

Royal British Nurses' Association.

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HOLIDAY WAYFARERS.

When preparing to attend the Manchester Conference and incidentally to make a study of that most obscure problem, the psychology of College "ethics," I was delighted to receive a terse communication from a member of the N.U.T.N., as follows:—"I'm coming up to meet you Mac." In a genuine spirit of comradeship she had decided that a "brither Scot" should not go into battle alone but when she reached Manchester from Scotland she found besides myself a letter from her society claiming her presence in London for a time. Characteristically, when the call came to do some fighting "for the right," she contented herself with a few lingering regrets for the holiday that she had thought to spend at her brother-in-law's place on the Clyde, and was soon reflecting that a further and entirely unexpected journey to London was not, after all, an impossibility for "she had at least brought her toothbrush." She appeared to consider that despite luggage in tabloid form, she still had a sound anchorage upon modern civilisation in the possession of a toothbrush.*

Recalling the incident the other day in holiday time, I began to reflect whether any holiday "kit" could really be complete without a paint brush, and whether one is likely to get all the enjoyment possible out of the world of nature that lies beyond our politics and our strivings, without the effort to create a reflection of it in words, music or in lining and colours. Certainly, in "bonnie Scotland," you can find no more delightful companion than a brush, and, if you hear the whistle of the last train home before it has completed its work, well, a ten-mile tramp or a search for a shelter for the night are, after all, no more than a sojourn in London with a toothbrush by way of luggage.

But I warn you, my comrades of the palette, if you are not fortunate enough to escape making appointments in holiday time, do not start your journey to one in company with your paint brush. Ever and again, almost with every step, will the tempter suggest to you possibilities in this weather-worn fir tree, or that moorland, with its tender, misty stretches of russet and green, or in

the purple hanging over the hill lands, or even just in that little rustic water-gate with the bank of green reeds beyond. If your eyes light then on the small companion of your journey you may yet withstand the tempter but let your fingers wander to his sleek, sable head, and the object of your journey will pass to the realm of forgotten things and you are in the grass, putting down this or that "impression," sometimes, it may be, hushing your conscience to sleep with the assumption that "some day" when the long struggle for justice is ended, when at last the organisation of what should be the greatest of all women's professions has been achieved, you will make good those hours dropped by the wayside and make out of the "impression," a "picture." Or it may be that, half consciously, you promise yourself that in the dull days of the winter time you will steal away from the pressure and stress of city life to build up, from the scrap of paper before you, a new conception, into which you will weave again memories of the world that lies beyond the din of shrieking motor cars, out of reach of the postman's bell.

The sable-headed companion of your holiday time will lead you, by diverse ways, to many places. Here, to put in a bit of hill road, or there' to catch the reflections of the fishing boats, or, it may be, the old town steeple, in the waters of the Loch. Thus "the call of the brush" took me to the ancient borough of Dunfermline, where round the Abbey, and in the beautiful Pittencrieff Glen, the gift of the late Mr. Carnegie to the town of his birth, you could find occupation for sable head for a lifetime. You may put down "memories" of corners of the Abbey, of the stately trees that shelter its gables or, if you are of a mind to let old memories jostle with the present, you can go to the gardens and get, against a background of old-time architecture, a perfect glory of crimson ramblers, of tall blue "lupins," of patches of flox, of gorgeous sunflowers, and of many-hued poppies, each of these last climbing upwards with its tiny green valise poised on its slender stem, from which it will shake a gown of glistening silk in which to live its short life of sun worship before fluttering back again into the arms of old mother-earth. But maybe sable head prefers to leave the crumbling ruins and instead there grows out of the paper broad paths, gorgeous flower beds and green lawns

*With apologies to "my good comrade" Miss Jentie Paterson.

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