

Veneering would observe, "the principle is the same," so I am encouraged to let it stand.)

Then comes the incalculable benefit to the physical and mental health from occasional life in the open air among green fields and babbling brooks.

Does a mere purposeless walk or loaf in the country produce the desired effect to anything like the same extent? I doubt it. Because the active mind seems to require a definite object on which to employ itself, and is apt in the absence of a legitimate interest to revert to the cares and worries of life, and to brood unwholesomely, or to lapse into a habit of fruitless castle-building.

A friend to whom I have just shown this, and whose chief recreation consists in long tramps through the country roads and lanes, smiles as he hands my MS. back, and remarks in a slow, dubious tone, which I have learned to recognize as veiling a mild brand of sarcasm:

"Somewhat didac-tic, perhaps." Well, let the "Country Parson" hold forth then, he has a prescriptive right to be didactic.

In his delightful essay "Concerning Work and Play" he says, "Recreation must be such as shall turn the thoughts into a new channel, otherwise it is no recreation at all, and walking, which is the most usual physical exercise *here completely fails.*" There! You see, the mind needs *change* as well as the body. Needs something, as the phrase goes, "to take you out of yourself."

Some find the change in botanizing; some in geological research; some in the hunt for bugs and beetles; while others seek distraction in love making (always more wholesome and satisfactory conducted beneath the cool

shade and seclusion of the merry green wood than in a stuffy room, liable to incursions from an all-unconscious papa or the ubiquitous *enfant terrible.*) Though, by the way, the ideal Sylvan retreat is not always free from the latter intrusion, if we may judge from an anecdote related by a recent writer.

He tells of a youth of tender years who in the course of his rambles in the search of the Palace of Sleep, surprised two grown-ups, a man and maiden, sitting happily together in a sequestered spot.

"Hallo!" exclaimed the man, "what are you doing here?"

"I came to find the princess," promptly explained the small student of nursery lore.

"Well, now you've found the princess, what do you think of her?" was the next query.

"I think she's very pretty" was the embarrassing answer, "but she's wide awake, so I suppose *somebody must have kissed her.*"

But to return. Fishing has been known to promote the physical well-being, but that pursuit seems to have a disastrous effect upon the moral nature, and to invariably result in a loose system of veracity.

(Here my eldest boy, just come home from a camping expedition, his memory stored with the respective weights to an ounce of those fish that got "clean away," is disposed to find me "somewhat didactic, perhaps." I don't care. If the cap fits anybody, he is welcome to wear it, with my blessing.)

Some minds of a meditative cast, can, I suppose, improve an afternoon sitting on a grassy bank, holding forth in a speculative vein to a bored companion; and drawing lessons of life from nature's teeming fount.