

Royal British Nurses' Association.

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VISUALISATION AS AN AID TO MEDICAL PRACTICE.

On February 5th Mr. Ablett, F.R.G.S., gave a very interesting lecture on the above mentioned subject, interesting not only because it comprised points relating to Art and the development of the artistic faculty but also because it embodied a great deal of psychology and some hygiene of childhood too. Mr. Ablett said that observation might be regarded as the beginning of the development of mental power, and so much of interest was to be found in the early drawings of children that he very often made of these drawings texts for his lectures; as an instance of this he drew a repetition of a drawing that a very small child had recently made of a steam engine. The first boy, asked to do so, commenced merely with a few slanting lines to convey the idea of smoke, but a much more enterprising youngster came forward and drew the smoke in a number of energetic curves, circles, and lines, then the funnel, and next the body of the engine, but the point was that this child drew no wheels to the engine, these were so small, in comparison with the rest of the engine, and moved so quickly that they had escaped observation, to some extent, and had not been retained in the memory picture of the child; thus children show only a fragmentary observation, and, indeed, all our observation may be regarded as fragmentary. Another child drew as a picture of soda water one line with a small line pointing downwards from it, near the top; with much energy he drew many smaller lines issuing from the previous one to indicate the flow of the soda water. What had impressed him had been the soda water issuing from the syphon, while the latter was of small account in arousing his interest. One of the most amusing drawings was that, by a child of two years, of a fearsome, dragon-like creature with very high angular ridges along his body. He had been asked to draw a caterpillar after his mother had recaptured, from his mouth, one he caught in the garden and injudiciously attempted to swallow. Some very comprehensive and very accurately drawn specimens of various dissections of a sheep's heart, done by a girl of twelve, were passed with many other drawings round the room.

Mr. Ablett did some experiments in snapshot drawings by going behind a screen and making sounds with the contents of certain mysterious parcels which he had brought, as, for instance, with two bottles, one being used to strike against the other. Several of the audience drew pictures of what had happened behind the screen with considerable accuracy. The lecturer told how he had once played some Beethoven music, and as a result a listener had sketched from this a very accurate picture of Beethoven from his memory of portraits of the great musician. Mr. Ablett expressed the view that some of these snapshots from memory, immediately after witnessing an operation, would prove far more helpful to nurses and students than any amount of shorthand notes.

After a vote of thanks to Mr. Ablett, Dr. Parsons Smith, in closing the meeting, said that he could wish that some of Mr. Ablett's methods of teaching drawing had been adopted in his early education; they were absolutely free from any kind of repression and well calculated to develop memory, observation and technique.

SIR ALFRED RICE-OXLEY, C.B.E., J.P., M.D.
Hon. Physician to the Royal British Nurses' Association's Club.

Members of the R.B.N.A. have, from time to time, in its Official Organ, seen references to Sir Alfred Rice-Oxley, C.B.E., J.P., M.D., Hon. Physician to the Royal British Nurses' Association's Club and a Member of the Council and Executive Committee, and no doubt many will be interested in our reproduction of his photograph in his Civic Robes as Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington. Apart from being Physician-in-Ordinary to H.R.H. the Princess Beatrice, and apart from the responsibilities involved in an unusually large London practice, Sir Alfred Rice-Oxley has to his credit some very splendid national work, and one might almost say a lifetime's labour for the Royal Borough and the development of its very numerous activities; he has been thrice Mayor of Kensington and, in every movement inaugurated there, he appears to be called upon to take a leading part. He is President of the Kensington Council of Social Service, an Alderman of the Borough of Kensington, President of the West London Medico-Chirurgical Society, Chairman of the Leighton House Society, a Member of the Council of the London Society, of the Society of Yorkshiremen in London, and of the latter he has been Chairman; these are only a few of the bodies which make constant claims upon the time he can make it possible to spare from professional work. Sir Alfred is the author of "Medical Men in English Literature" and of various articles. His chief hobbies are connected with archaeology and also with pictures, books and antique furniture, of all of which he possesses some rare treasures. During the war he twice received special mention for valuable services rendered, and probably it was as a result of this that he received first the Order of C.B.E. and later that of Knighthood.

Almost as soon as we moved our headquarters to 194, Queen's Gate and opened our Club there we received from Sir Alfred Rice-Oxley a very kind message to say that he would have great pleasure in attending the nurses when they were overtaken by illness. We appreciated highly the value of this offer, the more so because of the spontaneous kindness and thoughtfulness with which it was conveyed; it seemed a good augury for our adventure in Queen's Gate to meet with such friendliness almost at once. Since then there have been many nurses who have felt deep gratitude to Sir Alfred for his goodness to them when they have been overtaken by attacks of acute illness or have required medical treatment and advice for one reason or another. We feel sure that his patients at Kensington Palace can

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