

The True Joy of the Woods.

We commend to our teachers the two extracts, following, with the hope that they may help to make our boys realize that there are other joys in the woods than the handling of guns or hunting harmless wild animals. The sad death of two lads from our schools recently, under peculiarly distressing circumstances, from the careless handling of firearms, should be a warning to parents and teachers to use greater care to safeguard the lives of their boys, and teach them the true meaning of sport.

Would it not be better for boys to know that it is more manly to spare the lives of the innocent birds, squirrels and other animals of the woods than to shoot them. Few boys are cruel by nature; and the truer sport of making friends with these little denizens of the forest, observing their sprightly ways and industrious habits, will soon become matters of lively interest to them and make a walk through the woods in the autumn days a joy that will increase as the years go by. Then the trees and other plants, and the changes they are undergoing in preparing for the winter's sleep, will interest boys as they wend their way these October days to the top of some lofty hill to look down upon woods and valleys purpled with the many-tinted foliage. It is a joy to live these crisp autumn days if we are in sympathy with the woods and their inhabitants. What a pity it is if we can find no truer joy than the joy of killing.

The Bloodless Sportsman.

I go a-gunning, but take no gun;
I fish without a pole;
And I bag good game, and catch such fish
As suit a sportsman's soul;
For the choicest game that the forest holds,
And the best fish of the brook,
Are never brought down with a rifle shot,
And are never caught with a hook.

I bob for fish by the forest brook,
I hunt for game in the trees,
For bigger birds than wing the air,
Or fish that swim the seas.
A rodless Walton of the brooks,
A bloodless sportsman, I—
I hunt for the thoughts that throng the woods,
The dreams that haunt the sky.

The woods were made for the hunters of dreams,
The brooks for the fishers of song;
To the hunters who hunt for the gunless game
The streams and the woods belong.
There are thoughts that moan from the soul of the pine,
And thoughts in a flower bell curled;
And the thoughts that are blown with the scent of the fern
Are as new and as old as the world.

So, away! for the hunt in the fern-scented wood,
Till the going down of the sun;
There is plenty of game still left in the woods
For the hunter who has no gun.
So, away! for the fish by the moss-bordered brook
That flows through the velvety sod;
There are plenty of fish still left in the streams
For the angler who has no rod. —SAM WALTER FOSS.

I Used to Kill Birds.]

I used to kill birds in my boyhood,
Bluebirds and robins and wrens.
I hunted them up in the mountains,
I hunted them down in the glens.
I never thought it was sinful,—
I did it only for fun,—
And I had rare sport in the forest
With the poor little birds and my gun.

But one beautiful day in the springtime
I spied a brown bird in a tree,
Merrily swinging and chirping,
"As happy as bird could be;
And, raising my gun in a twinkling,
I fired, and my aim was too true;
For a moment the little thing fluttered,
Then off to the bushes it flew.

I followed it quickly and softly,
And there to my sorrow I found,
Right close to its nest full of young ones,
The little bird dead on the ground!
Poor birdies! For food they were calling;
But now they could never be fed,
For the kind mother-bird who had loved them
Was lying there bleeding and dead.]

I picked up the bird in my anguish,
I stroked the wee motherly thing
That could nevermore feed its dear young ones,
Nor dart through the air on swift wing.
And I made a firm vow in that moment,
When my heart with such sorrow was stirred,
That never again in my lifetime
Would I shoot a poor innocent bird! —SEL

A correspondent who is a believer in teachers' institutes sends the REVIEW a notice of a California joint institute with an attendance of 347—the total number of teachers, with a possible single exception, of those engaged in that section! We have something to work for yet.