

# Royal British Nurses' Association.

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## LECTURE—ANCIENT EGYPT.

The Members of the Association who were able to be present at the Lecture given to nurses at University College on 21st inst. agreed that they had rarely spent a more delightful afternoon.

Mrs. Latter, who presided, said that it required no words of hers to emphasise the privilege of being able to listen to a lecture by Miss Murray, whose name was so well known to all who were interested in Egyptology. The civilization of Egypt dated back thousands of years, and in this ancient civilization were to be found all the aims and ideals of the nineteenth century.

Miss Murray, in commencing her lecture, of which we can only give a short synopsis, said that the Egyptian civilization may be said to end where our own commences; roughly speaking, we can find traces of this ancient civilization back to six thousand years before Christ, but probably the Egyptians were civilized at even an earlier date. Miss Murray put several examples of ancient hieroglyphics on the screen and explained those, saying that the ancient Egyptian writing was certainly the most beautiful in the world. She drew attention to the lining and beautiful grouping of the picture words, and explained the meaning of certain of them. Pictures were also shown throwing light on the religious beliefs of Ancient Egypt; according to one of those, when an Egyptian died he divided into seven different parts: body, soul, mind, heart, shadow, Ka, and name. Many very wonderful pictures of kings of the various dynasties were put on the screen, and those present were amazed to find the amount of character portrayed in those faces carved in stone, particularly in the lower portions of the face. A picture of the Sphinx was shown, Miss Murray adding, at the close of her description of this, that she considered it one of the most impressive things to be found in Egypt; the "Father of Terrors" it had been called in olden times. Next came pictures, all carefully explained, showing the various things found in the tombs, and put there by the friends of the dead in the firm belief in a future life. There were utensils of all sorts, game, jewels, and different kinds of games, some of the latter very similar evidently to those of the present day. In another picture the lion and the unicorn were shown playing chess, and, as the lecturer remarked, it was evident from the expression of the lion that he was winning. In another view there was the portrayal of a lady preparing

for some feast or dance, and engaged in touching her lips with a colour brush. Pictures were shown indicating the custom of killing the animals which had belonged to the dead person, in order that he might not be lonely when he "crossed the bar." Miss Murray pointed out a remnant of this custom in these later days, in which the charger of a chief or an officer is frequently led behind his coffin, although it is not now slaughtered.

A most beautiful slide was shown representing the arm of a mummy with gorgeously coloured jewels. Miss Murray told of how this was discovered by Professor Flinders Petrie. The tomb must have been robbed in ancient times, and the thieves had been discovered or at least interrupted, and this arm had been hidden away in a crevice in the rock. The tomb was explored at different periods, in one case as early as 600 B.C., but the jewelled arm was not discovered then nor on any of the later dates at which there is evidence that the tomb was entered, until a few years ago when Professor Petrie was engaged in research work in Egypt. His servant came to tell him that he had discovered something bright, and when he examined the object the Professor saw the bright central jewel of an ornament. He cut up the covering, and disclosed the arm weighted with its wonderful bracelets. Several views of ancient temples were also shown, Miss Murray remarking that curves were never found in the architecture of ancient Egypt.

A fresh treat awaited the nurses after the lantern lecture, for Professor Flinders Petrie, Miss Murray, and others took them round the great Egyptology Collection of the University College, which is second to none in the world. It has not quite so many large specimens as the collection at the British Collection, but there is far greater variety, and one gazed with amazement at the beautiful pottery, the vases carved in rare stone materials, the dainty sculptured heads, the perfect enamelling of certain tiles, and many other beautiful and wonderful things. The perfect, graceful curves of some of the vases carved in stone were greatly admired, and one realized the marvellous control which those ancient Egyptians must have had over their muscles to produce such perfect work. In one case we saw the scent-bottle of the mother of the Princess who found Moses; it was of a beautiful cream stone, adorned with bands of lovely gilding, fresh as the day when it was put

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