

replace them if anything happened to them while they were in his possession. (Code of Hammurabi, Section 245.) In addition to plowing a considerable amount of harrowing and hoeing was necessary. If the seed had been sowed it was necessary constantly to harrow the soil, to drive away the birds and to pull the weeds. In the large holdings there were often ten special watchmen to drive away the ravens. Often in springtime a swarm of locusts would appear, possibly eating everything and leaving the field completely desolate. Occasionally a flood destroyed the entire harvest.

After all these dangers were escaped, the farmer who had faithfully done his work could hope for a good harvest in the late spring. Up to this point the tenant's own work and the work of a few slaves was enough, but the work of harvesting then required many additional helpers. At this season many foreigners came into the land and worked for wages. In harvesting the grain the ears were cut off rather short with a sickle. Later the straw was cut separately and the stubble was burned. The heads of the grain were transported on the backs of asses or on carts to the threshing floor. There they were threshed out by having oxen, asses, and various smaller animals walk back and forth over them. After the grain had thus been broken into bits it was hurled into the air so that the wind would separate it from the chaff. Then it was necessary to sieve it to cleanse it from the dirt.

The grain was preserved in storehouses. Since the poor peasant was not generally able to build his own storehouse, he had to rent one to keep his harvest in. The Code of Hammurabi gives very severe penalties for