

At the close of 1925 the London Repertory Company began an experimental season of revivals of the most noteworthy plays of our time, and this proved so successful that the Regent is now regarded as one of the most interesting repertory theatres in London. Just beyond St. Pancras Station is the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital for Women (see under "Some Notable Institutions") and beyond that are the Offices of the Hearts of Oak Benefit Society, opened by his late Majesty King Edward in May, 1906. This event was commemorated just twelve years later by the erection of the statue of the late King in front of the Offices. The work of Mr. Herbert Hampton, this bronze effigy, of heroic size, standing on a granite pedestal, represents King Edward in the uniform of a Field Marshal wearing a State robe, a scroll in his right hand, his left hand resting on a sword. The inscription reads that the statue was "Erected by voluntary subscriptions of members of the Hearts of Oak Benefit Society to commemorate the honour conferred by his Majesty upon the Friendly Societies of Great Britain, when, on May 26th, 1906, accompanied by Queen Alexandra, he opened this building." The ceremony of unveiling was performed, May 23rd, 1918, by Lord Burnham during the Annual Meeting of the Society's Delegates here. The building is of great beauty, having a central hall and suite of committee rooms floored, panelled and furnished entirely in old oak. The Society is a progressive one and was one of the pioneers of flood-lighting in London. Since its inception in 1842, it has disbursed over £30,000,000 in benefits, and advanced over £8,000,000 to enable members to purchase their houses. Its present membership is over 709,000. It is of patriotic interest to note that as a memorial to members who fell in the late war the Society instituted a War Memorial Fund, which provided free insurance for over 4,000 of their children until the age of sixteen. Adjoining the Hearts of Oak building is the Fire Brigade Station, erected in 1922. Further westward, Stanhope Street, running for some distance parallel with Hampstead Road, claims attention. For it was in Mary Street, now a part of Stanhope Street, that the great tragedian, William Charles Macready, was born, March 3rd, 1793. He was baptized at St. Pancras Parish Church in January, 1796. His father, an Irish actor who, in 1786, had married an English actress at Manchester, had come to London to join the Covent Garden Theatre Company at the instance of Macklin ("the Jew that Shakespeare drew"), and William Charles was the fifth child of this union. It should be stated that, when first constructed, Euston Road was known as the New Road, and subsequently received its present name from the fact that the ground landlords, the Fitzroys, are Earls of Euston as well as Dukes of Grafton.

Somers Town is a thickly populated residential and shopping district contained within a triangular space formed by the Euston, Pancras and Hampstead Roads. It is now difficult to visualize the time when this part of London was "almost exclusively pastoral," but such was the case. It derives its name from Lord Somers,

and is a most interesting locality. In Seymour Street, for instance, is that immensely important institution, the Railway Clearing House, a range of tall plain brick buildings occupying nearly the whole of one side of the street. But probably visitors to Somers Town will regard as a principal shrine the diminutive dwelling, No. 13 Johnson Street (a turning off Clarendon Street). For this is where some portion of Dickens' cheerless boyhood was spent. It was after leaving the Marshalsea Prison (on the receipt of a legacy) that the future novelist's father set up his household here, and the house remains practically as it was at that period. The visitor will observe on the wall of the little yard at the back of the house the inscription: "D. of B." This was made to mark the extremity of the Duke of Bedford's property at this point. Remembering how, in "Nicholas Nickleby," Messrs. Pyke & Pluck, in conversation with Mrs. Witterly, used such mysterious expressions as "The D. of B." and "The C. of B."—"the beautiful sister" being "the Countess not the Duchess"—the visitor will think of one impression of the novelist's boyhood which remained vivid in after life, and helped him to one of his quaint expressions. By a happy thought this house is now a Children's Library. The library contains nearly 1,500 books, and is embellished with a number of interesting pictures, autographs, etc. A number of overalls are kept for the temporary use of juvenile readers when every-day garments might not conduce to the well-being of the books which they come here to read. The Library is opened from 5 to 7 p.m. on week-days and is closed on Sundays. It is contained on the ground and first floors, the second floor being appropriated to the caretaker. The very greatest interest marked the institution of this Children's Library. A performance of Bulwer Lytton's play, "Not So Bad As We Seem," played at Devonshire House by the Guild of Literature and Art, in 1851, with Dickens in the cast and as "producer," was given—again at Devonshire House—in aid of the Library funds, the characters being sustained by eminent literary and artistic lights of the present day, including the two grandsons of Dickens and Lytton respectively. Books (some of them by these authors) were presented by many sympathizers, and subscriptions from well-known people were received. Lastly, the French Government—Dickens is as popular in France as in his own country—gave a number of French works to the value of about £80, the gift being formally handed over at a meeting at St. Pancras Town Hall by the French Ambassador, Comte de Saint-Aulaire, in April, 1922. The Rev. J. Brett Langstaff read a very sympathetic message from Queen Alexandra, and another from Princess Christian, also a letter from Sir H. Fielding Dickens, K.C. (Common Serjeant), a son of the novelist, and, in addition, informed the company that the Prince of Wales, who had often accompanied him to Somers Town, had given them permission to use his name in connection with the movement. On Christmas Eve, 1921, there was an informal house-warming at the Library, the children of Somers Town being welcomed