

Vacation.

I do not know who instated the idea of taking a vacation, possibly Adam and Eve having found that they were no longer happygrew tired of living in the Garden of Eden and motored across the country to spend the hot summer months with rural relatives. Or possibly Noah, worn out with his months of anxiety in keeping that frail craft afloat with all its precious cargo may have decided to go upon Mt. Ararat for a rest.

Whoever was the author of such a custom, no doubt deserves much credit for he has had a great following. The schools are scarcely closed when people begin a mad rush to get away somewhere. City people must have country air, country people must enjoy the sights of the city. The man in the east goes west while the man in the west plans a trip to New York or Atlantic City. People in ~~the~~ many parts of the U.S. continue their summers the year round by spending their winters in Florida while others even brave the hardships of Alaska in search of that vain something, they know not what.

I have often wondered why we cannot be happy where we are, but must go chasing each other around from place to place always imagining that someplace else is better. Be this as it may, my family had already fallen victims and wanted a vacation. The official board had already declared it and the pastor was to have a leave of absence covering three Sundays. This would give us almost four weeks, provided we left on Monday morning and came back on Saturday. I wish I could look in on that happy company of boys as they talked of the long ride to Columbus, the state capital, the bears at Olentangy Park, the visit at fat grandpa's and the big times in the country. A trip across the Atlantic Ocean could not have filled them with more delight.

Next begins the process of getting ready. Every article of clothing must be fresh and clean, and preachers usually have their laundry done at home. Besides, a number of garments must be made. My grandmother and aunts had told me never to go away unless the house was in perfect order. In their own words "one never knows how he will come home, he might be carried home". I never thought seriously about the matter until I came home from one vacation by the way of the hospital where I rested for a week with broken bones, cuts, and bruises. It was then that the truth of the old saying was driven home, and now I'm handing down the same adage to my descendants.

Monday morning dawned at last, and at six-thirty you might have seen us wending our way to the station. This was not the type of vacation so popular today where you step into a pullman car and at your destination you are whisked away to a hotel where you loaf around, half bored to death because you do not know any one. This is the type where you take the whole family along, and carry a lunch of real fried chicken when you forget you are really grown up and go back to the old neighborhood to feast with aunts and uncles, cousins and grandparents.

That was a noble army that marched down Main Street in ~~the~~ the beautiful town of Hillsboro. Father took the lead armed with one of those collapsible telescope suit cases containing about two bushels of clothing/ in his right hand while in his left he carried a suit case containing the best articles of clothing owned by each member of the family. A preacher must be ready for anything from country picnics to a formal reception of a funeral. Next follow the boys, one with the hammock, another with the umbrella, and another with the precious lunch box. I bring up the rear with the go-cart with its precious and the little satchel. I always persisted in taking charge of these two articles for I said if any thing should happen to either of them I would have no one to blame but myself.

That was one of the warmest days of that summer, but the boys/ must see the State Capital, Kirby's Ten Cent Store and eat our lunch in Olentangy Park. If we could only have lifted the veil of the future months we might/ have been spared some of this agony for the next fall we moved to Columbus for a nine years stay when such scenes became too common to notice.

That night we slept, or rather tried to sleep at fat grandpa's. Our hard work, the excitement ~~of~~ the day, the intense heat ~~on~~ the strange water or more likely all of them together had robbed our vacation trip of its halo already. We writhed in pain/ and our eyelids refused to close in peaceful slumber and the poor preacher wished he had never heard of vacations. In the face of such difficulties you might think we never undertook another vacation. Not so, for as often as the season comes around the same wild wanderlust seizes us and we go through with the same process. We come home so completely tired out and exhausted that it is days before we can assume our regular duties and yet everybody must have a vacation.

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BH/JH.