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Joys of Berry-Picking

FROM some points of view, it would be fair to divide the people of Canada into two great classes, those who like to "go berrying," and those who don't. There are, of course, plenty of people who enjoy eating berries after somebody else has gone after them, and many take a definite pleasure in having berry-patches of their own, as an adjunct of some neat little garden. Strawberry-growing by ordinary city or suburban householders, for example, has increased tremendously within the last few years, partly because the price at which strawberries are sold by the dealers has increased from the "three boxes for a quarter of a pound" of halcyon days to the 30 to 50 cents a box of post-war prosperity, and partly because of the popular discovery that success with a backyard strawberry patch is not much of a trick, after all, if one is willing to give the plants more fragments of one's time, with regularity. But your true enthusiast in berrying is the one who likes to pick berries, who, when somebody proposes "going berrying," will exclaim, "Yes, come on!" in the very face of opportunities to "go after the mail," to "go automobile riding," to "lie still and read," or to do any one of the countless other things that average humankind is supposed to do "up country."

Yet there are different species of the genus berry-picker. Anybody who has ever been berrying knows that all. Recall that one of peripatetic disposition, for example, who, large of stature, is apt, by some curious laws of contrasts, to seize upon the smallest basket or tin pail as equipment, who is always finding "a better place" over here, or a spot where "they're pretty thick," over there, who apparently never stays long enough anywhere to gather the berries that offer, but is all over the pasture and back again, perhaps without achieving any more than to fill a pail or basket once or small as this. Contrasting, indeed, is that other familiar one who goes at the picking as at a profession or a trade, who, swiftly and shrewdly, yet unobtrusively, selecting the favorable location, strips the bushes without a sign of effort, and seems to move hardly at all, yet who fills pail after pail or basket after basket, and who, very likely, "picks clean" to a degree that is positively provoking to one of livelier but less productive effort. Then there are berry-pickers who are always finding "flowers" about which they must call to their neighbors, with ever-new discovery and announcement of an ever-old beauty of form or color; there are berry-pickers who have an undiscoverable knack of keeping spick and span, though they go into the pasture in spots white throughout, and there are others who are always stopping to exclaim at getting stained with the green of moss or the claret of fruit, and who distract the attention of all the feminine berry-pickers near at hand by loud wondering as to what will "take it out" of their hands. It has been known to come perilously near taking on the aspects of a joint debate at such moments! There is, of course, a species of berry picker who looks like the rest, and acts like the rest, but who never succeeds in filling a pail or basket, for a simple reason that each berry-filled hand finds the way to the berry-picker's mouth the shortest and most familiar line of action; yet it ought to be said that these pickers are chiefly of the juvenile order, and can usually be detected readily by certain undeniable stains about the lips and teeth. If not, indeed, more or less over the whole physiognomy.

Nobody knows, rightly, just why people like to "go berrying." There must be something else than profit in it, for perfectly good berry-pickers have been known to come back from the pasture with heaping ten-quart pails, to say to some other picker, or to some neighbor, "Here, you can have mine. I haven't any special use for 'em," or "Can't you use these? I like just to pick." And certainly it is not merely a matter of being out of doors; there are places a-plenty in the open that are vastly more alluring, in themselves, than the middle of a side-hill pasture on a summer forenoon.

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Comfort, economy, practicality—these features explain the popularity of silk underwear; and added to this service for the coming season comes the appeal of color, for new models, single garments and sets, are delightfully pleasing in color.
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Poke Bonnets for Girls.
Poke-shaped hats continue in high favor for little girls. They are especially becoming to the childish face, and moreover they present an interesting surface for trimming of flowers and ribbons.

DEALERS IN REPTILES.

Strange Business Has Its List of Stock Quotations.

Jobbers' prices for reptiles, for example, Los Angeles, quote rattlesnakes at 10 cents a pound (more than some of the best of beef); Gila monsters, \$10 a dozen, and lizards, \$3 a hundred.

Like almost anything else, the reptile market suffered because of the war, but now that it is ended, Mr. Weinberg says, the demand is on the increase.

He and as many small boys as care to engage in the hunt search the hills and valleys of Southern California for the harmless "things that crawl with legs," but he goes alone into the desert for rattlers and Gila monsters.

He keeps his stock in his backyard, where his wife handles the catfishes and helps in their care as fearlessly as does her husband.

A dangerous business? No, according to Mr. Weinberg.

"No more dangerous than driving an automobile," he declared. "Of course, you must be careful in handling the poisonous ones. But most of the reptiles people fear are not dangerous at all."

He reached into a glass box, thrust his hand under some dry leaves and brought out a large lizard, squirming and trying to bite. He held its head to his lips. It closed its ugly mouth there.

"Perfectly friendly and harmless," said Mr. Weinberg. "See how it kisses me."

A long rattlesnake, which had been sounding a warning attack, but stopped against the glass side of another box.

"He's a little nervous," said the reptile market man. "He hasn't been handled for some time."

He opened the box, tossed a handkerchief over the snake's head and quickly clasped the creature behind where its ears would have been had it had ears.

"He's a pretty good rattler," said Mr. Weinberg. "Worth \$2, anyway."

Talking of the reptile demand, he said:

"It's like everything else—there is more demand for imported serpents than for home products. In Europe they want American snakes. In America they want European reptiles."

Begging a Fine Art.

The well-fed German out here (in Syria) used to call the Turkish soldier an "artiste de laim." The poor Syrian is a genius at it. Begging is the most flourishing trade in Syria, and the only one at which the craftsman gets a proper apprenticeship. Among the beggars the real starvards you will find child actors who would win a fortune in London. They lie in an attitude of death in a woman's lap, their well-rounded limbs carefully covered with verminous rags. You will see them ten minutes later, when mamma has gone home for lunch, playing touch.

Thieving in all its branches—prayer from off-loading ships, fraud, smuggling of stolen goods, pilfering and pocket-picking—had such a boom on the arrival of the British as was never known in the best Turkish days, though now it is waning beneath a somewhat determined police surveillance. Animals? They talk at home of selling army horses out here. Well, the Arab and even the Syrian knows the value of his horse, and that while he is in working order it pays to keep him so. That is the utmost limit; and as to worn horses, or any other animals, it would need all the staff of the R.S.P.C.A. to keep even the streets free of eyesores.

The Spanish Novelist.

There has been some discussion as to the name of Vicente Blasco-Ibanez, says Outlook. The Cumulative Book Index, for instance, catalogues his books under "Blasco," with not even a cross-reference under "Ibanez." We find the following explanation in the current Bookman: "In Spain a man's name still clings to the old Roman custom of having the surname or family name in the middle. Therefore this author's father's name was Blasco. But there is an additional custom which comes from his father, and the two are supposed to be used together. Thus Blasco-Ibanez—not just Ibanez. Furthermore, there is still another social distinction which rules that if any one calls a man by his mother's maiden name—e.g., calling this man only 'Ibanez'—the implication is that his father and mother were not married. It is a curious custom, but a fact." Speaking of Ibanez, or Blasco-Ibanez, or Blasco Ibanez, a book reviewing journal is said to have printed a pseudo-advertisement for a man to take a temporary job reviewing Ibanez's books—evidently a shot at the rapidity with which this author's books have been brought out in English.

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Speedy Travellers.

A statement was made recently to the effect that in the near future there will be airplanes capable of travelling eight hundred miles an hour, a possibility that makes the idea of crossing the Atlantic seem almost insignificant. And if this prophecy is fulfilled we may look forward to a race among airmen to be first to circle the earth in a day. To fly around the globe in a day over the latitude of London would require a speed of less than seven hundred miles an hour, while over the equator the speed would have to be about one thousand and fifty miles per hour. An interesting point in such a one-day world-circling flight would be that if the airman flew from west to east and started at noon, he would travel in daylight with the sun at the meridian from start to finish.—Tit-Bits.

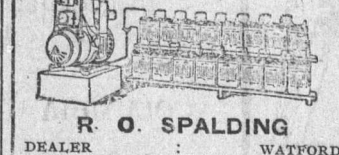
Picture Brings \$39,000.

The sale of pictures owned by the late Sir George Drummond, of Montreal, at Christy's brought extraordinary prices for works of the Barbizon school, says an exchange. A Corot landscape, painted for Daubigny's studio, realized \$34,000. Three works by Corot brought a total of \$65,750. These prices were eclipsed by a Daubigny work, which thirty years ago fetched \$19,000, and now realized \$39,000. It was bought by Airdrie Drummond, who will give it to the Montreal Art Gallery. The result of the day's sale was \$340,000.

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