

is not to be denied that many a man who has stood the strain of the year reasonably well, breaks down under the demoralizing influences of his "vacation." And it is time that the plainest of plain words were said in regard to men and boys whose habits and indulgences are doing not a little to bring into contumely the very recreations which many of us love, and which all of us need.

Wherever a man may go he can no more afford to take his pleasures amid impure companions than amid impure air. No family of Christian parents can afford to spend their summers amid scenes which will familiarize their lads with coarse manners, profane language or vicious habits. Better that your boy never had an outing than that he take it outside good associations and clean living. That man gets most from his summering who takes most into it. It is a blessed thing to turn away from the "financial question" and the "tariff question" and the multitudinous debates of a political campaign, and to listen for a while to the whistle of the grossbeak who wakes you in the morning, or to the plaintive notes of the whip-poor-will who sings your evening lullaby. It is a blessed thing to forget for a while all the twistings and turnings of political leaders and bosses, and to watch instead the graceful dip of the swallow, the swinging curves of the king-fisher and the dreamy sailing of some far away hawk.

And then not the least of the benefits of a true outing is the contact it affords one with a class of men and women whom he does not meet in his daily life. Just as there are flowers which will grow away from their native woods and dales, so there are in these humble cabins by remote rivers and amid vast solitudes, spirits as pure as the ice-plant and as sweet as the wild rose. Many of the world's bravest hearts beat under shirts of blue jean; and many a mother's breast which has never known silken gown has suckled the future ruler of his race.

Yes, take your outings; take them regularly, freely, largely; but take them as you take all good gifts of God, with a good conscience, and let them be treasured in a memory that knows no stain or sorrowful remembrance. Let your vacations be re-creations, and wherever you go, go as God's child to find fellowship with all of God's creatures. Then the vacation season may be looked forward to with fond anticipations, and back upon with pleasant recollections.

Vacation Sabbaths.

The following thoughts on the subject of Church-going during Vacation, from the pen of Mrs. Sangster will be fully appreciated by those of our readers who have summered at any of the popular resorts either at home or abroad.

"As I write," she says, "memory calls into being before my eyes the beautiful face and graceful figure of a dear lady no longer here. Reverses of fortune, sweeping and sudden, obliged her to open her spacious home, long the centre of an elegant hospitality, to the stranger and the summer boarder. She expressed her surprise, naively, at one aspect of the case, as it unfolded to her inexperience;

"People write and inquire about everything. Is there shade, is there a well, is there a play-ground, are there mosquitoes, is there malaria, may they drive or row or sail or ride, can they have rooms with the morning sunshine, is the piano in tune?—in fact, there is not a detail left to the imagination. They solicit fullest knowledge, and properly, but nobody asks about church privileges."

The omission was significant. In arranging for the summer holiday, church privileges do not occupy a large space in the mind of the ordinary tourist, and country pastors do not always discover that visiting Christians are a source of strength and help to their congregations. When the best day of the week is used, not as a day of sacred rest, but as a secular recreation, by people who when at home neither ride nor row nor in any other way invade the religious order of the Sabbath, the example is not to the profit of younger or older observers. Why should there be a license in the mountains or by the sea which is not desired nor accepted in the home life of the city?

To the Christian, away from his own pew and his own pastor, particularly, if attendance on the sanctuary has been regular, there comes the temptation to simply drift with the mass when on a vacation. Perhaps the question of church privileges did "slip his mind." Perhaps he does not feel that Dr. ——— can have a rival in an unknown minister. Perhaps the woods and trees and streams invite, and a book—it may be of sermons—or a religious paper holds out an attraction superior to that of the house of God.

Nevertheless, if a Sabbath well spent means a week of content anywhere, it means it as fully away from home as in home's dear precincts. The restful thoughts, the spiritual elevation, the opportunity for communion, are given in large measure when one is doing quiet duty without ostentation and in simplicity.

The responsibility of the Church for the keeping of the American Sabbath intact is the responsibility of every individual church member. It may not seem much to you or to me, temporarily domiciled in a hotel or at a friend's house, or keeping house in a summer cottage, to pay the same reverence to the Lord's Day that we do when at home, but certainly change of place does not lessen obligation. If Sabbath keeping is a duty in one, it is a duty in another environment. If Sabbath breaking is a sin in one, it is a sin in another environment. Release is never ours from the obligation to obey the divine injunction, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

I spent a summer Sabbath last year in a little out-of-the-way hamlet on Long Island. How sweet it was! How tranquil! No bicycle glided with clanging bell down the white road. No sail put out on the bay. Nobody drove for pleasure. The soft air was thrilled by notes of praise from homes and from the white-spired church, and at set of sun we felt that we had spent a season with the Lord of the Sabbath.

Dear friends, let us meet the issue which confronts us. It is required of every American Christian, man and woman, that each in his or her own lot, as custodians of God's holy day, should be found faithful.

"Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Vacations and Vacations. The benefits accruing from travel and change of scene during the summer, especially for mothers who are closely confined at home most of the year, cannot be over-estimated. But there is a class of women who carry this matter of vacation to excess and leave their husbands at home alone for the entire season to care for himself as best he may. Such women go away, not because there is any imperative need of change, but because the calendar has reached July and they are ready to do anything except to stay at home in a comfortable, quiet, affectionate fashion. They spend the summer in cultivating the acquaintance of people for whom they have only a passing interest, and thereby lose some of the sweetest opportunities for real family fellowship. The German custom of short, frequent outings, when the entire household goes forth together, is far more rational and conduces to the strengthening of domestic ties. The annual upheavals in the United States, which leave the father stranded for weeks in a desolate house, are deplorable in many of their effects.