

expression synonymous with work. Young men attend any institution of learning with the express intention of studying, and in and through this study, not only for the sake of the knowledge it brings, but also for the interest and pleasure it ever affords, they hope to be educated. This is a common idea and one most familiar to us all; perhaps so familiar that we scarcely give it a thought, and are in danger of allowing it to exert no vital influence upon our lives. But college life, here at "Acadia," occupies just eight months of the year: the rest is a vacation. Is then the process of being educated like a winter coat, to be laid aside as something too heavy and warm for summer weather, and again to be taken up when we return in October? Or is this impossible, and does this process, once having been commenced in a healthy man, ever appeal to him for aid in its onward and upward course? It would be more reasonable to suppose the latter statement true, and, if so, *what is vacation education?*

Now the mind, it will be readily admitted, is as often developed and strengthened by associations with objects in nature and life, as by contact with books; and the impressions thus made are often more lasting than any otherwise produced. With what, then, does the mind come in contact during the summer? During the fall, the winter and the spring one hundred students are gathered together for work. In the early summer they separate, and each of them, it may be presumed, seeks employment in some sphere congenial to his tastes. Let us briefly note the effect of some of these various pursuits upon the man.

One young man's father is rich. There is for him no need of working for the money necessary to defray the expenses of an education. The summer is passed in a round of pleasure; picnics, boating parties, baseball, tennis, all helping to while away the time which he knows, in complete idleness, would hang so heavily on his hands. But the question may be asked, Is this wrong? Is it not positively right to relieve the mind which has borne such a burden the preceding eight months? Yes, it is right. But the question is, rather, Does such employment, when carried to such a length, relieve or rest the mind; or does it render the mind stronger in itself,—better able to receive and retain knowledge? It does not. A young man, thus fully employed during his vacation, would return to his college a better tennis or baseball player, it may be, but ill-prepared to take up his work, to enjoy it and be benefitted thereby. Should not the vacation be so spent that the mind, yes and the man himself, shall be strengthened; and so that, on his return, although there may be for a day or two a disinclination to study on account of strangeness, yet very soon the mind will feel and reveal its strength in the prosecution of the year's work? For the mind "absence of occupation is not rest."

Or suppose the summer to be spent in travel. A young student goes down to the wharf and embarks for England or the continent, with the intention of doing the country. Two weeks are spent in going and a like time in returning, leaving three months for actual sight-seeing. Now travel does educate; but a man should not hope in so short a time as three months to see all that is worth seeing. A week here, a week there; a fortnight in London, a week in Paris. Much is seen, and if this is the purpose in view, it is abundantly fulfilled. But mere sight-seeing is not the true purpose in travelling. The true idea should be, to develop. A traveller comes in contact with other men very different from himself, and he sees strange objects which, if thought of and carefully studied, have wondrous power to mould his whole being; and so if a person meet an Englishman to-day, a Frenchman to-morrow, and a German the next day, he simply has met them. Their life has not affected his life; their customs have not caused him to think about them and decide how they reveal the national life; their personality has not come into living contact with his personality, and very, very slightly has the student traveller been benefitted.

The vacation has been very pleasantly passed, but the mind has become excited and disturbed, and has received no steady, uniform growth or permanent strength. A summer can be spent profitably in travel and, in thus spending the vacation, the better plan to pursue would be to pass the whole time in one country, studying the people, and by a careful consideration of their manners, customs, social and political life, to see how they really live. In this way the mind may be truly developed and the whole being rendered nobler and more capable of better thoughts and feelings.

We have spoken of two methods by which a vacation may be passed away; now let us notice a third. A vacation may, and not only may, but by very many young men must be spent in hard work. Of the students who leave "Acadia" in June, some are very soon found in lawyers' offices, others in the schoolroom, others on the mission field; and to the honest student all these varied occupations are very suggestive of work. A week is spent at home, the trunk again packed, and very soon he is a stranger in a strange land. In a great measure study is still kept up. If our student be a preacher he may be possessed of some good ideas, but oh how hard he finds it to express them; and so he has to think and study and read till at last there is the idea clothed in plain language, simple, expressive and well calculated to please, reprove or exhort, as the case may be. Is not this *vacation education*? Is not the mind and the soul developing? Will he not find it far more easy to express himself again, when again there is occasion or necessity?