

Hearth and Home.

A TALK WITH THE YOUNG FOLKS ABOUT THE MONTH.

This is the hottest month in the year, and quite in harmony with its character, our engraving shows two young people trying to keep cool. From their dress and general appearance, they seem to belong to the class of genteel idlers, very pitiable people, who, though in a position to enjoy life more than most folks, have, generally speaking, a hard time of it, selfishly seeking after happiness. If they would diligently betake themselves to some useful employment, and try half as hard to make others happy as they do to make themselves happy, it would be better for them, and for every body about them. The most wretched, pitiable, and useless of mortals are these same genteel do-nothings. They are often objects of envy, but are far more truly objects of pity.

Most of us are under the necessity of doing work of some kind, and although perhaps we sometimes think it hard to have so much to do, it is far better for us than idleness. If we did not work, we should not know the sweetness of rest. Idleness is not rest.

"A want of occupation is not rest,
A mind quite vacant is a mind distressed."

It requires a great effort to be diligent in hot weather, and sometimes we are very impatient of the heat, as if it were a sore and needless infliction. But it is really a great and indispensable blessing. The grain would not ripen without hot weather. Flowers and fruits require heat. This is what paints the rose, puts sweetness into the strawberry, the cherry, the plum, and the apple. Every person, whether young or old, is fond of these things, but we could not have them without July, any more than without May. It is in the heat of midsummer that the bees gather and store their honey. The summer makes all the young shoots and buds grow, which the winter hardens and makes tough. No doubt the heat produces important effects on our bodies, for the greatest physical vigour is



found in countries that have both winter and summer.

How pleasant in July is the cool shade. How delightful to get into some breezy spot where we can feel comfortable and be refreshed. What a treat is a draught of cold water or a dish of ice cream, when the weather is, as we sometimes describe it, "roasting hot." But we owe these enjoyments to the summer, and should know nothing of them if the weather was always cool.

After all, we know nothing of heat as compared with the dwellers in tropical countries. Some parts of the Bible must be far more expressive to the inhabitants of the hotter parts of the earth than they are to us. Those which speak of Christ as "a covert from the heat, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," those which liken the blessings of the gospel to water: and those which describe heaven as a delightful region where "the sun shall not light on them nor any heat," must naturally strike the minds of those who are familiar with intense heat. But God the Holy Spirit can explain these and all other portions of Divine truth to our hearts, so that we shall perceive their meaning, and feel their power. Let us entreat him to do so for Christ's sake.