

forth. Scrambling over logs piled high upon each other, or crawling upon fours beneath those suspended just high enough above ground, they work their way from bush to bush gathering the finest of samples, those growing on the open ground being generally shrivelled by the heat of the sun. After enduring a considerable amount of fatigue, they come from the patch usually well-loaded with the fruit; but their work does not always end here. The Dutch, who undoubtedly are the best pickers in Ontario, supply our markets with large quantities of these berries. Sturdy men and women, with equally robust-looking boys and girls, who have just commenced life in the backwoods, and who know more about hardships than we at first may imagine, may be seen trudging alone toward the nearest market. The load that each one carries is often enormous. Large pails filled with this ponderous fruit are carried one on each arm, while a third is generally borne upon the head. We can see them in town making bargains with their Canadian neighbours. Some can only speak a few words of broken English; enough, however to make known that the fruit is of the choicest quality—"as good as the best they have seen since they left their fadderland."

Notwithstanding the eagerness of these needy people to obtain fair prices for their fruit, it is often taken from them we are sorry to say, for sums far below its real value; the purchasers being individuals whose hands never felt a brier, and who care but little for the welfare of the poor.—*From the "New Dominion Monthly" for July.*

HUCKLEBERRIES AND RATTLESNAKES.

In July before the raspberry season is entirely past, other berries, equally prized by many, begin to ripen. There are the well known whortle-berries, vulgarly called "huckleberries," of which there are several varieties; but those found in marshes are now the principal ones sought after. There the bushes are taller and the berries much larger than on the upland. Before the drainage of the marshes, water was a great obstacle in the way of the pickers. This however did not keep many who were seized with the berry fever from going there. Even women have been known to wade for hours after the fruit. This of course, had a very deleterious effect upon their constitutions; the penalty that many of them had to pay being an attack of fever and ague, that often kept them within doors for weeks. The drainage of the marshes, which work has been accomplished in many places through the wisdom of municipal authorities, thus rendering the country, around so much healthier, has made the picking of these berries almost a pleasure instead of a task. Above, the picker beholds the conically shaped top of the verdant tamarack, screening him from the heat of the sun; while beneath he treads upon a mossy carpet of the softest kind. Most of the berries on the bushes are breast high to a person, and as they grow in clusters an experienced hand can gather a large quantity in a day. Some of the pickers become so engaged that they often forget the venomous reptiles that at this season of the year come above the moss to show themselves. Most of the marshes are infested with rattle-snakes, but strange to say, very few people have ever been bitten. The hideous snakes, though, often cause con-

siderable excitement in a march. A picker hears a noise as if shells were being rubbed together down by his feet. He looks and finds himself in close proximity to one of those monsters. He gives a shriek and a spring, but somehow, in his excitement he loses his balance, and down he tumbles, the big blue berries from his basket rolling over the moss in every direction. The first thing he thinks about is the distance he has made from the snake; and happily he finds he has landed several feet away. But lo! there is a scratch on his hand. Has not the reptile pierced him with its fangs? It is altogether probable. He shouts for his companions, and soon relatives, acquaintances, strangers assemble around him. Many antidotes, such as indigo, ash, whiskey, etc., are spoken of, but, unfortunately, not one is at hand. A bandage is placed tightly round the wrist, and a move is made for home. Before leaving, however, some of the more venturesome ones take a look for the snake; but his snakeship has crawled under the turf, and is safe. Rattlesnakes seem to till the minds of all, and berries lose their charm for that day. As they walk quietly over the mossy carpet on their way homeward, many a chill creeps over the more timid ones; and when they finally bid adieu to the marsh some resolve never to return again; but, alas, for such resolutions, in a few days some of the same party are again in the marsh. What has become of the adventurer with the snake? His hand not beginning to swell or change in color, they finally conclude it is simply a scratch, and not a bite of a poisonous reptile. Boys are sometimes rash enough to go into marshes barefooted. Parents, if they have any regard for their children, should put a stop to this practice. People from a great distance visit marshes to obtain whortleberries. They are esteemed very highly on account of their medicinal properties. Cranberries, also, grow in marshes, but not in sufficient quantity of late to pay for the picking. The time may come when the vine will be cultivated in the rich soil, and large quantities of this valuable fruit grown for our markets.—*From the "New Dominion Monthly" for July.*

Heath and Home.

"ONLY A FARMER."

"Now, John, do put on your best boots to-day. Those are covered with mud and positively not fit to be seen."

"They're good enough for me, wife. I'm only a farmer."

Only a farmer, was John's hobby, and he loved to repeat it to his wife as an excuse for his slovenly habits and neglect of the common courtesies which distinguish the gentleman, in whatever occupation he may be engaged, or position in society he occupies. As I happened to be stopping in the neighborhood, I occasionally dropped in on some trifling errand, but more particularly to notice the result and development of the one idea—"only a farmer." I have heard poor preaching, tiresome lectures, shallow pleadings, and noisy debate, but I never heard so weak an apology for untidiness and sloth.

The result was as one might expect. His old shell of a house that his wife—being a superb housekeeper—kept in the most perfect order, seemed just