- 7. In the recent grim invasion
 Of the Fenians, while we were
 All armed and massed on the frontier,
 He was not with us at all.
 Ah! ah! ah! yes truly
 He is a most surprising man!
- 8. When he returned from Ottawa
 The road was free from all danger;
 The invasion now was over,
 But his purse was full of money.
 Ah! ah! ah! but truly
 He is a most surprising man!
- 9. Now disillusioned, his dear friends All realize they have been fooled; The Doctor is a bungler sure, But always lines his own pockets! Ah! ah! ah! yes truly He is a most surprising man!
- 10. Dishonest as his hair is red,
 He laughs aloud at their anger.
 Malvat whose purse was now empty,
 Lends the fellow his stupid pen.
 Ah! ah! ah! but truly
 He is a most surprising man!
- 11. Finally, to end the matter,
 I have a suggestion to make
 And risk offending the rascal;
 Let him get out, or get stuffed with straw!
 Ah! ah! ah! for truly
 This man is much too surprising!

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Translated by L. Verrault

11. The Hunter and the Farmer

Introduction / This song appeared in June 19, 1872, issue of Le Métis, published in the village that was then beginning to be called Winnipeg. It was sung to the air, "Le renard et le corbeau." Although Pierre Falcon was still living, Martial Allard does not consider the song to be his work. It was evidently written for, and sung at, a social gathering of the Métis held to celebrate the return of the buffalo hunters from the western plains.

In 1824, when Governor George Simpson of the Hudson's Bay Company gave Cuthbert Grant land at White Horse Plain on which to settle the Métis, he hoped that these hunters and warriors would become farmers also. But his plans were not entirely successful. To gain their food wholly from the soil by backbreaking drudgery had little appeal for them. The blood that flowed in Métis veins craved the movement, the excitement and the thrills of the only life they had known, that of the buffalo hunt.

By 1872, however, the situation with regard to the hunt had become critical, for the animals were fast disappearing. For some years the rules of the organized hunt, which had preserved the buffalo, had been largely disregarded by newcomers and indiscriminate butchery had taken its toll. Thousands of buffalo were slain, only the tongues being taken, and the carcasses left to rot on the plains.

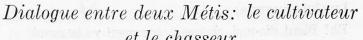
The former buffalo population of the prairies can be judged by the fact that, even in the year when this song was written, and when there was so much concern about their diminishing numbers, some travellers reported seeing a herd of about a million in the far west. Also in this year a party of Red River hunters brought in 21,000 hides.

Yet informed authorities predicted that the age of the buffalo was almost over, and that the Métis' subsistence by the hunt would soon be gone. This prediction proved to be true. The

last organized hunt went out in 1874, and by 1879 the buffalo had almost disappeared.

In the light of the foregoing facts, the song is interesting. Whoever composed it—obviously someone with the good of the Métis at heart, perhaps a member of the clergy—he was evidently trying to reconcile them to the coming change. He well knew that the hunt, in spite of all its dangers, was a part of the Métis nature, dearer to his heart than any other way of life could be. Yet he put not one word of praise for the hunt in the mouth of the hunter in the song, and the farmer had nothing but good to say of life on the land.

Thus it can clearly be seen that the song was intended as propaganda to help the Métis make the adjustment that soon would be required of them. The old order was passing from the prairie, and a new era was at hand.





Aujourd'hui pour chanter nous sommes réunis, En votre honneur, Messieurs, nous serons bien polis. Honorabl' assistance, au moins ne riez pas Si par malheur Anotch nous faisons un faux pas. Sur l'air du tra la la.

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LE CULTIVATEUR:

Eh! Bien! dis-moi, chasseur, comment va la santé Depuis qu'à la prairie en courant tout l'été Pour quelques chétifs bœufs, tu t'es cassé le cou Ou rompu quelque membre en tombant dans un trou, Sur l'air du tra la la.

LE CHASSEUR:

De la chasse au bœuf gras, je veux te raconter Les nombreux accidents que j'entends rapporter. Je crois que mon récit finira par guérir Ceux qui dans la prairie ont envie de courir. Sur l'air du tra la la.

Celui-ci dans sa course est tombé sur le dos Et s'écrie en braillant, ah! que j'ai mal aux os. Un autre en poursuivant un trop furieux taureau, De son ch'val est tombé dans un trou de blaireau. Sur l'air du tra la la.

L'un se casse la jambe, et l'autre les deux bras. Alors adieu le bœuf, la vache et les veaux gras. Pour comble de malheur, pendant tout un été Il faut boire l'eau claire à la place du thé. Sur l'air du tra la la.

Si je voulais tout dire et conter tous nos maux, Je n'en finirais plus; d'ailleurs c'n'est pas nouveau. Je n'exagère pas, ce sont des vérités, Amis profitez-en, n'soyez pas entêtés. Sur l'air du tra la la.

LE CULTIVATEUR:

Pour moi, mon cher chasseur, j'ai plus d'chance que toi, J'ai toujours bonne santé sans sortir de chez moi. En labourant la terre, au moins on ne craint pas Dans un trou de blaireau d'aller la tête en bas. Sur l'air du tra la la. Sans courir la prairie, autour de ma maison Je fais chasse comme toi et jouis de ma moisson Sans perdre tout mon temps à courir le gibier, Je monte pour l'hiver du blé dans mon grenier Sur l'air du tra la la.

Pour cinq ou six chasseurs qui viennent en chantant J'en vois bien d'autres hélas! qui n'en font pas autant; Les uns dans la prairie ont vendu leur taureau, Les autres n'ont plus rien à boire que de l'eau. Sur l'air du tra la la.

En cultivant mon champ à l'aide de mes bœufs Sans courir de danger je me rends fort heureux, Je vis avec ma femme et mes petits enfants Qui ne manquent de rien et qui sont tous contents. Sur l'air du tra la la.

L'automne avec mon blé je fais un peu d'argent; J'achète des habits et je suis chaudement; Ma table est bien servie et je mange à gogo Le Coucouche engraissé remplace le toro. Sur l'air du tra la la.

Dans notre beau pays nous voyons accourir Quantité d'étrangers venant pour s'y bâtir; Cultivons tous nos champs et gardons notre bien; Soyons bons habitants et nous ne craindrons rien. Sur l'air du tra la la.

Ah! n'ayons jamais peur de fatiguer nos bras, Semons orge, patate, élevons des bœufs gras; Soumettons-nous à Dieu et soyons bons chrétiens, En vivant de la sorte on ne manque de rien. Sur l'air du tra la la.

Note: Both words and air are from the Provincial Archives "De Folklore" Collection, J. O. Ducasse.

The Hunter and the Farmer

Assembled here today, we now have come to sing, Polite you'll find us, gentlemen, for we would bring Great honour to this crowd, so we ask, don't laugh please! Don't laugh, if tune and words don't always fit with ease. Now all sing tra, la, la, la, etc.

THE FARMER:

Well, hunter, will you tell us if your health's been sound, Since, running, 'cross the prairie, falling on the ground? And breaking legs and arms, all summer long you go; You risk your neck for several paltry buffalo. Now all sing tra, la, la, la, etc.

THE HUNTER:

I've heard of many accidents which all befell Good hunters hunting buffalo, so listen well; These stories will succeed in keeping here at home All those who o'er the prairie feel the urge to roam. Now all sing, tra, la, la, la, etc.

Now, one brave man while hunting, on his back was thrown. He shouted out, "Alas, I've broken skin and bone," A maddened bull, in chase, another caused to roll Right off his horse and down into a badger hole. Now all sing tra, la, la, la, etc.

A broken leg for one, both arms another's pain, A bull and cow and calf they'll never see again. And all the summer long, the height of misery; They have to drink clear water in the place of tea. Now all sing tra, la, la, etc. Now if our list of troubles I tried to run through,
The end would never come, and there'd be nothing new;
The truth I don't distort because there is no need,
So don't be stubborn, friends, but to my words take heed.
Now all sing tra, la, la, la, etc.

THE FARMER:

Dear hunter, I've good fortune which you do not know; I keep good health at home, while you a-hunting go. As I go out to plow, I do so without dread Of falling in a badger hole upon my head. Now all sing tra, la, la, etc.

I can enjoy my crops and hunt around my home, So why, like you, should I upon the prairie roam? I need not waste my time in hunting game to eat; Against cold winter days I fill my barn with wheat. Now all sing tra, la, la, etc.

For hunters five or six, who sing as on they go, There's many many more who've got dismay and woe. For some out on the plain, their bull they've had to sell, And others must drink water, for their thirst to quell. Now all sing tra, la, la, etc.

My oxen are good help as now I till my land; No danger to endure, so happy here I stand. I live with my good wife; my children I adore; They're happy as can be, and well provided for. Now all sing tra, la, la, etc. I make some cash in autumn selling wheat and rye,
And then to clothe my body good warm clothes I buy.
My table is well set; I always eat my fill;
Instead of buffalo, the fatted pig I kill.
Now all sing tra, la, la, la, etc.

In our fair land we see arriving every day A host of strangers, here to build and here to stay. Now let us till our fields and hold our new wealth dear; Good colonists we'll be, and we'll have nought to fear. Now all sing tra, la, la, etc.

We'll never fear hard work, we'll always sing its praise. Let's sow potatoes, barley, and fat cattle raise. Submitting all to God, good Christians we would be, And living in this way, from need we'll all be free. Now all sing tra, la, la, la, etc.

Author Unknown.

Translated by Robert L. Walters

IV. HOMESTEAD DAYS

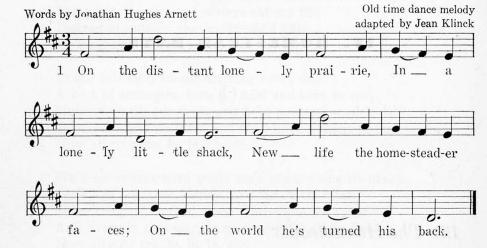
12. The Homesteader

Introduction / When the territory of Manitoba was formed, in 1870, the government offered a free homestead of 160 acres of land to prospective settlers. This seemed a wonderful gift to those from other parts of Canada where a farm cost real money. The man who took up the land must remain on it for three years, and during that time get a specified acreage under crop. Then the land was his.

A young homesteader, usually with scant equipment, would start off to find the land he had chosen from a map, sometimes a hundred miles from a town. In his pocket lay the document carrying his signature which entitled him to his homestead. This signature was the government's only evidence of interest in him.

He was off with a high heart and a sturdy pair of hands to work out his destiny. He would sink or swim, lose all or win out. It was human endurance pitted against the elements and other forces of nature; against calamity and ill luck. Some fought a losing battle and, before the three years expired, gave up. Others with high courage in the lonely struggle, doggedly stuck it out and won a settled home for themselves.

The Homesteader



On the distant lonely prairie, In a little lonely shack, New life the homesteader faces; On the world he's turned his back.

He's fifteen miles from a neighbour And a hundred miles from a town; There are rolling plains between them; It is there he's settled down.

In the midst of God's great freedom, Under skies of fairest blue, He is building broad foundations And a manhood strong and true.

Through day-long hours of bright sunshine, With the twilight into night, Through the fierce hot rays of summer And the autumn's paler light. Through night-long hours of deep darkness And the glare of winter snow, With the roar of well-fed fires, And forty degrees below.

Through the plowing and the sowing,
When the dust blows black from fields,
Then the welcome rains of springtime
Bring him dreams of harvest yields.

Through the golden glow of harvest,
With showers the grain to fill,
Through the fear of threatening hail storm
And the fierce hot winds that kill.

With age-old wisdom behind him, And spurred by his own great need, Thus he builds his broad foundations Free from custom and from creed.

JONATHAN HUGHES ARNETT.

13. O Prairie Land

Introduction / "O Prairie Land" is a song of the homesteading period composed, as far as can be learned, in the district of Albert, near the site of present-day Carman, Manitoba.

When the Province of Manitoba was formed in 1870 and the land was thrown open for settlement, a new era for the West began—the era of the homesteader. The influx of settlers, already heavy, increased daily. Hordes arrived at the Provincial capital, the tiny village of Winnipeg, by boat, by oxcart or by wagon. Some even made the last leg of the journey on foot, carrying all their worldly gear on their backs, so anxious were they to avoid delay and obtain the choicest locations.

Naturally the land near Winnipeg was taken up first and soon the surrounding country was dotted with surveyors' stakes. Homesteaders, who had known the toil of clearing eastern forests to win fields of arable land, might then be seen sifting the rich virgin soil through their fingers and marvelling at the wealth to be gained by the mere turning of a sod. But the mirage of greater riches beyond, which ever lies at the back of man's mind, lured some even farther afield.

Settlement at Albert, sixty miles to the southwest, began in the late 1870's. The homesteaders were mainly young families from Ontario, who became so enthusiastic about their new home that, in the early Eighties, they wrote a song about it. The beauty of the untouched prairie—a carpet of grass and flowers of every hue that reached to the far horizon—captivated them. It was truly an unforgettable sight, difficult to imagine today in settled Manitoba. The homesteaders called their song, "O Prairie Land," and they sang it to the tune of the hymn, "Beulah Land," on which their verses were modelled.

"Beulah Land" was a new Methodist hymn then popular in the district. Its words and music were written, in 1876, by Edgar Page Stites and John R. Sweney respectively, and it was first sung that same year by Bishop McCabe at a meeting of Methodist ministers in Philadelphia. The subject of the hymn was the beautiful country the Israelites found on their restoration to Jerusalem, referred to in Isaiah, and used by John Bunyan in his allegory, *Pilgrim's Progress*. The hymn with its catching air spread quickly and soon reached even as far as Manitoba.

No doubt the homesteaders were happy in modelling "O Prairie Land" on this hymn, as both sang of a new home in a fair new land.

The song immediately became popular. It was on everyone's lips. And at concerts in the Albert schoolhouse it was a favourite item on the programme, when one of the young folk sang the verses from the platform and all joined in the chorus.



We've reached the land of pleasant dreams, Of level plains and deep ravines, Where flowers abound on every hand In this, our lovely prairie land.

Chorus:

O prairie land! Sweet prairie land! Where everyone joins heart in hand, We are a loyal, jolly crew, And I am sure you'd say so, too, If you were here to join our band In this, our lovely prairie land.

There are more flowers than I can tell, There's gentian, wild rose and blue bell, There's buttercup and golden-rod And sunflowers springing from the sod.

The settlers here are very few, But then they are a jolly crew, They work and play and dance and sing; In fact, they do most everything.

The cities here are very small, In some there's not a house at all! They're but surveyed and marked with stakes, And I think that's a great mistake.

The little gophers skip and play Across our pathway every day, And badgers, too, here may be found In holes they burrow in the ground.

The prairie chickens flip and fly, And they go splendid in a pie; And if you are a man of luck You'll have a chance to shoot a duck. And there are other kinds of game, We have far more than I can name, We've birds of every kind and hue, They're white, brown, black, and grey and blue.

The flying ants are little pests,
To keep them off we do our best,
When they're around we have no mirth
For they do bite for all they're worth.

Mosquitoes here in hordes abound, They rise in swarms up from the ground, They sing a song, a kind of grace, And then they light upon your face.

There's many a lonely bachelor here Awaiting and watching for his dear, And very soon we hope she'll come To soothe his heart and cheer his home.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN.

14. Tragedy at Meadow Lea

Introduction / The first week in March, 1882, was marked by the worst and most tragic blizzard in Manitoba's annals. The district of Meadow Lea, twenty-four miles west of Winnipeg, where the northern winds swept in unhindered over the empty prairies, suffered severely. On the worst night of the storm John Taylor, his wife and three daughters from Ontario, who had recently taken up a homestead in the district, were sitting cozily around the fire in their log farmhouse. With them was a friend, Miss Reed. Suddenly, mingled with the roar of the blizzard outside, they heard a faint crackle which seemed to come from the roof. One of the Taylor girls ran out hastily and dashed back crying, "The roof is on fire." It was thatched with tough couchgrass sods, which had ignited from the sheet-iron chimney.

The girls—their father was a cripple—quickly found a ladder and tried to put out the fire with pails of water from the well, but it was soon out of control. They then decided, as the flames were still confined to the roof, to stop fighting them and move out their household goods. They had almost finished, when the flames burst through the walls. Panic stricken, they grabbed blankets and, wrapping themselves up, rushed outside. There, from holes dug in the snowdrifts, they helplessly watched their home being consumed. At last, when the fire had burned itself out, they became frightened of the black, howling darkness and cold. They felt they must try to find better shelter.

A Taylor nephew lived some distance away, and one of the girls decided to set out for his house. Ontario people knew nothing of the confusing power and danger of a blizzard. She did not return. The other two sisters followed, one after the other, but they, too, failed to return. Then the mother said, "I must go and find my girls." She never came back. Finally Miss Reed felt she, too, must try to find help. She left John Taylor wrapped

in blankets in a deep burrow in the snow and set out. After struggling through the storm blindly for some time, her hand touched a wall. It was the wall of a field granary. She managed to make her way in and, half frozen, buried herself deeply in a bin of wheat.

In the meantime, the Taylor nephew set out in a sleigh to see how his relatives were faring. As he came to the granary, he heard a faint moan and on going inside found Miss Reed. Wrapping her in blankets, he put her in his sleigh, and drove on to rescue his uncle. Thus, Miss Reed and John Taylor were the only survivors of the tragic fire.

and, wrapping themselves up, round outdoo. There from heles

Tragedy at Meadow Lea



'Twas winter and the wind blew keen, Blew with its might and main; And more and more the snow did blow Across the stormy plain.

And now without, still fiercer yet, The Storm King raged and blew; And nearer to the fire within The little company drew.

That night John Taylor sat beside His wife and daughters three; And pleasantly the hours flew by, At home in Meadow Lea. A lady friend was staying there, And oh! with what delight Those fond young tongues would rattle on Regardless of the night!

They talked of old Ontario, Of Peel, their native place, Of the old home so far away, And each remembered face.

Of Stanley Mills and Harrison Awhile their chat would be, And then again of new-found friends At home in Meadow Lea.

When lo! what light is this they see Reflected on the ground? "Fire! Fire! the housetop's in a blaze!" They all cry with a bound.

Out in the storm they wildly rush, To work they gallant go; But who could stay a fire like this In such a blinding snow?

No neighbour's house or light is seen, Whichever way they turn; And so these helpless ones seem doomed To either freeze or burn.

Then cried the youngest, fearless girl, "I'll to my uncle's go And bring strong arms to help you all, Or perish in the snow."

Then off she set, but missed her way, Across the stormy plain, And helpless through the cold, cold night, For succour watched in vain. Then cried another daughter true, "I'll search the prairie wide, I'll bring my sister back again, Or perish by her side."

Ill-fated pair to venture forth In such a whirl of snow, Misguided love to urge them on Where scarce a man would go.

'Twas almost noon at William's house, When one of them did say, "I'll go and see how uncle fares On such a wretched day."

He went—but oh! did ever eye Behold so sad a sight? Around him death and ruin lay The work of that cold night.

A mother and her daughters three Had perished on the plains; And of that happy family But John alone remains.

The neighbours gathered, one by one, And searched the prairie round; And here and there in reefs of snow A frozen corpse was found.

Was ever anything so sad? Or did you ever see A case so strange and pitiful As this in Meadow Lea?

AUTHOR UNKNOWN.

Note: The verses of this song are believed to have been written by an itinerant Methodist minister.

V. YEARS OF ESTABLISHMENT

15. Harvest

Introduction / When the composer of this song, Jessie Louise Hetherington, came as a small child to the Souris district of Manitoba, in 1882, the plains were still dotted here and there with the whitening bones of the buffalo. In 1900, when she wrote these verses, the Indians still spent a large part of the year in their pleasant age-old campsites along the Souris River. The country around Souris is a gently rolling plain, cut by deep wooded ravines and the valley of the river itself.

The song was inspired by a golden, glowing autumn afternoon, filled with the sights and sounds of harvest time.

Harvest



Manitoba, Manitoba,
Fair thy fields of harvest stand,
Mellow light of early autumn
Stealing down across the land;
Laughing up from far off meadows,
Comes the south wind bold and free,
Bending into rippling wavelets
All the tranquil golden sea.

rip-pling wave-lets All the tran-quil gol-den

Manitoba, on thy prairies
Yesterday the buffalo fed,
And the trembling plains re-echo
With the thunder of their tread.
Now they sleep in earth's oblivion
And the golden harvest waves,
In its wealth of autumn splendour
O'er their long-forgotten graves.

Manitoba, peaceful homesteads
Nestle in the amber light,
Where of old the tribes have gathered
For their fierce and deadly fight.
And the Indian by the river,
Standing at his tepee door,
Gazes sadly at the country
He may cross in hunt no more.

Manitoba, from thy prairie,
Won by God's especial grace,
To a nobler, fuller mission
Than the battle or the chase,
Rises up the song of harvest
As the thankful people raise
From the oat fields and the wheat fields
Fervent notes of thankful praise.

JESSIE LOUISE HETHERINGTON.

16. Manitoba

Introduction / The words and air of this song were written in 1920 by Jonathan Hughes Arnett, a school principal in Manitoba. With the hope of fostering in school children a love of their country, its freedom and its brotherhood, he made a simple but lively air and wrote simple verses for it. However, the song found a wider audience in concerts and on radio programmes.



Manitoba, here we rise to greet you,
Manitoba, our home.
You're the bond that binds our great Dominion,
East to West from foam to foam.
You give to us from mines and forests,
From lakes and from your fertile plains.
We will live in thy light,
We will stand for the right
In the Land where Freedom reigns.

Refrain:

For we all love our Manitoba, Manitoba, our home so dear, And we raise the strain Of the waving grain, Ring it out again, One chorus strong and clear.

Manitoba, we, thy children, greet Thee, Manitoba, our home.

We love the sweep of rolling prairies, And the hills through which we roam. You breathe the heritage of Freedom, For which our faithful fathers stood. In our faith, in our speech, In our law, we know One bond of brotherhood.

JONATHAN HUGHES ARNETT.