

Royal British Nurses' Association.

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Royal Charter.

THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.

LECTURE.

ANCIENT CHURCHES AND THEIR ARTISTIC TREASURES.

We had a perfectly wonderful Lecture on Saturday, February 28th, when Mr. F. C. Eeles described to us the beauties of about fifty of our old English Churches. Mr. Eeles, one of the greatest authorities on Church Architecture, stated that the great bulk of Britain's artistic Treasures were in the Churches, and, however some of these may have been mishandled in the past, there is no doubt that the Church has proved a far better custodian of England's artistic treasures than either the State or the individual. One curious fact is that fewer of the beautiful treasures of our Churches are to be found in London than elsewhere. Probably this is due to the Great Fire and partly to the fact that many fine old Churches in London and the districts which once lay outside its boundaries, have either been entirely pulled down, and new structures have been placed on their sites or they have been mutilated when structural additions were made to them, which greatly interfered, too, with their original beauty. Another curious point is that the further one goes from London the more beautiful become the Churches, a fact difficult to explain but partly due to a better supply and quality of stone procurable in certain districts.

It is quite impossible to give any adequate report of the Lecture because Mr. Eeles's remarks referred almost entirely to the marvellous slides which he put on the screen. All the old Churches, internal decorations, structural arrangements, &c., were of exquisite beauty, and we spent a truly delightful time and felt at the close of the Lecture that we had learnt an amazing amount in the short hour and a half during which some fifty pictures were passed before our eyes on the screen.

The Chair was taken by Sir Alfred Rice Oxley, who, throughout his life, has taken such a deep interest in the architecture and artistic treasures of our English Churches. At the close of the Lecture he expressed, on behalf of the audience, great appreciation of the treat they had enjoyed.

A NEW DEPARTURE.

As I drew near to the House Beautiful, I heard the strains of sweet music, and from the merry-hearted damsels therein I learned that a new wonder had succeeded those other charming exploits which the R.B.N.A. had aforesaid achieved. In other words, the *Dramatic* branch of its activities saw the light, and the performance of "Isabel, Edward and Anne," which took place at the Home on March 10th, was an event full of credit to everyone concerned. The production and able management (in the able hands of Mr. Douglas Phair and Mr. Cyril Pearson respectively) were excellent, the decorations by Mrs. Helen Ross artistic, and the performers gave a fine account of themselves.

A splendid audience welcomed H.H. the Princess Marie Louise on her entrance, with three friends, to witness the production; beneath the note of ceremony, in receiving

her, there was a friendliness that gave warmth as well as loyalty. Miss Cattell presented to Her Highness a beautiful bouquet of pink tulips. In addition there were present Sir Alfred and Lady Rice Oxley, Mrs. John Temple, Dr. Morison, Mrs. Olson, Miss Schuller, Miss Rimmer, Mr. Lindsay, and other friends of the R.B.N.A.

Regarding the play itself, every actor and actress deserves more space than one can use here, but there are one or two points which must be noted. Miss Macdonald, as Mrs. Carew, was as naturally placed as one could imagine. The part is one that "fits Miss Macdonald like a glove," and one feels that, had she been called upon in real life (which Heaven forbid), to deal with the tiresomeness of Edward, the innocent muddles of the well-meaning Mrs. Bucket, and the charming, if headstrong, young lovers, she would have arranged things very much as did her namesake. It is truth, as well as a thoroughly deserved compliment, to say that her speeches were often so uttered that they made one forget there was a stage at all. Mr. Alex Rogerson, as that "essence of perplexities," the Hon. Edward Carew, handled what was perhaps the most difficult part in the piece very cleverly and with just the right amount of restraint, so good, indeed, was his acting, that we found ourselves alternately laughing at and sorrowing with him. In the hands of a less skilled actor, probably for this part, on such a small stage, the whole production must have suffered immeasurably. Miss Sarah Hebson, as the worthy Mrs. Bucket, got quite the "Farebrother touch" and gave a delightful rendering of the poor mother who sank her own interests in those of her son, and richly merited the bouquet handed up to her. Miss Violet Rice, not so fitted by Nature to her part, one is glad to say, as Miss Macdonald was, nevertheless allowed Art to triumph so far as to almost "out-Theda Theda Bara" as a designing vamp of the first powder and paint. Her performance showed that the Noble Profession, far from fearing the travesty of its uniform by the Society Vamp, can, after all, "give a Roland for an Oliver." Miss Mamie Leith played Anne with a charming ingenuous touch, and her stage lover, Mr. Derek Williams, interpreted the rash but lovable young hero in a way that made one feel he is likely to go far in his career. The part calls for much psychological sympathy and understanding, a quality that Mr. Williams undoubtedly possesses.

Altogether, judging from the performance, Mr. Phair is a young man who is likely to "go far," if all his productions are as effective as this one; anyway, there are not a few amongst his audience who have registered the resolution to attend the first play he puts on the boards of a London Theatre.

The gathering broke up with the playing of the National Anthem, and, after the Royal guest had departed, a number of the audience adjourned, with their still untired entertainers, to the drawing-room to indulge in dancing to the strains of the gramophone. Eventually we all departed our several ways, carrying with us yet one more "happy memory" of the "House Beautiful."

PIXIE BAIRD.

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