

THE ALUMNÆ NEWS

Published Monthly by the Associate Alumnae of Hunter College of the City of New York
(Entered at the New Rochelle Post Office at the pound rate of postage.)

VOL. XXVII. NEW ROCHELLE, N. Y., DECEMBER, 1922

No. 8

THE FALL REUNION

November eighteenth saw the Chapel comfortably filled by the flock of the faithful who never fail to respond to the call of Alma Mater.

The recent achievements of Alma Mater were summarized by Mrs. Popper in her address of welcome, in which she referred to what has been accomplished by the Summer Session, by the Senior Class, and by individual alumnae who have gained distinction. She mentioned, too, the series of ten Philharmonic Concerts given under the auspices of City College (represented by Professor Baldwin) and Hunter College (represented by Professor Fleck); and finally she referred to the success of our High School Department, to whose graduates have been awarded 185 state scholarships.

Neither were Alma Mater's requirements forgotten. Mrs. Popper begged her audience to give thoughtful attention to the crying need of a new building. The High School Department is threatened with eviction; and the College, too, is in sore want of more space for further development in every line, both cultural and athletic.

President Davis, who on the previous day had represented Hunter at the inauguration of a new chancellor at Syracuse, had been unable to get back to New York in time for the Alumnae meeting; but he sent a cordial letter of greetings and good wishes, the reading of which met with hearty applause.

The musical numbers on the program included several delightful songs admirably rendered by Mr. Vernon Hughes, and the "Ivy Leaf", in the singing of which, as usual, all joined.

The speaker of the day was our own Professor Whicher, whom all the Alumnae were most eager to see and hear once more after his absence of over a year abroad. There, in his capacity of Professor in Charge at the School for Classical Studies of the American Academy in Rome, Professor Whicher resided in the Academy, where he lectured and arranged for lectures, and directed the band of students in their researches; but he also found time to explore Latium, Etruria, and Horace's Sabine Hills; to represent Hunter at the quinquecentennial celebration of the University of Padua, which university conferred an honorary doctor's degree upon him (but this he omitted to mention); and to amass many interesting "Observations of Modern Italy," which he proceeded to summarize for us in his own inimitable manner.

Italy, like our own country, is a melting-pot. In the northern portion, which in the old days was not considered Italy at all, the people look Teutonic, while the way of life rather resembles that of France. Of these prosperous manufacturing centers Professor Whicher did not purpose to speak so much as of the agricultural communities to the southward, where sturdy peasants seek to wrest a living from a land lacking in iron and other metals and in coal, covered with barren ridges of limestone, and "poor in water" like that primitive kingdom of Daunus of which Horace tells, so that ordinary hygienic facilities are practically non-existent.

But in less material things the Italians are blessed. Professor Whicher says that he was particularly impressed by the personal beauty of the men. (As he explained in a jocular parenthesis, he was not so likely to be struck by the loveliness of the women, since twenty-four years at Hunter had accustomed him to pretty girls!) And more important is the intense love of beauty that pervades all classes—beauty of nature and beauty of art. Very touching was Professor Whicher's reference to the Italian immigrants of the east side, who, even while they realize that they have found more material comfort and prosperity in this country than their own land could have offered them, still grieve that their children are being deprived of that beauty which should be their birthright.

For these same immigrants Professor Whicher made a most moving plea. Surely they merit our respect—these gangs of men who do the most repulsive work of civilization, often at the risk of their lives, and share their scanty wage with some dependent relative in the little home-village back in Italy.

Together with this love of art goes a tremendous respect for science and scholarship. To the Italian the essential thing about a university is not its buildings but its faculties and their scholarly achievements.

An amazing thing about Italy is the abundance of its artistic remains that have survived the centuries of political turmoil inevitable amid so vivacious and so individualistic a people. Every little community has something of which any community might well be proud. Every town has its own source of inspiration. And inspiring, too, is the wondrous background of lakes, and falls, and "villages white or whitish-gray surrounding like a crown some little mountain peak that rises out of the purple Campagna."

ALICE RICH NORTHROP

May, 1922

She brought glad tidings to the stony street,
To little, longing souls, unkindly pent
Between hard walls. Her quiet way she went,
Spreading the gospel of green leaves, the sweet
And living word of the woods; and where her feet
Had passed, sprang peace, and happy wonderment;
So shall the thought of her be ever blent
With those dear boons the seasons still repeat.

Year after year her memory shall be writ
With violets in bright April's Book of Hours,
And tenderest ferns, from the warm earth new-risen;
And every Autumn shall illumine it
With color of gentians and of cardinal-flowers;
For she brought Beauty to the spirits in prison.

Helen Gray Cone.