

THE THIBET ROAD.

By Miss HAWKINS.

“ONE gets weary of admiring the beauty” was the remark I heard from a fellow-traveller on the Kotgarh Road. One is reminded of Ruskin’s advice that imagination is a wearable faculty and it is often necessary to take it from the mountains and lay it “on the grass to rest.” Few surely could tramp many miles beyond Simla without often feeling the necessity to lay that delicate faculty “on the grass”, though the beauty is not monotonous, and does not fail in variety. Just round a curve in the road and one is surrounded by bare, rocky steeps with a magnificence all their own, and almost unconsciously emotions come under their influence. Life seems a stern rugged duty, though none the less glorious, noble and majestic. Hardly have these impressions sunk into our souls when the next curve in the road brings us to glorious pine-covered mountains, their slopes soft as velvet with the effect of the shadows. Life appears to us less stern, our duties are softened though not less grand and noble. A sudden turn in the road and we behold a great range of snow-covered mountains, glistening white summits. With such a view we are awed into silence and can hardly share the emotions which sweep over us, for our hearts are strangely stilled, and the messages which are whispered in that stillness are sacredly our own.—And the valleys? They have a glory too. The little villages nestling down so cosily, securely protected by pine-covered slopes, fill us with a strange tenderness. The softer emotions come over us, tender thoughts of loved ones, and all the love and protection which have sheltered us through our wanderings seem very real to us just now, and we are stimulated to desire the softer virtues of graciousness and tenderness of which we are reminded by the valleys.

The very hill sides by the road, appeal to our imagination—such treasures are hidden there—maiden-hair fern grows in profusion, columbines, anemones, larkspur and even lilies of the valley make their resting place near the road. One can almost believe that they delight in giving joy to the wayfarers. The little waterfalls rippling down the mountains seem to rejoice in their power of refreshing. Sometimes we speak rather glibly of “crystal water” but truly the water, as it drops from these little water ways, might be crystals sparkling in the sunlight!

It is hard to know where we can rest our imagination for everything surrounding us seems full of messages and from the violets on the way side to the glorious snow capped summits of the mountains all whisper their secrets to us. It is good for us that we return to the plains where for a season our imagination may be at rest, though even there we can rejoice in the mysteries which were revealed to us in the mountains.