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EDITORIAL.

THE HOLIDAY SEASON.

It is good for man—and for woman—to work, and it may indeed be taken as certain that the happiest people in the world are the hard workers. To go no further than our own profession, nurses are some of the hardest workers; seven days—or nights—a week they are to be found at their posts, making little of a ten hours day—did not their predecessors indeed work for fourteen hours daily with equal cheerfulness?

Yet the day comes sometimes when the music of the spheres is tuned to a minor key, when life becomes a burden, and work a weariness. Then indeed it is time for the workman to lay down his tools for a while and seek that rest which his honest toil has earned. And to nurses also the call comes, the call of Mother Nature, to leave the feverish cities and come once more to learn of her, to absorb something of her peace, her strength, her restfulness, to learn in the solitudes with which, if we will let her, she surrounds us, and so come back once more, each to her appointed place in the world of work, re-invigorated, ready to grapple again with the difficulties and daily worries which lie in wait for us all.

Indeed there is something about the holiday-makers which is unmistakable. We met them perhaps in tube and 'bus three weeks or a month ago, listless, unobservant, inert. A few weeks of absence and we meet them again, buoyant, optimistic and full of energy, and it is Nature who has wrought the change. Therefore it behoves all nurses cease work from time to time that they may return to it surcharged with all those potent forces which Nature liberally bestows on those who turn to her for help. "Nature never did betray the heart that loves her."

It is not to be expected that all tastes should be the same; to some people quiet seems essential to their well-being, to others it is merely oppressive. Some seek companionship, others desire to escape from it. But whatever it is which will restore to us the lost power to work, let us seek it, whether in the gay parks and boulevards of a foreign city, or amongst hills and mountains at home or abroad, where, to the accompaniment of running water, the birds alone make melody.

It was a great lover of Nature who wrote: "The best image which the world can give of Paradise is in the slope of the meadows, orchards and cornfields on the side of a great Alp, with its purple rocks and eternal snows above. . . . Loveliness of colour, perfectness of form, endlessness of change, wonderfulness of structure, are precious to all undiseased human minds; and the superiority of the mountains in all these things to the lowland is, I repeat, as measurable as the richness of a painted window matched with a white one, or the wealth of a museum compared with that of a simply furnished chamber. They seem to have been built for the human race, as at once their schools and cathedrals; full of treasures of illuminated manuscript for the scholar, kindly in simple lessons to the worker, quiet in pale cloisters for the thinker, glorious in holiness for the worshipper."

For all the mountains have some message, and they are wise who seek to decipher it. And while we enjoy the wonders of the glorious world around us, unspoiled as on the day of its creation, let us remember those who in sick room and hospital ward are transfixed on beds of pain, and through the peace and serenity which enfolds us when we return to work amongst them, let us pass on the message of the everlasting hills.

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previous page

next page