



THE LAST LOAD.

OF the delights of labor finished, poets have sung; and moralists given their dissertations. The completing of the harvest, the assurance that the last sheaf is safely housed, and all the hay securely gathered, is a moment of so much pride and happiness to the farmer, that he can even count but our own, and the other farmer's, but a quiet and peaceful resting. The Last Load does not, elsewhere than in prosaic America, usually go home so solemnly and quietly as our artist depicts it in the accompanying sketch. Nor do the farm people go soberly from their labor, with no outward expression of pleasure in the gathered and garnered products of the fields. We all know what a gay time is had in the neighborhood of a happy English harvest, when the dances and the songs and the toasts, and a generous hilarity, give the occasion honor. It might be well, perhaps, if we of to-day did not, in our matter-of-business way, entirely forget and ignore those graceful methods of celebrating epochs in our ready tasks. An American farmer has usually a more sober way of expressing his gratitude to a garnered harvest, than by wasting his store in wild revels. But, let us do what we can, and all the more if all pleasing might be done to memorize the event. Even the young women in Mr. Homer's sketch are insensible to the poetry of the occasion. If their hearts are glad, they lack even the taste or the art to show their gladness by so much as a flower in their hair or their bonnets. They would wonder, perhaps, wherein the significance of such an act would exist. The grass was ripe; it was needed to mow, to dry, to gather, to stack it; and, these duties being done, others follow to exact a cause

## Winslow Homer

### Title

The Last Load

### Medium

Wood engraving on paper

### Date

1869

### Dimensions

9 5/8 x 7 3/16 in. (24.4 x 18.3 cm)

### Accession number

97.12.6

### Credit Line

Purchased with funds given in memory of David Ferranti, 1997