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NATURE NOW

Uses Summer to Renew Self

By LYDIA KING FRESHÉ
 Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Here in the close fastness of summer we live in a world apart. We have just experienced that which we have long promised ourselves, a single week of vacation from our writing chores.

Now rested in mind and body, the pencil falls naturally into place once more, as we share our thoughts and experiences with you.

This is a day of clear skies and high winds. Now in mid-morning the color of the water is easily described by a word coined for the purpose "aqua maris". The waves move in a ceaseless rhythm, gliding a tune that is old but never monotonous. One of our coveted vacation joys is to read at random; not what one should or must read but what one enjoys. Such an experience was ours this past week, with "An English Year" by Nan Fairbrother.

ARRANGED IN the pattern of the seasons, this book is a young mother's reflection and experience as she lives in a 16th century old house on a Buckinghamshire farm. Here she has retreated for a year with her two small sons.

To this reader, the author's avid likes and dislikes, as she evaluates the varied realm of the arts and letters, are second in interest to her response to the English countryside.

Always sensitive to the moment, her reflections are particularly her own; colors, sounds, sights, impressions and moods are seldom expressed with such provocative insight.

Always when your scribe travels in person or via the printed page, she is more impressed with the similarities than with the differences of the countryside as compared with our own.

THAT THE English spring should know the voice of the

fortunately, she began way back in high school and college. A second question which can be somewhat disconcerting is "Do you think writing is worth the time and effort you put into it?" No one who does anything creative can measure its value in terms of another's questioning. The joy and compensation of every creative effort lies in sharing something of oneself with others. And this is a wholly unique endeavor which could not be done by anyone else. I answer this question for myself, alone, and the answer is "Yes".



Mrs. Freshé

THE CHRISTMAS roses, winter aconite, yellow archangel and the heather on the moors; these the botany books have long told us to expect. But the marsh margold in the English ditches, viper's bugloss along a dusty road, enchantress's nightshade on a shaded forest path, for these familiar plants are somehow unprepared.

As the reader ponders a book so expressive of the author's thoughts and feelings, she is impressed anew with the creative opportunity which is the writer's prerogative and of the travail which all serious writing entails.

"How long does it take to write a column?" is a question often asked of me. The actual time required to put it down on paper depends upon such things as the topic and how facile is my pen at the moment. But it is a truth that no writer can report in any field without years of observation and study.

IN A VERY real sense it has taken your scribe at least 20 years to write every column you read. This does not take into account the study of writing itself, which,

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