

In Pastures Green

Mr. Summersox threw back the clothes and went to the door intending to work off his wrath on the intruder. When he came back he was almost cheerful.

"It's the cook," he volunteered.

"Well, I am glad she had the kitchen fire lit when she came in out of the cold."

"She hadn't. It went out," snapped Mr. Summersox.

Then silence reigned in the parlour bedroom until the warmth from the newly-lighted heater began to take the chill off the air.

Dec. 31.—I want to fulfil a promise I made some time ago that I would sum up the results of my experiment at farming before the end of the year and tell frankly what it means to get back to the land. I cannot do that in facts and figures because I have not received the returns for my shipment of apples, and yet I feel that I got enough from it to justify me in saying something. But what I got is not the sort of thing that a man can store in his granary or deposit in a bank. It can be set down only in terms of personal satisfaction with the world we live in. What I am treasuring is chiefly the memory of spacious days, serene hours, and emotions that were not even productive of thought. That seems rather hazy, does it not? And yet it seems everlastingly worth while. After having felt the grip and grind of the world it is something to feel peaceful and secure for a few hours.

And now let us get back to the real advantages of farming and country life. The prevailing idea with many people is that it is monotonous and lonely. It has never struck me in that way, and I take much satisfaction in quoting what Thoreau replied when questioned about the loneliness of his life.

"What sort of space is that which separates a man from his fellows and makes him solitary? I have found that no exertion of the legs can bring two minds much nearer to one another. What do we want most to dwell near to? Not to many men, surely—but to the perennial source of our life, whence in all our experience we have found it to issue, as the willow stands