

## NURSES WHO HELPED TO WIN THE ROYAL CHARTER.

### THE SIGNATORIES.

Since the great battle before the Privy Council for the Royal Charter in 1892, between the Royal



MARGARET BREAY.

British Nurses' Association and the more reactionary of the Nurse Training Schools, led by St. Thomas' and the London, Guy's, and King's, thousands of Nurses have passed through their training, who know nothing of this historic contest, or of the past history of their profession. Many nurses are apparently quite content to accept all that has been won for them, without knowing or caring who worked and suffered for their benefit. To possess a knowledge of the history of one's profession should be the duty of everyone who hopes to adorn it, and this useful lesson is now carefully taught in the leading American Nursing Schools, and the pupils in our own schools would greatly benefit by such instruction. I was immensely impressed quite recently when chatting with an American Superintendent to find that she knew the whole history of nursing evolution in this country.

"We have the *Nursing Record* and *BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING* on file in New York," she said. "Miss Lavinia Dock put me on to it, and we are encouraged to study the wonderful story for professional emancipation on this side. It's real fine reading. Take the women who won the Royal Charter,



HENRIETTA C. POOLE.

how many of you have lived through it?"

"Oh! quite a number," I replied; "and those of us who are left are just as keen for self-governing State Registration as we were 25 years ago."

"Now, isn't that real splendid!" she exclaimed.

Then we recalled the leading personalities of those women who had helped to found the

British Nurses' Association, and who won the Royal Charter.

Of the great work for nursing reform and organisation of the late Miss Isla Stewart, this

American Nurse expressed profound admiration, as President of the Matrons' Council, as founder of the first Nurses' League, she called her a "dis-sentient Nightingale," who had the rare courage in opposition to her Alma Mater to stand alone in support of the grant of the Royal Charter, and for State Registration.

"That was so and she was made to suffer for it," I said. "Two days before her death she said to me very sadly, 'No Nightingale probationer has ever held a more honourable professional status and record than I have done (she was Matron of St. Bartholomew's Hospital for 23 years), but I have never been forgiven for signing the Royal Charter, and for working for State Registration.'



MAUDE G. SMITH.

"From all over the country the most touching and exquisite tributes of love and admiration were sent as this truly great woman lay coffined at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, before being laid to rest in her dear native land, but not one word, or one flower was sent from St. Thomas' Hospital, and now, incredible as it may seem, these very people are prepared to annexe the Royal Charter, the granting of which they so bitterly opposed, to give prestige to the College of Nursing Company, and to give effect to the very reforms, including that of State Registration, for which she worked for half a life time."

"Is that so? How greatly her generous heart would rejoice did she know it. And," continued this delightful American, "Let us hope that the St. Thomas' people will not fail to recognise by some worthy memorial in the Nightingale School, the 'honourable professional record' of the greatest of its pupils."

"The other women, who, in recognition of their valuable work for the Royal British Nurses' Association, were invited to be Signatories of the Royal Charter were Miss G. M. Thorold, Matron for upwards of 30 years of Middlesex Hospital; Miss Cassandra Beachcroft, trained at the London, and for many years the valued matron



ETHEL GORDON FENWICK.  
Founder  
British Nurses' Association.



LOUISA HOGG.

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