered a year of New England.

Suddenly with a distant rustling of leaves, a girl came through the trees, following the winding path toward him. John Bowditch, 40 years old, ignorant of women, saw only that the gleam of her crimson dress in the light of the September afternoon was not unpleasing. Stepping aside as if to examine a tall sumac, he was leaving the narrow path to her, when his eyes fell on a bunch of flowers in her hand. He scowled. His near-sighted eyes strained at her. She had not seen him. He must get a better look unobserved. He slipped behind the shelter of the sumac. Now she was only ten steps away—and he could see. It was his heather. She played with the flowered, half-caressing the tiny, pink sprays. There was a dreamy, sentimental look on her face that roused an evil temper in the man of science.

He glared at her as she passed, half-minded to protest, but the right second thought lost, stood looking angrily after her retreating figure, soon hidden by the curve of the path. Turning, he plunged ahead through the tangle of asters and goldenrod, with frequent stumbles over twisted roots. He was too cross to watch his feet. It was science vs. sentiment, and science seemed to have the worst of it. Before him in a clearing lay the heather patch. He stooped over it, smoothing the plants with loving fingers. Broken stems, empty spaces told their story. The roots would live on; for that he was thankful, but for the present this experiment must remain incomplete. Rising with a shrug he tried to turn his mind to the other plant life around; but for once even botany had lost its charm. Science and John Bowditch were out of tune, and he stumped homeward indignant.

Meanwhile Scotch Mistle Cameron rapturously arranged her plunder in a bowl. The very touch of its tiny, prickling leaves made her realize how the days of her visit to her American were flying, and awake in her a sudden, home-hunger. But how came heather into Maine wood to make a Scotch girl homesick? The puzzle of it haunted her. Her neighbors had no knowledge of the plant. One at last suggested that she ask that old botanist, Bowditch, who lived alone on the hill; and impulsively she wrote him a note of eager inquiry.

John Bowditch next day grunted over it and tossed it onto his crowded desk. But each time he glanced up from his microscope he caught sight of its white back. Bother the thing! Impatiently he turned it over.

"She writes a fair hand—but Caesar, what an ending! It too, as a stranger from Scotland's sentimental, sickeningly sentimental! Well, she's got my heather. How the Dickens shall I keep her from my other stuff out there, and from babbling all over town to set people hunting?"

At last he wrote her briefly, asking her to show him the heather in growth. Before the time came, he thought, he might contrive something to tell her. Meanwhile, anti-lipating such boredom, he felt himself truly a martyr to science.

Two days later he kept his appointment with her. He felt oddly out of place in his familiar woods as he followed her awishing skirts along the path. Serenely unconscious of his embarrassed silence, the girl supplied a friendly chatter, until triumphantly she stooped over the disputed patch.

"Is that anything but heather, Mr. Bowditch?"

Conscious of her scrutiny, he pulled scientifically at the leaves. Finally, with an air of congratulation and surprise, he faced her.

"It is Calluna vulgaris, I vow. How unexpectedly plants do turn up! Migrating birds, a hundred different mediums carry them. I'd rather not commit myself to any theory here. Suppose we consider it one of nature's experiments, and wash the result."

He flushed a little under her pleased, unassuming assent. He had a guilty consciousness which he hoped did not show. Yet as he stood looking awkwardly down at the heather in its glow of autumn sunlight, and at the bright girl's face above it, he somehow felt glad to be there. Less shyly he began to speak again of the plants.

"First of all we must keep this now to ourselves," he said decidedly. "The flowers are small and off the beaten track. Probably only your Scotch eyes could have noticed them in a dozen years. Shall we pledge ourselves to keep the secret?"

With mock solemnity Mistle stretched out her hand to him and she shook it as soberly.

"Of course," she added. "I shall walk here now and then." "Oh, naturally," John agreed. "I shall keep an eye on it myself."

her at her gate, he halted in the road in the wonder of a swift realization. He had not been bored.

A week later rambling near the clearing he caught a glimpse of crimson through the trees. He had volunteered to keep an eye on the heather. He did at once—until the sudden autumn darkness forced him to see Mistle home.

At their third meeting, for variety, he guided her by old logging roads strange to her. The charm of the odd companionship laid an unsuspected spell upon them both. Through winter snows and February thaws they found excuse for meeting—always under the open sky, oftenest in the woods, where John Bowditch's knowledge opened a new world for the girl. He taught her the use of snowshoes; and on them they followed together the tracks of the tiny, shy wood habitans.

Before spring winds blew they were tried friends—"chums," Mistle secretly phrased it with occasional wonder. As for John, he hardly realized Mistle's girlishness in his delight in her sympathetic company.

One day when they had been roaming the woods for great bunches of violets, he had found his comrade unusually quiet. As they reached the clearing, they stopped a moment by the faithful patch of heather which had braved the winter storms.

"It is hard to realize," Mistle said, with a catch in her voice, "that I'm not to see it blooming."

"Why not?" John demanded sharply.

"They say now I must go home in June. My sister is to be married. They need me."

Mistle's lips trembled. She hardly dared glance at the kind, studious, familiar face. She anticipated its look of pain. The look was there—and with it the amazement of a man who leaps to a sudden understanding of himself.

"Mistle," his voice rang deep, intense. "I need you more. That is—I mean—no, I mean just that! I cannot let you go!"

Mistle dropped her violets in a sudden gesture of dismay—yet on the instant felt that this all was strangely right. John Bowditch went on with an excitement new to him.

"I've known we were good friends. I didn't know how much more. You Scotch girl, you've grown as deep into my life as that heather into the soil! If you are torn out it will leave a great, empty place. But—"

He looked at her and paused. Perhaps he really saw her fresh, girlish beauty, for the first time. A shadow settled on his face; he went on in a different tone.

"I'm talking foolishly. I'm twice your age. My home is here, miles enough from your dear Scotland. It was selfishness. Please forget it all."

But Mistle was reaching out both hands to him across the heather.

"Oh, John, John! Can't you see that I'm transplanted for good? If you root me up, I may wither—die! I didn't want to go back—only I hadn't any excuse to stay."

As they walked home through the rich May sunlight, stirred by the pulse of new life around and within them, John stopped short.

"Mistle," he said earnestly, "it's no use. You mustn't love me. I'm a fraud, a—"

She faced him, suddenly white. "You didn't suspect," he went on doggedly. "You were too truthful to dream I could cheat. I planted that heather—an experiment. That's why I told you to keep it secret. I'm ashamed, sorry. But how could I foresee all this?"

Then in wonder at the radiant laughter of her eyes: "Dearest, how could I dream it would lead me to you?"

She smiled with loving mockery and leaned tantalizingly toward him.

"Is that why you're so sorry for it, John?" she asked.

Had to Have His Smoke. A. C. Benson, son of the late Archbishop of Canterbury, tells the following story of Charles Kingsley in the Cornhill:

"My father used to tell how once he was walking with Kingsley round about Eversley when Kingsley suddenly stopped and said, 'It is no use; I know you detest tobacco, Benson, but I must have a smoke,' and he had accordingly gone to a big furze bush and put his arm in at a hole, and after some groping about produced a big churchwarden pipe, which he filled and smoked with great satisfaction, afterward putting it into a hollow tree and telling my father with a chuckle that he had concealed pipes all over the parish to meet the exigencies of a sudden desire to smoke."

Hardly. "Is Pippa a baseball fan?" "Sure. Why, he even proposed to his wife at a baseball game."

"Do you mean to tell me he took his mind off the game long enough to propose?" "Yes." "Pshaw! He's no fan."

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