

THE RAMBLERS.

One of the latest expeditions of Members of the Ramblers Club and their friends was to the London Dock and all agreed that they acquired a great deal of fresh knowledge in this busy centre of trade activity. The first visit was to the wool department and here we listened to the romance of the transformation of wool sent in in its raw state until it comes forth a finished product of manufacture. What interested us most here was the difference in the types of wool from the many different countries from which it is imported and of which we had examples set out for inspection. The process of the purification of the wool is an interesting one, as was pointed out, "nothing is thrown away that can be made use of" and from the cleansing of the wool we get lanoline. We made a pilgrimage through the vast wine vaults and then on into the department for ivory where we had a most interesting lecture on zoology. We were told that, although the tusks of many animals go under the name of ivory, only the elephant's tusks provide ivory. Those of the rhinoceros are really only compressed hair and glue. The witch doctors of China, however, have a high opinion of the medicinal qualities of a powder made from these unsavoury looking horns or tusks so that they can be sold in England at the rate of 21s. a pound. We saw the tusk of a mammoth which must have lived at least 50,000 years ago and, when it was removed from a glacier the body of the animal was as free from putrefaction as if it had been killed the day before; even the green food in its stomach was in the same condition as when it was first buried under the ice and snow in Siberia all those thousands of years ago. Our minds were disabused, while viewing the elephants' tusks, of the theories that exist regarding the suffering inflicted on elephants in order to obtain ivory, for these great loads of tusks are really all unearthed from the jungle.

The first Ramble outside London this year was to Oxford, and we followed, as far as possible, the course of the river in going there and chose a different road back. Thirty-four "Ramblers" set off before nine in the morning and returned soon after 8.0 p.m., having thoroughly enjoyed the beauty of the English roads in springtime. At Oxford we had four hours to spare and most of the nurses made a tour of several of the colleges and other places of interest, while one or two never got beyond the ancient illuminated volumes in the Bodleian Library. The colouring of the illuminations is particularly lovely in some of the pre-Renaissance work and so full are some of the oldest in their suggestiveness that we were tempted to spend much time in the effort to interpret their symbolism and to compare it with legends found in mythology and folklore. Queen Margaret's "Book of the Gospels" came in for its share of admiration—this extraordinary volume, which belonged to the first of the Royal Nurses in Great Britain and which has survived not only immersion, when it was lost and found under the waters of a river nearly a thousand years ago, but has as miraculously survived the River of Time and the storm and tumult of the Reformation.

THE TRAINED NURSES' ANNUITY FUND.

The Report of the Trained Nurses' Annuity Fund has just been issued and, as usual, it indicates activity in helping those of our colleagues who, through age or illness, find themselves in difficult circumstances. In spite of the fact that interest from investments is not what it was, we are glad that the number of annuitants, and the amount given to each, has been maintained. Nor does the Fund confine its work to meeting the needs of the present time, for during the year £700 has been invested towards the foundation of further annuities. The finances of the Fund are administered

with all possible economy. The expenses for printing and postage are necessarily heavy, but most of the work of the Fund is done by nurses who give their services voluntarily, and only accountancy and such work as demands expert clerical qualifications is paid for. The satisfactory condition of the Fund is in no small measure due to those who generously give time and service to help their less fortunate colleagues and to Miss Swaby Smith and Miss Giffen in particular our thanks are due, for hardly a day passes without their spending several hours at benevolent work in the office.

MY GRANDMOTHER'S SIMPLES.

By Mrs. ATHERTON EARP.

In her lecture on the above subject Mrs. Earp confined her remarks not so much to the medical aspects of her subject as to those connected with personal hygiene, recipes for old cordials and the like. One could not but feel it to be a pity that so much of the old folk knowledge of the properties of plants has been lost, for many happy hours must have gone to the collection of the materials for preparing home-made remedies, ointments, cordials and beautiful dyes.

In referring to the present enthusiasm for beauty culture Mrs. Earp said that most of the treatments used were in no wise new. The Queen of Sheba had many essences and creams of all kinds and there was evidence that the benefits of the face pack and spray were not unknown to her. In Tutankamen's tomb cosmetics were found, and the Greeks and Romans used spices and perfumed oils in connection with massage and baths. It was interesting to find that the Crusaders were largely responsible for the introduction of cosmetics from the East into England, and they brought too the cult of cleanliness. Thus beauty culture belongs to no particular age or people. In England great faith existed, in the days of our grandmothers and great-grandmothers, in such things as bergamot, olive and almond oils, witch hazel, rose and elderflower water, calamine and such like. Our grandmothers' elderflower wine, when properly made, was, said Mrs. Earp, not inferior to good champagne, and the effect of elderflower or rose-water was believed to be exceedingly beneficial for the skin. Mrs. Earp brought for inspection a home-made moth ball as used in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and she allowed those present to copy many old recipes. We will only give one of these and that because the holidays are drawing near. It is a lotion to use against the attacks of midges, mosquitoes and similar pests that we are apt to meet with on a continental holiday. Half a breakfast cupful of Epsom salts is put into a sufficient quantity of boiling water for its solution and there is added a small quantity of almond oil or glycerine. A bottle of the lotion, with a small pad of lint, is easily carried about in one of the small waterproof cases procurable to-day. The lotion is still more likely to prove effective in its purpose if coal tar soap is used instead of ordinary toilet soap.

GIFTS FOR THE CLUB.

The following gifts have been received:—Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Greenhill, Mrs. Temple, Misses M. C. Bennett, M. Brown, M. Chappell, Durnford, B. Frame, G. Hovenden, F. Macdonald, I. Macdonald, M. Morris, E. A. Phillips, A. Treble, B. Treasure: Flowers; Miss A. Barclay: flowers cake and chocolates; Miss Temple Way: soup tureen of "Old English blue"; Miss Swaby Smith: tea trolley and old china; Miss Adams: carpet; Miss Upton: magazines; Miss Cutler: sweets and jam.

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