

Oh! how I wished that all the tired nurses of my acquaintance might have been my companions on that "lovely night in June."

We motored along avenues miles in length, under the shade of stately palm and graceful pepper trees, through orange and lemon groves, golden with fruit; past mansions and bungalows covered with gorgeous flowing creepers and gardens ablaze with roses of every colour, and hydrangeas of a wonderful shade of blue.

On leaving this Paradise of loveliness, we wound up the hill side to the summit of Mont Rubidoux, from whence we had a fine view of the valley beneath us; but I venture to say that the cross raised on the rocks at the summit of the hill had, for most of us, an interest even greater than the beauties of nature at our feet.

This simple, rough hewn cross has been placed there in memory of Junipero Serra, the founder of the Spanish Missions in California; and year by year, as Easter Day comes round, a service is held at sunrise attended by men and women of all creeds and nationalities, to commemorate the life and work of the holy Franciscan monk.

"Being dead, he yet speaketh."

We returned to Riverside, wishful to know more of this good monk and his life work; and also full of curiosity as to our destination and halting-place, "The Mission Inn."

"Is it a Monastery?" I asked one of my fellow travellers, as I gazed at the cloister arches and heard the chime of the Spanish bells.

"Oh, no," she answered; "the monks were driven out of California long ago—the Mission Inn is a *first-class* hotel."

My companion spoke truly.

The monks have long since left the neighbourhood. The Mission Inn is certainly a *first-class* hotel, but she failed to tell us that in Frank Miller, the Californian, a man has arisen to whom the memories of the past are a sacred trust, to whom a "Vision" of a high purpose has been granted, and with it the power and the abilities to bring that "vision" to fulfilment.

Colonel Frank Miller combines in his person inherited business instincts with a love of all that is beautiful in art and music, but above and far beyond all this he has realized that under the surface of modern civilization there exists in the hearts of men and women a craving and a need for something more than *creature* comforts, a blind groping for a peace that the world cannot give, and of which the monks of old held the secret.

HOW THE MISSION INN CAME TO BE.

Frank Miller, appreciating the importance, historic and religious, of the old Mission buildings—those earliest monuments of Christian civilization on the Pacific coast—cherished the vision of reproducing in Riverside the actual outlines of one of the Franciscan missions.

He has honestly striven to impart in every detail of architecture and furnishing the spirit of those old mission days, the spirit of courtesy and

kindliness and true frank hospitality—the spirit that makes for peace, quiet and rest.

"Enter, friend, this is your house," is the Spanish motto that greets you at the main entrance.

The Mission Inn occupies an entire city block, and is built round a courtyard full of shady trees and tropical shrubs and plants.

Under the trees are suspended quaint swinging seats, and here we rocked lazily to and fro until summoned to the evening meal.

We approached the dining hall by a cloistered walk or passage, containing niches, in which are placed images of the patron saints of the Missions, old paintings by well-known Spanish artists hung on the walls, and the red tiles over which we trod had been brought from one of the abandoned missions.

After a dainty dinner, served in the inner courtyard of the Inn, we wandered round the outer cloisters into an art room, containing endless treasures, and attracted by the sound of music we found ourselves at the entrance of the Cloister Music Room, where a fresh surprise awaited us!

The lights were low as we entered the beautiful hall, with its open timber roof, its wall hung with royal banners and escutcheons worked in mellowed colours and glinting gold.

The seats were crowded with hotel guests—men and women in evening dress, men and women tired and shabby, tourists and travellers like ourselves from all parts of the world—listening in a rapt and reverent silence to the tones of the cathedral organ.

We lost count of time as we sat in the carved oak stalls, listening to the magic tones of that mighty instrument, which seemed to speak to us of longings, fears, hopes and desires and disappointments, offering tender sympathy, then bracing us to further effort.

There was no applause during the pauses of the music, only a silence fraught with meaning, a silence laden with prayer.

The beautiful St. Cecilia window at the east end of the hall glowed with a light from without, reminding us that the sun had set, and that our time was short!

Silently we stole out into the twilight—carrying with us a sense of peace; carrying with us the memory of a Vision!—a vision of the Ideal in work, and in its train the blessing of an abiding peace.

ANNIE E. HULME.

From private letters we learn that Miss Hulme and Miss Kent are enjoying their travels immensely. Miss Hulme would like to spend the winter in California, but is just now seeing something of our wonderful Canada. With Europe in such a fearful turmoil no wonder the peaceful delights of the Pacific Coast appeal to our National delegates. We shall expect some very interesting reports of all their doings when they return home. They have been received with the very greatest kindness throughout America.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)