



THE

Good Neighbour

BY MARY

From Me To You

I WISH I was an artist so that I could capture for you, and forever, the beauty that is before me now. I do wish you were here to share it with me—the magic of a holiday. Yes, I am holidaying—one precious week stolen from the very days themselves, seven shining days which will forever be set apart from the other three hundred and fifty-eight of this year, just one precious week when the very world itself seems to have paused in its activities just to allow a small and unimportant person such as myself to “stand and stare,” and to revel in the beauty around me. This is a gem of a holiday spot—a sheltered corner of the Marlborough Sounds. From my window, as I write, I can see a cherry blossom tree in full bloom—picture for yourselves the pale pink of its flowers and the deeper pink foliage outlined against a sea of Mediterranean blueness. Reminds me of a verse I love:

“A curve in the road, and a hillside,
Clearcut against the sky,
A tall tree tossed by autumn wind,
And a white cloud sailing by.
Ten men went along that road,
And all but one passed by,
He saw the hill, the trees, the cloud,
With an artist's mind and eye,
And he put them down on canvas,
For the other nine to buy.”

Beyond the cherry tree, which stands like a sentinel guarding the gate, the grass slopes gently down to the golden strip of beach and beyond that again the jetty runs out into the clear waters. On the opposite hillside, not very far away, the bush comes down to meet the water's edge. This morning when I woke, the sun was shining over the hilltop and it tipped the flowers on the apple blossom tree, all dewy wet they were and they shone like polished silver in the morning light.

Yesterday we went walking in the bush behind us. We climbed and climbed, and oh! the beauty of that bush walk! In one spot we found a grove of birches, their

black trunks and silvery-green foliage being silhouetted against the blue of the sky above. All so lovely—I am sure had I been there on a moonlight night, there would have been elves and fairies dancing in that grove for my delight. The bush was full of birdsong and sunshine filtering through the trees; and our hearts were full of a quiet content undreamed of in the busy ways of the city.

And by the time you read this I will be well back again into the whirl of tomorrow, with this idyll of loveliness far behind me, but remembering that “God gave us roses in June that we may have memories in December” I will look back on my springtime holiday with joy.

And because I have enjoyed myself so richly, I would ask every one of you to make a special effort this summer to have a break, no matter how small, away from

your usual occupation. Just drop all your worries and relax. There is nothing like it for reviving tired hearts and tired toes. And there is always the joy, after being away, of returning—the welcome of your dear ones, who cannot do enough to show how glad they are that you are back again; and too, there is the joy of new friendships, or perhaps renewing old ones. Life slips away far too quickly—we must do our best these days to make the very most of every moment and to do that we must be fit and able to carry out what lies before us. So don't think a holiday is a waste of time—it isn't! It is an investment you will never regret.

Mary

Mary's "At Home"

THE days are very hot here and although spring is still here, the weather is so mild that it is hard to believe that summer is not well advanced. I started on my big garden this week-end and three dozen tomato plants were amongst the proudly planted. Do you like animals? So far we have twenty-one “additional”—otherwise calves, and really they are little darlings, gambolling in the green fields.—M., Feilding.

ABOUT that problem to solve in a recent competition: I do feel that the winner, “Rainbow,” handled the subject in a most able and just way, looking at it from all angles and summing it up in a decidedly practical way, for indeed it was no frivolous matter to set a mother's heart at rest. I was sure she would derive great help

and solace from “Rainbow's” entry. Incidentally, what a life it would be if husbands could be turned out to order! 'Tis a much better test, however, to make the best of what one gets.—Roundabout, King Country.

MY spare time these days is taken up with Red Cross work and I don't seem to have much time for letter writing. During the winter I had lessons in papier mache with the object of making splints, bowls and trays for E.P.S. and Red Cross needs. It is very interesting work but takes time to become proficient.

I liked your letter about remembering birthdays, but I am afraid I must confess to not always remembering those of my friends. Years ago it was the fashion to have a birthday book and our friends were asked to write