

THE PASSING OF A SIGNATORY TO THE ROYAL CHARTER.

By the death of Miss Christina F. Forrest, S.R.N., the Royal British Nurses' Association has sustained the loss of one of the twenty-eight members of the Medical and Nursing Professions who with our first President, H.R.H. the Princess Christian, were signatories to the petition for our Royal Charter, and whose names are incorporated in the Charter granted in response to that Petition by Queen Victoria, by Warrant under her Sign Manual. Only seven of that diminishing group of pioneers are still living—Dr. and Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Sir James Crichton Browne, Sir Dyce Duckworth, Miss Catherine J. Wood, Miss Gertrude A. Rogers, and Miss Margaret Breay, and the loss of Miss Forrest is a very great one, not only to the Association, but to the Nursing Profession at large for, to the end of her honoured life she took the keenest and most forceful interest in all that concerned its welfare.

Her death took place on Easter Monday (April 5th) at the Victoria Nursing Home, Bournemouth, of which she became the proprietor and Matron in 1899. For the last six years, though young as ever in spirit her physical powers have been failing, and she has been tenderly cared for by her partner and friend, Miss F. L. Pearce, S.R.N., and was happy also in receiving loving service from the members of the nursing and domestic staff of the Home, many of whom had been with her for over 20 years, and also from her Secretary, Miss F. K. Clarke, for she had a most winning personality and had the faculty of attracting loyalty and devotion.

Miss Forrest was the eldest daughter of the late Captain J. H. Forrest, of the 11th Hussars, and Chief Constable of Hampshire. She entered on her professional career at the Royal Hants County Hospital, Winchester, in 1880, and was subsequently Matron of the Children's Hospital, Southsea, Sister at Guy's Hospital, London, Matron of the Home of Good Hope, Bournemouth, and of the County Hospital, York, until in 1894 she went to reside in Bournemouth where her activities were thenceforward centred, first in a Nursing Home in Victoria Road, and since 1899 in the Victoria Home in Cambridge Road. In addition she established the large Hostel in Beechey Road for the supply of private nurses, and was largely instrumental in establishing the Home of Good Hope for private patients in Porchester Road.

With so much work on hand at an age when many nurses would have considered themselves entitled to a well-earned rest, Miss Forrest was nevertheless in the forefront of those who promoted the interests of the Nursing Profession at large. We have already mentioned her position as a Signatory to the Royal Charter, and her support to the Petition at a time when this aroused strenuous opposition, and the various self-governing Associations of Nurses had her active sympathy. She was one of the first members of the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, and when the International Council of Nurses was founded on the proposal of Mrs. Bedford Fenwick at the Annual Conference of that body in 1899, she became one of its keenest supporters. She was Hon. Treasurer of the National Council of Trained Nurses from its foundation in 1904 until 1923, and founded the Victoria Bournemouth Nurses' League,

which, under her Presidency, in affiliation with the National Council, took an active and honourable part in the struggle for State Registration of Nurses, and when a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed, in 1904, "to consider the expediency of providing for the Registration of Nurses," Miss Forrest gave valuable evidence before it in support of such a Measure. It was a great delight to her when Acts for the Registration of Nurses were placed upon the Statute Book in 1919, and she applied for Registration at the earliest possible moment, her number on the Register of Nurses for England and Wales being No. 16.

At the Meetings of the International Council of Nurses in Paris (1907), London (1909) and Cologne (1912), Miss Forrest, with her party of members of the Victoria Bournemouth Nurses' League, all wearing their neat, professional uniform, attracted much attention. In London the National Councils of Canada, Denmark, Finland and Holland were admitted to the International Council of Nurses with impressive ceremonial. Miss Forrest was deputed to welcome Denmark, and it was characteristic of the thoroughness with which she discharged all her duties that she greeted Mrs. Tscherning, President of the Danish Council of Nurses, in the Danish language.

In the midst of her many professional activities Miss Forrest found time to make and retain friends. One of these writes of her:—"Dear, dear, Miss Forrest. What a unique and charming personality her's was. We shall not see its like again, for it belonged so much to the *best* of a past day. It was always a joy even to see her. Such a beautiful old lady, with the fire of mind, and flash of wit in the eyes, and the look of fine tiredness, with so much done and thought and fought for in her life. And then, too, as with so many of the old people of that generation, a youthfulness and joyousness of spirit. It is a privilege indeed to have known such."

Another friend writes:—"She certainly had a very attractive personality which made it a pleasure to be with her. She was *younger* than ever last August Bank Holiday



MISS CHRISTINA F. FORREST, S.R.N.
A Signatory to the Royal Charter.

when she asked me to wheel her down to the Parade for her to see the people enjoying themselves."

Her funeral took place at Southampton, the first part of the service being held at St. Stephen's Church, Bournemouth, conducted by the Rev. G. P. Trevelyan, assisted by the Rev. E. Moor, of St. Michael's. At the Old Cemetery, Southampton, the Rev. I. H. Eveleigh, Rector of Felton, Hereford, a nephew of Miss Forrest, officiated.

The Royal British Nurses' Association was represented by Miss Amy Curtis, M.R.B.N.A., and a wreath was sent from the Corporation bearing the following inscription:—

"From the Royal British Nurses' Association—a token of its Members' respect for one of the Signatories to its Royal Charter of Incorporation, and for a courageous pioneer of Nursing Organization."

Among many other floral tributes was one from the Victoria Bournemouth Nurses' League, bearing the inscription:—"In loving memory from the Victoria Bournemouth Nurses' League. Diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Another from the Sisters and Nurses of the Hostel, Bournemouth, and another from the Sisters and Nurses of the Home of Good Hope. Miss E. J. Hurlston represented the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland.

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