

Royal British Nurses' Association.

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MISS MACDONALD "AT HOME."

On October 20th Miss Isabel Macdonald was "At Home" to Members of the Association and other friends. There was a large attendance and there were many pleasant meetings between Members who have seen little of one another since the early summer, when the gatherings became much less frequent. Miss Macdonald was presented with a most beautiful basket of flowers from the nurses which is still a source of great pleasure as we go to press, and looks as though it intended to adorn our drawing-room for many days more. It was a great pleasure to the hostess to welcome so many friends.

LECTURE.

HISTORIC PLACES IN THE ROYAL MILE.

On October 26th Miss Jessie Holmes gave a lantern lecture on "Historic Places in the Royal Mile." Before the commencement of the lecture Miss Macdonald said she had been given the pleasant duty of introducing Miss Holmes, but Miss Holmes required no introduction to a Royal British Nurses' Association's audience. She was well equipped to give a lecture on Scottish history, for she had made a great study both of the history and literature of her country. Moreover she yielded to no one in her love for Scotland and, the speaker believed, would climb the Devil's Elbow in snow drifts if she could do it to the skirl of the pipes.

What of history one short mile could contain evidently did come as a surprise to the audience; but that mile comprises within itself a kind of tabloid of Scottish history and it stretches simply from Edinburgh Castle to Holyrood.

Edinburgh, said Miss Holmes, is "a city that is set on a hill," and like Rome is surrounded by seven hills. Its real architectural history may be said to have commenced with the building of the Castle and the Norman chapel of St. Margaret is the oldest remaining part of that. The Castle is mentioned first in history, as a royal residence, in the reign of Malcolm II in 1004, but there were fortifications on the Rock before then and kings no doubt may have lived there. Queen Margaret lived much at Edinburgh Castle and she died there in 1093. Other slides comprised a general view of Edinburgh as it is to-day and a view of old Edinburgh from the Calton Hill, Stevenson's favourite haunt as a boy; others showed Princes Street looking west, the beautiful gardens there and, what proved most attractive, the Old Nor Loch and the old Church of St. Cuthbert, which once stood on the site of the gardens, the loch having been drained and replaced by the latter.

We have not time to enumerate the whole of the hundred and thirty slides shown "within about a mile o' Edinbro' Toon." There were several connected with Sir Walter Scott, in this, his centenary year. Pictures of the old and new Royal Infirmary were exceedingly interesting and

presented a wonderful transformation in architecture within a comparatively short period of time. Several old historic churches were shown and "the Blue Blanket"—the fine banner made in connection with the foundation of the Trinity Collegiate Church by the Queen of James II. It is a craftsman's banner of intense historic interest and is still preserved in the Huntly House Museum. Many extremely interesting views of places connected with the Covenanters were put on the screen. When showing Castle Hill Miss Holmes remarked that it was called "the Goose Pie" because of its peculiar shape. Allan Ramsay's house was here; and that a wag had said to him that such a name "was all right for the Castle Hill while *he* lived on it." We wonder how many nowadays read his beautiful "Gentle Shepherd."

The town house of the Duke of Gordon was a very interesting slide, as it was there that Sir David Baird spent his childhood; he became the hero of Seringapatam. The site of the temporary palace of Mary of Guise (mother of the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots) was shown and the old Weigh House where all commodities imported into Edinburgh were weighed and registered; where it once stood is now the fine Church Assembly Hall. Then came West Bow Street up which Lord Randolph urged his weary steed "with the wae-fu' news o' Flodden"; Scott describes the hanging of Colonel Porteous here. The gallows stones were also shown where Porteous and other Covenanters were hanged and we saw a representation of the fine picture of "The Porteous Mob" by James Drummond. Among other slides were the house of the great historian David Hume, Brodie's Close, where the notorious Deacon Brodie lived until he was hanged on his own invention, the tenement where Robert Burns lived on his first visit to Edinburgh, the entrance to St. James's Court, where James Boswell entertained Dr. Johnson in 1773, and the House of Lady Stair, now a fine museum. Liberton Wynd was interesting, not only because here was John Dowie's Tavern, where Burns wrote, but because the name of Liberton really came from Leper Town; how many poor creatures have walked up this, leaving their friends and their lovely Edinburgh behind them? Parliament Square and the Court of Session came next. Here the fascinating associations with history and personalities were referred to.

One slide, which caused great amusement, gave a picture of Jenny Geddes (1637) throwing her four-legged stool at the Dean of Edinburgh when he attempted to reintroduce Roman Catholicism into Scotland by reading Laud's Liturgy; the expressions on the different countenances, particularly that of Bishop Lindsay, provoked much laughter. A particularly interesting picture also was that of Old Stamp Close with reminiscences of the Church Assembly and notabilities in the 18th century; here Flora Macdonald was educated, and here Burns saw the haggis which inspired one of his most popular poems.

Two slides of St. John's Close and Street were interesting, because these were granted by James II to the Knights of

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