

raking hay. How poetical is this and many another task when you are not doing it yourself, and how prosaic when you are! If beautiful Maud Muller could speak out of her picture, she would tell you that she does not enjoy being looked at. Bare feet in the presence of shoes and stockings feel all the agony of blushing, without its compensating wave of color and sense of becomingness. A hay-rake, in comparison with a bicycle to lean on, is an instrument of humiliation. Please go away.

Our Maud's charms brought us to the verge of rudeness, but the business in hand saved the day. As it happened she and her sister were planning to go that very afternoon to that identical woodlot, and on the self-same errand. The knowing man had only opined there ought to be berries in that lot: Maud's past experience and present instinct turned the potential into indicative and positive. There were raspberries there!

So forward! past the front door of the farmhouse, and on through a grassy field to a field which proclaimed in unmistakable fence language: Change here for Woodlot, and all routes through the Underbrush!

The wheels were soon hidden in a clump of bushes, and the real expedition began. Beyond a stretch of overgrown pasture land, lay a broad band of forest green on the horizon. A deep sky notch in it pointed meaningfully. All the crooked pasture paths seemed to lead to it. We hurried to gain it, for somewhere in there, just out of sight, was a clearing where the raspberries were swarming in a green and crimson riot.

A leisurely walk in the woods is one thing: to hurry through them on a given errand is another. In the first case you are the guest of Beauty, and she entertains you royally. In the latter, you are the stranger passing by her gates. Your eyes rove hither and thither, snatching what they can, but your heart is not in it, and the wood knows it. Those dream-like vistas of green and gold blur before your glances. Slender white birch stems wave you by. They have nothing to say in a hurry. Great rocks, with a thousand living tongues in their clefts, turn you their faces grey and speechless. Odors, which ought to be familiar, float to you grudgingly and vanish before you can name them. In the whole wood there is nothing offered to you freely, where if you paused it would all be your own. Stay! stay! if you would find beauty and pleasure at home. On! On! if you have an object ahead. And the chief zest of it all is in being thus tantalized.

Midway, we came to a brook in a hollow, and, just above, a parting of the slender wood-track. Which hand should we follow, right or left? Our memories would not serve at this particular fork, our powers of reasoning from observation were far from Indian-like. There was nothing to call upon but inclination, and inclination, a wind out of an unknown quarter. It blows upon you and impels you whither you think you would, and leaves you where you find you would not. Never trust to inclination in the woods. Which ever path it makes you feel is the right one, is sure to be wrong; and if you choose on that principle you will be wrong again.

Deeper and deeper into the green shadows we went, until the road, overgrown with sun-loving plants farther back, rustled underfoot with the slippery padding of last year's dead leaves. The sun was a scarce visitor here. We peered eagerly about for signs of the expected clearing. Once it seemed as if the flecks of sky off to the right were nearer and brighter than straight ahead. Reason deserted, and impulse led a wild-goose chase through the thicket. Result, the discovery of a side-hill in that direction, with trees and heavy undergrowth stretching adown and beyond it unbroken. Reason returned to the beaten way, and impulse retired discomfited. In a wood-lot, a wood road might be expected to lead to the place where the wood is taken out. Reason is not above giving experience many a sarcastic nudge and superfluous "I told you so!"

Suddenly, a broad beam of sunlight lay across our path, and in it stood a raspberry bush! A glance showed that it was bare of fruit, but was it not the forerunner of a loaded host? A few moments of excited scrambling, and then the trees opened out into a large, semi-circular clearing, its whole surface green—was it green or red?—with the peculiar, hot, bristling foliage of a raspberry field under an August sun.

It was now twelve o'clock, and with bushels and bushels of berries waiting to drop into one's cans, where was the need of hurrying? Upon a mossy hillock, under some young birch saplings, we sat us down to lunch, and to "loaf and invite our souls." The sandwiches and cake disappeared all too soon, but there remained the sweet, fine, elusive odors of balsam, of bay-leaf, of fern and warm earth; the solitary heart-stirring note of some belated white-throat; the musical stillness of the thicket; and the million-pointed sparkling of the sunlight upon the wavering sea of foliage about us. Prone on our backs we lay, watching the airy tops of the birches brushing the sky, and steeping ourselves in a perfect luxury of laziness.

Once a small animal of some sort darted out from behind a tree and ran into the ground at our very feet. We both sat up very straight. Lucy was of the opinion

that it was a woodchuck. My idea was a rat. Lucy said its body was long and thin. I said it was round and fat. Lucy said it was too furry for a rat. I said it was too sleek for a woodchuck. We did not settle the question, but our combined knowledge of rats and woodchucks, beginning at zero, had widened into two distinct and positive images of that momentary, visual streak. There is nothing like discussion to warm ignorance into assumption of wisdom. And assumption waxes into persuasion, and persuasion hatches out conviction, and conviction puts on the plumage of assurance and struts unabashed. With plenty of discussion one can do without knowing.

But where are the wild raspberries? you ask. Exactly the question which confronted us as we floundered through that tangle of brush and brake, stumps and dead branches, raspberry leaves and prickles—and nothing more. There were not two berries in the whole clearing. The white throat must have been sorry for us, for he suddenly called out, with a new set of words to the old air:

"Better go home again—home again
Home—again—home again!"

Never! In hunting for wild berries it is exactly as in life, the thing you want must be somewhere, and it is yours to find it. All failures—if your health is good and the sun is shining—serve but to put a keener edge on the hunt. After the first few flat and sick moments are over it is as easy to start afresh as it is to begin a new day.

In our case the explanation of the failure was easy. It was the wrong clearing, of course. Accordingly, back we went with all haste, and at the little brook in the hollow where should we meet but Maud and her sister, just turning into the other road. They were carrying modest baskets that made us and our cans seem like a train of milk wagons. The sister did not think we could fill the cans—her face was tactfully grave as she glanced at them—but there were undoubtedly berries to be had for the picking. So once more our visions were rosy.

Arrived at the clearing, Maud and her sister plunged into the bushes and went to work with the silence and skill of experts. Lucy and I also plunged, but it was all plunging and no work. Had we come so far to waste our energies on those mere travesties of raspberries,—small, dried-up, ant-eaten, and only half a dozen to the bush at that? Grumbling, we roamed about for half an hour or so, covered perhaps the bottoms of the cans, and then left the field to the heroic pair who were steadily and admirably making the most of the few and the best of the worst, and saying nothing about it. I have no doubt they got "enough for tea" with not a fraction of our fuss and talk. There is the way of the people who really make the world go.

But the berry-picking instinct dies hard. Lucy knew there were some berries in the Deep Hollow Road, because she had seen them. Thither we rode by the roundabout way of the Mills, our cans rattling shamelessly over the stones, and scoured the rocky hillsides of that lovely road. With what result one incident will show. While the locusts were singing their loudest and driest, and the dust in the road lay the hottest, we sat down under a tree and recklessly ate every berry we had picked. The cream was very warm, and had little specks of butter in it. Why couldn't farmers' wives comb the churning and bicycle riding in some such way?—asked Lucy. Lucy's levity is often both a cloak and a cure for concern.

There was still, however, one forlorn hope left,—a certain pasture on Greenwich Hill, where somebody or other—not positive enough for naming—had said there might be berries. It would at least be interesting to test the whole gamut of potentialities. So back to the Mills a wheel, up the long hill afoot, and there at the top was a sudden excuse for not pushing the purpose of the day to a hopeless finish, the familiar view which proved to be for us one of Nature's consolation prizes for the defeated and empty-handed.

The great wide valley at its summer ease is indeed as satisfying as a volume from the poets. The rivers, creeping, shining, curving out of the green western hills—flashing eager welcome to the advancing sea, or lying darkly abandoned by the fickle one, these are the lyrics of the landscape. The many roofs and orchard squares, the fields, and the sober-going roads, are visual sonnets on the cardinal virtues. The far away purple mountain suggests the deep-sounding richness of a sacred psalm. The brown, misty, tidal waters of the Basin carry one as on the wings of an ode to the unknown but open and alluring Beyond.

Like poetry, too, it is all for pure absorption, with any definite individual thinking lost in the magic haze of its distances. It is good to visit such a place of dreams, but for actual living and doing one must not stay on the hill-top. Is it not always the inhabitants of the plains who run to and fro in earth and air busily?

Six o'clock, one moment more delicious than another, it is immediately preceding the one in which you are said to be "making up your mind." Perhaps it is the conscious absence of mind, so to speak, which makes it so agreeable; for mind on a summer's day is a tyrant and a bore. Nature understands this, and occasionally snatches him away in a cloud or a misty

sky-line. It is the blessed relief which invests the landscape with its mystic charm. You are aware that the pleasure will pass before you really possess it, but the knowledge of the power to hold off your mind for a moment and a moment longer helps Nature to fill in the blank with a double joy.

Not even a glance of regret was sent in the direction of that last pasture as we rode on and by down the hill, our cans rattling loud and triumphant peans all the way. Why not? To tramp all day, filling every moment with some benefaction of the woods and fields, and to feel at the end as tireless as if immortal,—these are the true rewards of wild raspberrying. And in life as well, what matters the thing called success, when experience is so sure and so rich?

Only, alas! there are always families waiting for supper.
Greenwich, N. S.
BLANCHÉ BISHOP.

"Their Eyes Were Holden."

BY REV. S. E. WISHARD, D. D.

That walk to Emmaus on the morning of the resurrection was full of surprises. The coming of the Stranger to the two bewildered disciples was unexpected. The news of the resurrection, brought by the women, was a surprise. The apparent ignorance of the Stranger concerning the amazing events of the past few days was a surprise. "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that are come to pass in these days?" That they needed rehearse the events of those days to any one was a surprise, but the greatest surprise of all was the fact that they were talking to the risen Lord and knew it not. "Their eyes were holden." The deep shadows of their sorrow had darkened their vision; or ignorance of the necessity for those events left them unprepared for them.

Turning from the two disciples to ourselves, as we walk in our journey and are sometimes sad, the pitiful fact is that our eyes are so often holden. He has said to us, "Lo, I am with you alway" But in the bewilderment of the rushing events of life, in the amazement of our disappointments we do not see him. Unbelief casts upon us shadows so deep, darkness so thick, that we do not recognize him. Our eyes are holden. It ought to be settled in the mind and heart of every believer that he is the Ever Present One. This truth is fundamental to all peace and comfort in the Christian life. We accept it in the beginning of our journey. He is the Good Shepherd. "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out, and when he putteth forth his own sheep he goeth before them" And so long as we keep our eyes fixed upon him, and hear his voice, we rejoice in his presence. But there comes a day of sadness. The unexpected has come to us. We had planned otherwise. Our cherished things have disappeared. Like the two disciples, "we had thought" events would move along the way of our purposes. But his thoughts were not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways. And as he began to unfold his divine plans, we were disappointed, bewildered, amazed. Our eyes were holden. We did not see him in the old familiar form, as we were accustomed to see him before he interrupted our plans, when our hand was in his.

How many Christians start out in the new life joyfully! They see him, recognize his presence for a time. He is the one altogether lovely. They would have no other. His ways are ways of pleasantness. Great peace have they. He is their song and their delight. But there comes a time when

"HE LEADS IN PATHS WE DID NOT KNOW."

Our faith staggers. Can this be he? The way is rough. Our feet are sore. New burdens come to us, and climb upon our weary shoulders. Our eyes are holden. We cease our singing, and cry to the passers by, "Whither is my beloved gone?" Troubled one, he is there just the same as in the past. Disguised now, but he is with you, not in a song, but in your trouble. He never was so near as now, but your eyes are holden. Nothing comes to you but what comes from his hand, either on purpose or by permission. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without his notice. Not an event comes without his permission. "Ye are of more value than many sparrows." A mother may forget the child of her love and care, but he cannot forget. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

There comes into your home a sorrow that no one can know but God and yourself. For a moment you stagger and are ready to question whether he knows. Yes he knows. He is there. He is tempering the storm. Hear him say, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." His explanations will come in the future, as they came to Abraham, as they came to Jacob, when he saw the wagons that Jacob sent to carry him down into Egypt, to the land of plenty.

He is in all our care, and tells us to give it over to him. He is putting his loving hand under every burden, and will lift them all if our eyes are not holden. It was our plan for ourselves that concealed him for us. And when he came to help and comfort in his own way, we thought he was a stranger. Our eyes were holden. It is our unbelief that conceals him, puts him far away. "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," are his sweet words, that never can be broken. Not one jot or tittle of that promise can pass away. "Only believe." "Said I not unto thee that if thou wouldst believe thou shouldst see the glory of God?"

All these disappointments, sorrows, burdens, griefs, against you? No, no, never! They cannot be against you. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" The world, the flesh and the devil may combine to torture and cripple us. But if we are his, and he is ours, all these are vanquished foes. "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us." Let our eyes be no more holden then.

Even when come the valley and shadow of death, his presence shall be with his children. They need fear no evil, for his rod, symbol of power, and his staff, symbol of support, shall be with the children of faith. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor persons, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." For he has declared, "My presence shall go with thee."—Herald and Presbyter.