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The Past:— Present; ^{and}— Future of Farming
By Cyrus H Walker

When man was driven out of the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken human hands were first-soiled and hardened by honest toil. The first-farmer, broke the first-sod, with some rude implement, and then scattered his first seed. No sooner had the virgin soil been broken, then the thistles and thistles sprang up also, and mankind from that day to this, has had to stir the soil with one hand and hew down the weeds with the other; but thanks to the stronger right hand the one that stirs the soil, the weeds are kept in subjection, and bountiful harvests are garnered with songs of rejoicing.

And here let me say that what is true of the material world, is equally true of the moral and spiritual. Wherever the plowshare of a Christian civilization has broken the ^{stubborn} soil of heathenish superstition and idolatry, and sown

the seeds that shall bring forth the living bread
 the thorns and thistles of cultured error and
 skepticism, have come in to be combatted; but
 the arm of the Almighty is stronger than they
 and golden harvests have ever, and will ever reward
 the reapers toil, "While Error, wounded, withes with
 pain and dies amid her worshipers"

The two first-farmer boys
 divided the work, and while one tilled the soil,
 the other was a shepherd boy.

Sad the story, when his noble life went out under
 the cruel blows of his sturdier brother.

For a time at least, there was no shepherd boy,
 and the two occupations were merged into one,
 and have continued so to this day, to a greater or
 less extent, but the tilling of the soil the, first-
 industry, has always been in the lead.

It is one of the crowning glories of
 this closing 19th Century, to note the wonderful
 advance made along farming lines. The immense
 areas brought under cultivation almost exceed the
 wildest-imagination. Take our own country;
 especially the western wilds of 50 years ago.
 My boyhood days spent hard by the haunts of

roaming savages in Oregon, had but a small insight into the even then rapid strides of frontier civilization, born out of the sturdy farmers of the earlier eastern states, who pushed out an unbroken line of advance all along the west bank of the Mississippi river; the vanguard of a mighty host that has since crossed the Rockies, and spread itself out in the valleys and on the plains of the true west, as grasshoppers for multitude; and will yet be as the sands upon the sea shore, which cannot be numbered.

Our little mission farm, or what is now called Walker's prairie, near Spokane Falls Wash, with its acre or two of wheat - which had to be cut with the reaping hook, one handful at a time; the small field of corn with pumpkins intermixed, and a patch of potatoes, was all I saw of farming, and in which I had no hand as a worker.

This grain had to be carried on pack horses, about 60 miles to the nearest mill, that at Old Fort Colville on the Columbia river.

Where are now the Dakotas, if not other great states, my old geography called the country the "Mandaw District."

Within 40 years nearly all the virgin soil

of our United States, that could give a fair to a large return without irrigation or the clearing of forests, has been brought into service. In this respect we have no doubt passed the high tide of our farming industry in securing cheap grain.

Like as in the older agricultural states, western Oregon at least, must begin to return something to the soil of her once fertile valleys and prairies, if a larger yield is to be secured. In some measure to offset the lack of fertility in our once rich soil, invention has made such rapid strides that a man can now do in one day, the work it took several days to perform in those early years. As for transportation, it then took from one or two days to a week or more, according to distance to make a trip to Oregon City, with a load of wheat, often with ox teams, and then get of I am not mistaken, but 50 cts per bushel in trade at the Hudson Bay Company's store, until in the early 50 ties, when the California gold mines, and a large immigration brought up the price to \$4.00 or \$5.00 per bushel, and flour 20.00 or more per bbl. But those golden days are gone and with them the then familiar sounds, now quite unknown to our boys, of "Wo-haw Back, gee Berry, Our first farming implements, were the home made plow, with wooden teeth, or a brush harrow, and for harvesting the hand sickle or reaping hook, and home made grain cradles. Then came the Peoria, premium steel

plow, and iron tooth harrows, and what I have swung many a day;
 Hartigan cradles. Then we had improved walking
 plows, and for harvesting the combined Manney
 reaper and mower, a cumbersome affair that dragged
 a team of 4 horses down nearly to poverty in a season
 work. Then came the ruder forms of sulky and gang
 plows, ^{and} hinge harrows; and for harvesting; headers,
 and improved reapers, as Woods self raker, the Marsh
 Harvester. Then came chilled iron plows, and better
 models of gang and sulky plows, ^{and Acme. Disc. cut away ^{and} Spring tooth plows} and for harvesting,
 rice binders; which gave way to twine binders.

As to thrashing; the old fashioned flail
 gave way to the threshing floor, and tramping horses,
 some times tied two or three abreast, and driven
 around; or the farmer with plenty of horses turned in
 quite a number, often wild and unbroken, and
 thus made the grain fly. Then came the chaff piles
 with tread power, then the Pitts and other threshing
 machines, ^{unmounted} driven by horse power. Then the improved
 Pitts, and other machines ^{by mounted horse or} driven by steam power

The dreaded words to the pioneer women, "the threshers
 are coming" now bring no dismay, as the white winged
 messenger of health to toiling farmers wives, the canvas
 covered cook wagon appears to view. There has been
 a grand advance along another line, somewhat

connected with farming, 50 years ago, and that is the whiskey jug has largely disappeared from the hay and harvest fields. The rum power has largely concentrated its forces upon the cities, whose inhabitants in most ~~states~~ ^{instances} seem powerless to resist the invader. Some time the shout of the farmers will be heard as they come to the rescue, and their war cry, ^{of more justice and less taxation} will be as joyfully hailed, as was the coming of the Scotch Highlanders to the beleaguered fortress of Lucknow, ^{India} whose garrison, with intense expectancy, breathed the words "Divine hear the slogan", and wept when the familiar tones of the Scotch bag pipe burst upon their ears, as Havelock approached on that eventful 25th of Sept 1857.

In my later boyhood days it was my ambition to be a model farmer. I loved farming, and the days I followed the walking plow and built air castles were some of the happiest days of my life.

I gave up the college course that I might have taken and despite the wishes of my parents, that I should study for the ministry, I early set up my own roof tree and commenced to build on the plans I had wrought out in my boyish fancies. Like many another, these castles vanished, ^{as} in mud air. Unstable as water I could not excel. I have tried too many other

pursuits among them over 18 months in the military
 service, ^{asa commissioned officer} back in 1864-65-66. In 1877 I drifted back to
 the life of my earliest years, and spent 15 years in
 work among the Indians. During all these years however
 I never lost my love for farming. While at the Warm
 Springs Agency, I took agricultural papers, and took
 up a ranch along the eastern bank of the rushing
 Des Chutes river, back of which frowned the basaltic
 cliffs, ^{Towering} more than 800 ft. I essayed to head out a
 model farm; but an arid soil, and lack of moisture
 brought a large defeat, and the imperfect service
 wrought by Indian laborers upon which I had mainly
 to depend, and most of the time without my personal
 supervision, brought back a poor return for the outlay.
 When I think of the advantages our boys now have for
 making practical farmers, I give a sigh and wish I were
 boy again. To be able now to take in all the possibilities
 of what the coming farmer, can attain to, seems to me
 would be glorious. The boy who is to make the coming farmer
 must, if he enters the Agricultural College, do so with the firm
 resolve to make farming his life work. We need educated
 farmers, as well as educated professional and business men.
 Every other trade and industry is surging ahead at a fearful
 pace. The farmer will have to put on more steam, or be left in the
 race. The farming of the future will demand more skill

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Subsoiling is going to play a very important part in future farming.

The nature of the soil that is cultivated will need to be known, in order to determine its adaptation to certain crops. Steam and electricity will largely take the place of horse power, and how to handle them will need to be learned. There must be a thorough system of drainage adopted. Western Oregon will never give its grandest results, until there is a perfect net work of teting, from one end of it, to the other. This perhaps will not be carried out until the section farms are divided, and subdivided into smaller farms, thus lessening the expense to any one person, and insuring more complete and thorough cultivation. Economy in saving everything that will enrich the soil must be practiced. Straw must not be burned, or if burned must be scattered more, as more of its ^{soil} enriching qualities are lost if burned in large piles. Clover must be sown, since it is the best, because the cheapest fertilizer that we have, that meets the requirements. The world is our competitor in the grain market, and while grain may be for ^{some} years our leading product, our farmer will find diversified farming will bring more certain and larger returns. With industry and a heart-right toward God and man, he shall reap ^{beautiful} golden harvests, and sit down under his own vine and fig tree with none to molest or make him afraid.

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