

fresh. There were pine trees soon and a magnificent view of mountains. It was the "land of wine presses"; we pass lines of wagons full and brimming with black and white grapes.

Arrived at the tram terminus I note that there is no inn where one could possibly stay, but I learn that there is a convent *un petit quart d'heure* away. What a walk that was! The red sand became a good 6 in. deep. My shoes were filled. I met no one; in truth, I had found solitude amongst the eternal hills. It was magnificent, and soon all lit with the divine glory of the setting sun. I turn down a side track to a big lonely farm. They were busy with the vintage and could not possibly take me in, nor do they think I shall find room at the Convent, which is still a good hour's walk away. I climb a little hill and far, far in the distance I see the long lines of the Convent buildings. What a site they have chosen for their house. I stumble on, red with the sand, red with the heat, red with apprehensive fear, for suppose the farmer was right and they can't take me in.

The nuns, a famous missionary order, dressed in white with big picturesque white hats, are working in the fields and receive me with true French courtesy if with mild surprise. Sleep there I could not. They sleep only on straw. It could not be thought of but they fetch me delicious mustal wine and pastries to revive me, and after a long, long rest, one of the Sisters will take me to a house only a *petit quart d'heure* away, where I shall be much better cared for than I could be at the convent, which lacks all comfort.

So gazing on the guileless countenance and limpid truthful eyes of the persuasive *Sœur Supérieure*, I abandon my first thought of borrowing a rug and asking to be allowed to sleep under the big oleanda tree in the garden, and set out with a stout heart down a steep lane with the red sand so deep that it now reaches the calves of my legs! On and on for a mile or two. Had I been alone I would soon have turned back, but braced by a companion I must struggle on to the end of this long, long tramp.

At length we reach Buinandais, a tiny hamlet and after all I am not too tired to eat a frugal supper and enjoy eight hours of dreamless sleep.

I shall never forget those kind, gentle nuns, in their mountain home. I spent all the days of my little stay with them, returning to Buinandais at night. They initiated me into the whole process of their wine making. We began by filling the big baskets with the white muscat grapes and ended by seeing great casks labelled for a London wine merchant. Nor do I forget the fat roast chickens, the perfect home-cured hams, the preserved fruits and delicious baskets of grapes and passion fruit with which they plied me.

From Buinandais I could return to Algiers by diligence. There was no room inside but they let me sit on a wobbly box at the back. We had three capital horses and swung round the corners, almost shaking me off my crazy perch. Back

in Algiers there was still time for further sight seeing, and what a strange medley the city is of French modernity and Orientalism, too incongruous to mingle well, I thought, yet when the war is over and one could feel a holiday had been earned, I will go back there and see it all again.

We had still four uneventful days at sea. Once we stop, informed, they say, by wireless of the approach of a submarine. Then after thirteen days of pleasant travel we are at the journey's end, in hot, dusty—was there ever such dust as the Salonika dust?—Macedonia. I am posted to a great hospital for contagious diseases, three miles outside the town. Sixteen hundred beds, all full and many overflowing into tents outside. Nursing indeed under difficulties, for it is a severely military hospital, and what we have considered necessities in our English wards we are told, and we know there is no appeal, are not necessary and that we must nurse without them here. It is a hard experience and has its tragic side. Our death rate is frightfully high and the little bands that we send on the homeward bound hospital ships, 3,000 at a time, many as a last resource, are pitiful indeed.

I am nursing Greeks, Serbs, Sinegalis, two Hindoos, as well as a large family of French. We have two or three cases of cerebro-meningitis, a man with sleeping sickness. Amongst the Serbs a very severe form of erysipelas and a great deal of diphtheria. The nurse's path in this particular hospital is by no manner of means a thornless one. My assistant *infirmiers* resist my efforts to teach the difference between dirt and cleanliness, and at times openly defy me. It is a hard life with a good deal of struggling; only the devotion and belief in one from the patients make it more than worth while.

MATRONS' COUNCIL AND THE R.R.C.

We offer from fellow-members and from the *B.J.N.* hearty congratulations to the President, Miss M. Heather-Bigg, and the following members of the Matrons' Council, on receiving from the King the Decoration of the Royal Red Cross:—

Miss Maud Banfield, Miss M. Carruthers, Miss A. Dowbiggin, Miss G. R. Hale, Miss E. Macfarlane, Miss M. Thurston (N.Z.N.S.), Miss R. E. Wallace, Miss M. A. Fogarty, Miss G. Knight, Miss E. M. Smith, Miss E. A. Sordy, and Miss K. S. Stewart.

May their services to the sick and to their profession be long available.

THE SCHOOL NURSES' LEAGUE.

The School Nurses' League held their Annual Meeting at the Eustace Miles' Restaurant, on February 10th. The officers were elected, and a Petition for a War Bonus considered. The League decided to give a "whist drive" on March 17th, to realise a fund for cocoa for the poor children who are treated at the cleansing station, in memory of Nurse Russell, who recently died on foreign service, and who had been a very kind benefactress to these needy little ones.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)