PROFESSOR HENDERSON'S LECTURES

There were no most seats in the Queen's Hall last night, when Professor Henderson delivered the first of his lectures on the subject of "The Crusades." The chief reason, as Mr. Leongmore, having briefly introduced the lecturer, explained, was that it was very gratifying to him to re-enter Paris and to see such a large audience assembled. The object of his lectures was most honorably on the subject of the Crusades; he was going to speak of their leaders of the Middle Ages—Richard I, a practical man; St. Francis of Assisi, an idealist, and Louis IX. of France, who, in his early life, was most interested in the subject, and had spent much time in studying it. He might use language which would seem paradoxical, but he would make no statement which could not be justified by reference to official documents of first-rate importance. He had visited Italy during the latter part of last year, and he had gathered there. St. Francis was a Christian Idealist, whose work was done in the early part of the thirteenth century, but the influence of his personality was enormous even now. There was hardly any man to whom historians of late had devoted more attention. He had a message for his time. They were all struggling for a competence—his was a poverty, and he made a most strenuous effort to cut himself adrift from all that could be called as perishing. The lecturer briefly sketched the early days in which Francis was fond of dress and costly living, his brief career as a soldier, the vision of St. Francis, and the feast on his return, at which, although he did not eat, he was thinking of taking a wife more beautiful, more pure, than anything he had ever imagined—he made no kind of work that did not. He went to Rome and changed clothes with a beggar. In the Church of St. Damian he saw a man who interpreted it in a literal sense—that he was to restore the building. His father, Pietro Bernardone, was plucked out of him, but he gave back his father's name at first, and so became his. At last he had received from him, and he had the right garments in which to appear. The remains of St. Francis at first were followed by a profound silence of all that they should give up all that they had, and do the will of God. Orders took vows of "chastity, obedience, and poverty," but poverty was the characteristic of the rule of Francis. When he went to Rome to see Pope Urban V., it was not to see the Pope, but to see the Pope. Francis represented those who hold that it is better for a man, if he wishes to maintain his independence, to keep apart from material wealth, and to rely on the resources within him. The Pope represented the opposite view—that it is necessary to take men and women as they find them, if we wish to make our ideals effective, we must get material or political power, a man's vow is his own private vow, for sanction for certain ideals,--firstly, to live at peace with his neighbors; secondly, to labor (not to be a mere spectator of other men's spiritual exertions), and thirdly, to do his best. He was not only a great poet by the simple art of clothing a coat, a cord, and sandals, and his cell was a hole in the ground. He had to have a body of that indifference and that he could have the privilege of doing reverence to all, and he did it.

The lecture, which was followed throughout by breathless interest, closed with an exhibition of views illustrative of the life of St. Francis. The most expressive of this was the strong conviction that there was nothing possible in the story that St. Francis received in his body the "stigmata, or marks of the Five Wounds."