

VACATION DAYS.

The hot season has its compensations to those who are able to get away to the hills, the lakes, the woods or the seashore. The mercury that drives one out of the office and into the pleasant fields of recreation is blessing to thousands. Many otherwise would grind away until health was completely shattered and all usefulness at an end. Every man and woman should have a vacation. In these nervous, restless times our very natures call for it, and even demand it. And if it were twice a year instead of once a year our employers would be the gainers. There would be more heart in the duties of one's calling. The ennui and lassitude which we not infrequently bring to our duties are not infrequently the result of overwork. There would be fewer wrecks on our railways; there would be better service in our departments of business; there would be more heart in many weary shop girls and worn out salesmen. Life would mean more for us all. The vacation rays help restore the balance, nerves regain their composure, the exhaustion of our bodies under a too-rigorous strain disappears and our vitality reasserts itself. We are our selves again, ready to enter upon duties with zest and enthusiasm. There will be fewer mistakes; our books will balance easier, our blood will flow more healthfully and the mind will pull like a kite on the string until the limit is reached.

It might be a gain if we would all take life with a little more composure. But under existing circumstances that seems, to many men and women, an impossibility. Their time is not their own. They must either do the work of their department, or give it up. A let up means in many cases a giving up, and a giving up means one more unfortunate in the great army of the unemployed. The work must either be done or some one else will be secured to do it. And because of this a rest from such high tension should be given or we lose our zeal, our vigor, our accuracy and come to our work jaded and go about it mechanically.

If our business is in our own hands there is less excuse for this incessant rush and grind. But if such conditions must be, then the necessity for a brief release from it is all the more imperative. We will live longer, we will live happier, we will be more of a blessing to ourselves and to others if the breath of the mountains or of the sea blows through our activities.

In one of our exchanges the editor says that he has not taken a vacation for eight years, but has stood faithfully by his work and issued his paper regularly on time. But in his last issue he says, "Some indications the present season have suggested that a rest and change are needed." Those "indications" are bound to come sooner or later. We may hang to our work through necessity or compulsion, and may continue to perform it in a fairly satisfactory way; but the "indications that rest and change are needed" are waiting for us at some turn of the road. Life is

more than meat. The body is more than raiment. Time is more than an opportunity for work. The character is shaped by the vacation days as well as by the days of toil, by the vocations as well as by the vacations.

An outing of a few weeks gives us themes to think about and laugh over for years to come. The experiences we have had, the friends we have met, the ridiculous people we have seen, the new ways of doing things which we have observed, the knowledge of the world which we have gained are things which give spice to life. The new orators to whom we have listened, the singers who have entertained us, the ships in which we have ridden, the streams in which we have fished, the woods in which we have hunted are memories that come back to us after many days, like the bread cast upon the waters, to strengthen many a friendship and brighten many an evening hour. And the employer who kindly gives his "help" their rightfully-earned season of recreation has not only added to the efficiency of his employees, but has contributed to their home happiness and their own individual delight. Many large firms give a day's outing to those in their employ, an occasion which attaches employer and employee more closely together and results in better relationship and more efficient service. Better would we all be if we would follow the Master's advice: "Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile."—United Presbyterian.

OF INTEREST TO THE PUBLIC.

The General Baggage Department of the Grand Trunk Railway System has just issued a summary of the rules and regulations governing baggage car traffic for the guidance of baggage masters, station and train baggemen on the entire System, and this pocket manual pertaining to their duties is designed to provide not alone for the usual conduct of the business, but action desired in case of all kinds of contingencies, and perplexities, which may assail the employees of the Baggage Department.

The Manual consists of 68 pages, and an examination of the book indicates the very important part the Baggage Department of a great Railway System plays in the conduct of the passenger traffic, the assurance that passengers may feel that their personal belongings which accompany them in the baggage car are being carefully watched, and that the liability for the loss of either temporary or permanent is arriving at the disappearing point by foresight and care exercised in directing the operation of this important branch of the service.

There is a distinct effort made in this book to have ever present in the mind of the employee of the Baggage Department that his first duty is to the public, and to illustrate this, on the first page of the book appears such clauses as the following:

"The relations and responsibilities of common carriers to the travelling public are such as to require from the carrier the most constant and watchful care of the property of the traveller.

"As Station and Train Baggage masters you are entrusted with the safe-keeping and proper transportation of effects which are valuable to the owners. Nothing can be more annoying to travelers than the loss of, abuse of or delay of their baggage.

"You must try to give satisfaction to the public and establish a reputation for courtesy and civility to everyone. You are expected to be polite at all times, to answer civilly all questions addressed to you, and if unable to give any necessary information, endeavor when practicable, to obtain it if pertaining to baggage car traffic, if not, the passenger should be directed to the proper office. Endeavor to make the Grand

Trunk Railway System popular; its business is dependent on the good-will of the people."

It is expected that in this manner the employees of the Baggage Department will appreciate that in serving the public intelligently and well, they are serving their employers equally, as without this spirit to co-operate, neither the public nor those in charge of the different Departments of a great Railway System are reasonably satisfied.

LITERARY NOTES.

The August Fortnightly contains the usual varied bill of fare. Two articles on the Quebec Tercentenary appear most strongly to Canadians—the Romance of the Past, by Edward Salmon, and the Call of the Present, by James Milne. In the latter we find a good description of the French-Canadian of today: "The French Canadian has, admittedly, not the initiative, the energy, the 'grit' of the Briton, who is already the industrial force of Canada. He is content to go on rather in the old way of simplicity, salt and sincerity, 'contented wi' little and cantie wi' mair,' as Robert Burns says. He is fond of music and of art, and the statues of Champlain and Laval which he has erected in Quebec—French Canadian handiwork—suggest that some day he may be the artist of the American continent. He is thinking a good deal of the past, to which tradition and his Church anchor him, while the Briton is thinking chiefly of the future, and of the splendor and wealth that await a Canada fully peopled and fully developed." Other subjects discussed in this number are: "The Fight Against Duelling in Europe, the Literary Indebtedness of England to France, the Persian Crisis, Sweated Industries, and Towards Union in South Africa."

Gertrude Atherton, who is travelling on the continent, spent July in Oberammergau, where she has been the guest of the man who takes the part "Christus" in the famous Passion Play.

At last Swinburne's "The Age of Shakespeare," is in the press and is promised for September or early October. The actual day of publication is left to the Harpers, who have the American copyright, and whose splendid edition of Swinburne's Poetical Works has made known to Americans the poet acknowledged by all European critics to be the greatest alive. This great prose work is published in England by Chatto & Windus. It is to be dedicated to Charles Lamb in a poem, the opening stanza of which is quoted in the Athenaeum:

"When stark oblivion froze above their names

Whose glory shone round Shakespeare's bright as now,

One eye beheld their light shine full as fame's,

One hand unveiled it; this did none but thou."

Harper's Magazine has published Swinburne's great essays on "Lear" and "Othello" and "Richard III." It published also Theodore Watts-Dunton's essay on Hamlet.

Another link with Thackeray, Dickens, Disraeli and many of the literati of the last century is broken, in the death of Charles J. Dunphie, who was for half a century on the staff of the Morning Post. He became the dramatic and art critic in 1856, holding the double post until 1895, when he confined himself to the art department. Mr. Dunphie wrote Latin verse and some essays which gave him genuine prestige in scholarly coteries. "Sweet Sleep," "The Chameleon," and "Many Colored Essays" are mentioned in the biographical notice. Mr. Dunphie was a friend of Joseph Knight, Westland Marston, father of the blind poet, Philip Bourke Marston, and many of the distinguished group who were wont to gather at "Chalk Farm."