

the window. Upstairs there is the wonderful studio of the artist, now used for exhibitions of famous paintings or for concerts, for which the raised platform at one end makes it exceedingly suitable. We wished that more time had been available to study the fine pictures both here and on the staircase. From a gallery we had a last glimpse of the Arab Hall, which, in this new perspective, seemed more beautiful and unusual than ever. Space forbids us to describe in detail all the many and beautiful things that live in our memories of an afternoon spent at Leighton House. All the more delightful are these memories because the "ramble" was made under the guidance of one who loves and understands every treasure within these walls. After leaving Leighton House we were entertained to tea by Sir Alfred and Lady Rice-Oxley, and so there closed another of those expeditions which appear to be so much enjoyed by many of our London members, who like to explore places rich in history and tradition, or closely connected with the lives of great Englishmen.

CLUB FIXTURES.

On Wednesday, April 4th, the Ramblers' Club is to visit the Record Office, and will meet outside the entrance in Chancery Lane at 2 p.m. The Nurses will find this, from the historical point of view, a most interesting expedition. There they will see Records dating back through the centuries in relation to all the great events in the country's history. We hope, if there is time, to go on to Soane's Museum. The Ramblers once explored this to some extent before, but, unfortunately, the limits of time and their interest in certain special Sections prevented us from being able to go through all the departments.

For the evening of Thursday, April 12th, at 8 o'clock, Miss Jessie Holmes is arranging a Whist Drive in aid of the Princess Christian Memorial Fund, and it is suggested that those who participate in it should come in fancy dress. Miss Holmes has been promised some very beautiful prizes, not only for the victors of the whist drive, but also as prizes for those who wear the most original dresses. There will be games and other entertainments in one of the drawing-rooms for those who do not care to play whist. Tickets will be 2s. each, inclusive of refreshments. For fuller particulars please write to the Secretary.

On Saturday, April 21st, at 3 p.m., Miss Macdonald will lecture on "Queen Margaret of Scotland—the first Royal British Nurse."

For Saturday, April 28th, we hope to arrange a Dance, but this date is subject to confirmation later so that those who wish to attend should communicate with the Secretary. The last dance was the most successful we have ever had, and we hope that that which we are now arranging will be equally so.

ANCIENT CUSTOMS OF THE CITY OF LONDON.

On Friday, March 23rd, Major Rigg, O.B.E., J.P., gave a lecture on "Some Ancient Customs of the City of London." That the subject appealed to the Members was shown by the fact that the large double drawing-room was quite filled; the lecture was one of the most interesting we have ever had. The Right Worshipful the Sheriff of London occupied the Chair, and his exceedingly humorous remarks, in introducing the Lecturer, gave an atmosphere of gaiety and pleasant anticipation that helped us to enter, in a very human kind of way, into all the queer customs which were described. We hope that one day Major Rigg will write a book on these ancient customs; assuredly it would prove widely popular. As the Chairman pointed out, there is no one in London who has made a wider study of, or can speak with greater authority on, the traditions of the City of London than Major Rigg.

In thanking Mr. Sheriff Davenport for his introduction, Major Rigg took opportunity to tell his audience a good deal about the interesting and honourable office of the Sheriff of London, which dates back to the Norman Conquest; it is an office honoured by great antiquity and tradition. Indeed the traditional customs, which cling about the office of the Sheriffdom of London, are almost as old as those connected with the crystal-headed Mace of the City. The office of Lord Mayor, although very old, is not of the same antiquity, and is of French origin. The Lecturer gave us many interesting details regarding the appointment of the Lord Mayor, remarking that before he could hold office he had to run the gauntlet of four different elections. A description was given of some ceremonies which take place when a new Lord Mayor is installed, and of the ancient rights and privileges held by him.

Most interesting, too, was the description of customs connected with the Tower of London, particularly of that in which every night the Sentry of the Guard challenges the Chief Warder when he comes with the keys of the fortress. The "Ramblers" once had the opportunity, on a snowy night in winter, of witnessing this most picturesque custom, which dates from the days of the Conqueror.

Major Rigg gave us an account of the customs of the different Trade Guilds of the City, and explanations regarding much that takes place in connection with the Lord Mayor's Procession. The dress of the Aldermen and its pointed hood originated in an ecclesiastical order, and details were given regarding the Liverymen and the traditions and customs connected with them.

We were told of the measures taken to prevent infection when the prisoners were brought, in olden times, before the Criminal Courts of the City. That such precautions were necessary is shown by the fact that, in one year, seventeen Aldermen died of the plague, but we doubt whether the sprinkling of herbs and flowers, the burning of old shoe-leather, and such-like precautions, would be very efficacious in the matter of preventing the spread of infection, although great faith was placed in such customs in the Middle Ages. The matter is interesting from a nurse's point of view, as references to the condition of the prisons pointed to how great was the need for those reforms which John Howard and Elizabeth Fry were instrumental in bringing about.

In speaking of the hearse cloths of the different City Guilds it was interesting to learn that the finest of these is very richly ornamented with peacocks' feathers; it may be that this is the origin of the widespread superstition that peacocks' feathers are unlucky.

A Member who thanked Mr. Sheriff Davenport for presiding at the Lecture told how they felt that, that afternoon, they had stolen a march upon him. Often when his fine equipage with coachman and footmen in gilded livery waited for him in Queen's Gate, the nurses had gone to the balcony to watch him come out in his official robes. Unfortunately, they had never been able to wait long enough for his appearance, so that it was the more pleasing to have induced him to preside over a gathering at their Headquarters; warm thanks were expressed for his kindness in sparing time from his official duties to take the Chair that afternoon. At the close of the Lecture a large number of those who attended stayed for tea, and it was amusing to note that Mr. Sheriff Davenport had to submit to considerable cross-examination as to the details of his office; with much good nature he supplemented Major Rigg's remarks and also explained the symbolism of the beautiful chain of office which he was wearing.

ISABEL MACDONALD,

Secretary to the Corporation.

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