

the working winter returns to us we have so little to show as progress in the delicate art of the building of character. It is precisely as if we were trying to acclimate a magnolia tree, and after digging round it and enriching it and watering it for ten months we were to pull it out of the soil and leave it lying with its roots exposed to scorching sun and drought for two months, and then laboriously replant it, and wonder at its retarded development. It is high time that Christian men and women should face the question, 'What of the things of the spirit in vacation?'

Let us premise that the poorest kind of a vacation for a tired, intelligent Christian person is a month of doing nothing. There may be cases where that is necessary; but they are cases for a physician's prescription. Of course, restful occupation presupposes a mind at ease and a conscience void of offense.

Our first and readiest holiday business then, may be the reading of a few good books. The chance novel is a poor makeshift for the happy leisure of a summer's day. A little forethought and contrivance will provide some noble reading for every holiday, and by so much establish the period of rest upon a sound intellectual basis.

Whenever the service of God's church is available, it is the most gracious accompaniment of recreation. When it is not accessible, there remain for the devout soul the pages of Bible or devotional book or at least the hymn and the inspiring printed sermon.

Again, it is good for every one all the year round to maintain a friendly relation with people less well placed than himself. If the poor do not press so closely upon us as in winter, there are always the lonely and the overworked to whom a smile and a word may be priceless. It is even worth trouble to try to reveal to some tired worker that the true recreation does not depend upon change of scene or freedom from toil, but is a matter of the inner spirit. It may be the privilege of the holiday maker by a word to set free the imagination of the stay-at-home worker, to catch a glimpse of what eye hath not seen.

The fretful child, kept in by the rain, may be shown that the great forces of nature, going on their beneficent way, are preparing for him on the morrow a deeper green in the field, a brighter blue in the sky and a clearer horizon. So the child may actually share the joy of the parched earth in the rain, as his fancy follows cloud and brook and bursting seed, while all are quickened by the storm.

There is one other way by which the summer may be wonderfully enriched. The joys of travel may be deepened by the definite intention of seeing and delighting in the world because it is God's world, and in the beauties of art because He has inspired men to create them. We have no right to look upon our earth as the child reads a book—ignorant and incurious of the author. We are bound to see in mountain and ocean and meadow the work of God's hand.

Is there any one phrase in which we may sum up the whole matter? The writers of the gospel story have set the life of our Lord before us with a subtle, inspired adaptation to the needs and the questionings of all the ages. As we study it, we may continually adjust our lives and their new-old problems to the standard of the most blessed Life. Will this process help us here?

One day in the midst of Christ's busiest year he made a long tiresome journey on foot. With the reserve with which the evangelists always speak of the physical conditions of Christ's life, St. John says simply, 'Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey sat thus on the well.' So his companions left him while they went to buy food. Then followed his meeting with the Samaritan woman, the long searching conversation with her, the revelation to her of her sin and the sin of the world, her hurried message to her neighbors and their flocking out to hear his teaching.

The long summer afternoon wore on as he taught—without food or drink—and when the disciples returned they found him, not exhausted and travel-worn as they had left him, but refreshed and invigorated. They were perplexed and said to each other, 'Hath any man brought him meat?' And he, reading their thoughts, replied, 'My meat is to do

Canadian Pictorial

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the will of my Father.' Then with a figure which may flash a quick ray of light even on our modern perplexity, he added, 'Ye say, "There are four months and then cometh harvest." Behold, I say unto you, "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to the harvest."'—Heloise E. Hersey in the 'Interior.'

Begin the Day Alright.

A good beginning is always desirable in a day of work or pleasure. A few cheerful words count for more now than at any other time, for they often serve as a keynote for the whole day. It depends largely upon the mother of a family whether home is a sunny resting-place, or merely a habitation of complaint and contention. Unhappy indeed is the household that begins the morning with domestic clouds. There are some heads of families who seem to consider it due to their dignity that they should perpetually wear a severe aspect, and who are never sterner or more unrelenting than at the breakfast-table. The family leave for their respective daily tasks with a sensation of chilliness that requires the most cheerful surroundings to overcome.

A sunny word now goes far to lighten the day's tasks, to speed the parting members of the family, and to help those who remain behind in the performance of their various duties. The hostess who goes to her kitchen and deftly straightens out with a few touches of her own the tangled skein of work

which she may find there accomplishes more by a few well-chosen words of encouragement than she will by a score of complaints. Consideration and kindness often do wonders with even the most stupid and obdurate of servants. It shows great selfishness for the family or for the mother to make other members of the household bear the burden of their individual trials and grievances at the breakfast-table.—'Christian Globe.'

Home Religion.

There is no greater need to-day than a quickening in home religion. It is beyond question sadly true that we are now reaping all over our land the painful result of irreligious home life. It is evident in all social, domestic and other crimes which shame us. There is no safeguard of our civilization, of the state or of the church which is nearly so strong as that which godly homes furnish. When unbelief or evil dominates here the floodgates of iniquity are open, and all wrong finds an ally. There is no institution in the world that can do or undo the wrong in equal measure with the home. The church is a great sufferer at the hearthstone to-day. It seems an uneven task to teach children in the Sunday School, when it is not supplemented by prayer and example in the home.

The responsibility of parents—not of one, but of both—is very grave here. No condition or pretext can excuse us. It is easier to live right than wrong, to trust and obey God rather than the world, the flesh and the