

Royal British Nurses' Association.

(Incorporated by



Royal Charter.)

THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.

AN EVENING WITH KIPLING.

Seldom have we enjoyed a more delightful literary treat than that of Saturday, 15th ult., when Miss Anderson Parsons gave us "An Evening with Kipling." Miss Parsons is an enthusiastic student of Kipling; she is steeped in his writings, and all through the evening one felt that she had somehow managed to actually live inside the mind of this great writer. Whether by her own enthusiasm, or by the way in which she brought out the all-pervading humanity of Kipling, she certainly managed to bring "the Kipling atmosphere" about us all. First, we had a short reference to Kipling's parentage. His father was a great authority on mythological sculpture, and also he was a zoologist, author and educationalist of no mean reputation. Kipling's mother came of a distinguished Wesleyan stock and has several books of poems to her credit. Miss Parsons next led us through his schoolboy days, never losing the thread of how the influence of the vicissitudes of those days helped to mould the man of letters. Next came the early days of journalistic career; and following on those, the experiences of the South African War and the effect of this upon his writing. Speaking of his personality, Miss Parsons said:—

"These phenomena in regard to Kipling are remarkable—the suddenness of his appearance, the decisiveness of it, and the great speed of his publicity. The earliest efforts from his pen appeared in the school magazine, in June, 1881, and from then onwards he was never idle. He was never a brilliant scholar. He did not shine in athletics, and the evidence of his old drill sergeant goes to show that he was not a favourite with other boys. His personality is a factor that counts for much. There are flaws in his finished works and certain defects in his genius, but such defects are not fatal, and the thirst of the true Kiplingite is not slaked.

"The fact that Kipling is not academical is a rock upon which many of his critics, friendly and otherwise, have split and foundered. It has been said of his prose that he has no style, no majesty, no complexity, no balance, no rhythm. But if the matter fits the manner, surely here is the supreme feat of style, and who can truthfully deny that Kipling has achieved this feat? With

the exception, maybe, of Defoe and Balzac, no writer of any age exhibits such a wide knowledge as does Kipling of the circumstance of life among different ranks and conditions of men, of the many and varied ways in which they can earn their living or squander their existence, of the patter of their pastimes, the slang of their sports, the technicalities of their trades, and of the thousand-and-one manners in which they speak, move, think, feel, love, and have their being. Admitted he is no scholar, there is no question that he is a great artist. His work is sometimes brutal, but never base; sometimes unduly compressed, but never contorted; it is the result of an observation most faithful, and an insight most keen. His 'secret' is very simple—he embodies an 'idea' in every sentence. He suggests more than he describes, infers more than he tells, insinuates more than he declares. Often boisterous, he is never in repose, and although he may irritate, he will never bore. Not once in all his works, either as novelist or poet, does he commit that sin, unpardonable in a writer, of being dull.

"Apart from his merits as a teller of tales, Kipling has other and greater values. He is a Friend, a Force, a Future. He has praised us to a greater self-reliance, has inspired us to efforts yet more potent, has Pisgah-sighted us to lands of our desire; but, as a friend, he has also warned us against overweening confidence."

Miss Parsons proceeded to deal with many of the works of Kipling and recited several of his poems. "We could have listened all night" said one member of her audience; and, indeed, request followed request for "just one more."

At the close of the address, Miss Marsters thanked Miss Parsons very warmly on behalf of the audience for an entertainment which everyone had enjoyed. It was difficult to say whether the lecture or the recitations had been most delightful.

MISS AUGHTON'S CONCERT.

A concert, organised by Miss Aughton, M.R.B.N.A., was given at the Club on Thursday, 20th ult., and she certainly managed to introduce into her entertainment a wonderful versatility of talent, so that not only members in residence but many from outside went off feeling that they owed to her and to her friends a perfectly delightful evening. Miss Verina Cumbers' vivacious singing

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