

Next month's Journal will be sent out V. P. P. The cost will be Rs. 5 which will include T. N. A. I. members' Annual Subscription. Members are asked to remember this, and honour the V. P. P. when it comes. We are reminded of the sixty journals that were returned last year refused. Please help to ease the work of the Business Manager and to conserve the association funds by accepting the V. P. P. packet when it is first delivered by the postal official.

Once again wishing you all the Happiest of Christmases. We hope that this number will prove interesting, helpful, and recreative.

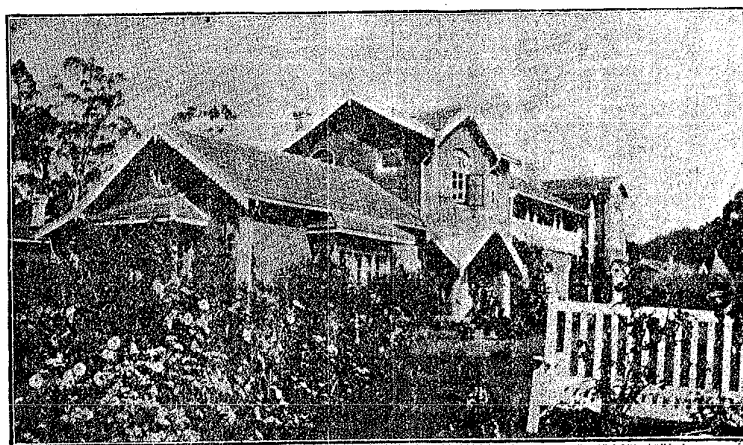
Only one cross word puzzle solution received. Was it found too difficult I wonder? Want of space prevents one being issued this month. We hope to be able to again introduce them in the January number, that is if they are appreciated.

"GOLDEN OOTY"

BY MISS E. GRIFFIN.

IN the list of holiday places in our Handbook Ooty is not included. I cannot think why. Surely some members must have visited this beautiful place. As a holiday resort it is ideal.

Ooty is nearly 7,500 feet above sea level and the climate is very like England but sunnier and more equable. All the English flowers and fruit flourish, not only in season but all the year round. There is practically no winter, no snow, but just a little frost, so Christmas is a delightful time to come to Ooty.



SELBORNE

This place was discovered nearly a hundred years ago by a Mr. Sullivan and by his efforts a health resort was gradually built up. The houses are widely scattered on the slopes of several hills, and in the valley dividing them is a beautiful lake, which reminds one in some parts of the lochs in Scotland. Round its edges are sloping grass banks covered with Arum lilies, which grow wild everywhere, and in the water are numbers of blue lilies like small lotuses. There is a road all round the lake with lovely views at each turn of the road.

Ooty is famous for its Downs; these stretch for 10 or 12 miles on the Mysore road and are like the downs of Sussex and Wiltshire. Long undulating hills of grassy land covered with gorse and broom and cattle peacefully grazing.

All the roads in Ooty are good and many excursions can be made by motor or rickshaw. For walkers it is a paradise, you can climb to the top of Missionary hill or Elk hill or go up the hill behind St. Stephen's church and you will be rewarded by extensive views of Ooty, the Downs and the distant Kandahs. Pykara Falls is another place to visit, and the Observatory on the Dodabetta range. The Maharajah of Mysore has a palace here just above the lake and the grounds are large and prettily laid out. They are open to the public when he is not in residence. The Maharajah of Baroda has a palace quite near to the Mysore one and this is well worth a visit. It has beautiful grounds and lovely flowers. Visitors are also allowed to go over the house. It is furnished in English style and there are cabinets of lovely china and exquisite painted glass. The marble bathrooms are most luxurious.

There are good bus services to Coonoor, Wellington, and Kotagiri and it is worth while visiting these places; the run is about three-quarters of an hour to the first two and just over an hour to Kotagiri. The scenery going down is varied and beautiful. When I was there the Kaiti valley was yellow with corn and the hillsides golden with wattle. At this time of the year they call the station 'Golden Ooty' and with reason. At Lovedale, about 3 or 4 miles away there is the Lawrence Military Asylum which is a small colony in itself.

HOW TO REACH OOTY.

There is the railway from Mettupalliam which carries passengers up slowly through the fine scenery of the Mettupalliam Ghat; this comes through Coonoor and reaches Ooty from one side. Another way, and I think the nicest, is to motor up from Mysore; there is a bus service. The distance is 100 miles and the run takes about six hours. The scenery up the Mysore Ghat must be seen and will never be forgotten. It is beautiful beyond words, part of the way through tropical forests with mountain streams tumbling over boulders and many waterfalls. Wild

flowers make a gorgeous mass of colour; big white datura trumpets, orchids of all colours, hedges trimmed with wild roses and the scarlet and yellow lilies of the *Gloriosa Superba*. Other bushes and plants covered with mauve, purple and yellow flowers, giant tree ferns and red anthills complete the picture.

The last ten or twelve miles are over the Downs and how one appreciates the English-looking scenery after the tropical forest. You reach Ooty by this route at quite another corner but end up at the railway station by the lake.

WHERE TO STAY.

There are several hotels in Ooty and a Y.W.C.A. as well as boarding houses. The nicest place for nurses is Selborne, the Missionary home. It is in a very central place, close to shops and churches and within easy reach of everything. The house is large and beautifully furnished; the hostess most charming, she does everything in her power to make her guests happy and comfortable—and she succeeds. It is a real *home*. The food is excellent and one is sure of meeting nice people. There is a large garden and a variety of lovely flowers; I counted forty-four different kinds when I was there.

Selborne is nearly always full, and from April to June extra full; so long notice should be given if possible. From July to March there is generally plenty of room and the later months of the year are so delightful in Ooty that it is worth while taking holidays at that time. The rainy months are from June to the end of August but even then the days are not entirely wet and it is generally possible to get out sometime during the day.

One very pleasant feature of Ooty is the abundance of straw-berries, they seem to come all the year round. We have eaten more in two months than we have seen in the past fifteen years!

There are also other fruits which we do not get in England as passion fruit and tree tomatoes.

CHURCHES.

St. Stephens is the Anglican Church and is on a hill near the post office. It was built nearly 90 years ago and contains some fine coloured windows. In front is a large cross of white daisies and it is surrounded by a hedge of heliotrope. The Union Church is a little bit lower down the hill and there is also a Roman Catholic Church and some smaller ones in other parts of the station.

AMUSEMENTS.

At the Assembly Rooms pictures are shown once a week and concerts are often held. One of the features of the week is "Shandy

Day" the market day, which is held every Tuesday. Everyone goes to Shandy and each lady does her own shopping. You can see dozens of motors and rickshaw parked on the road and all laden with baskets of vegetables and fruit. Inside the scene is beyond description, stalls of every kind of fruit and vegetables, meat and fish, to say nothing of the general stalls where one can buy almost anything in the way of stores and oddments.

The day we were there T. E. the Governor and Lady Goschen were there walking about in the crowd, inspecting the carrots, etc., and taking a keen interest in everything.

A walk through the main bazaar is full of interest. There are the usual shops for stores and clothing materials, but what interested us most were the tea and coffee clubs with tables set out and urns boiling and all kinds of weird things to eat.

The hair cutting saloons were also worthy of notice, got up in what was evidently considered the latest European style. Endless amusement is to be found by an observant person in the Bazaar.

On these hills are the remnant of old aboriginal tribes, the Todas, Badagas and Kotas, etc. They are most interesting to study. The Todas are the most important, they live in Munds as they call the little villages. They are of a totally different type to the other Mahomedan and Hindu inhabitants of Ooty. The Toda cathedral is one of the excursions which should be made. The Todas are rather Jewish or Syrian in appearance with long hair and big noses, the women often very pretty.

The Nilgiri Library is near the General Post Office and is a fine building. It contains 30,000 books and a very good supply of magazines and papers come each mail for the reading rooms. Visitors are allowed to join as temporary members for Rs. 5 a month.

The Government Botanical Gardens are on the slopes of the hill near Government House. They are beautifully laid out with velvety lawns and masses of flowers. There is a bandstand and numerous seats where one can rest, and fine views can be obtained from the terraces. There is a small lake covered with lilies.

In a little conservatory we found the best begonias we have ever seen; pink ones like rosettes, and white with a shell pink blush, pale yellow with crinkled orange edges and many others. There were several other kinds of flowers and ferns and the house is a thing of colour and beauty.

To sum up Ooty is the prettiest hill station we have ever visited. Even nurses from the North would do well to come here. The cost is not so great if you go by the Mysore route and our concessions are available to Mysore; the bus fare from there is only Rs. 6-8.

Ooty is well named the Queen of hill stations; we shall be sorry to leave and shall live in hopes of coming again.