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## EDITORIAL.

RICHARD WHIELDON BARNETT, KT.

THE NURSES' CHAMPION IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*"A Veray Parfit Gentil Knight."*

The passing of Major Sir Richard Barnett will leave a grievous blank in many departments of community life, but by none will he be missed more than by the Nurses' Organisations whose interests he so effectively voiced in the House of Commons from the day on which he introduced their Registration Bill in 1919 until 1929, when he withdrew from the House where he had served the nation so loyally. He departed this life on October 17th, at his home at Park Lodge, Park Village West, Regent's Park, N.W., and the opening words of his Will proclaim unequivocally the mainspring of his beautiful character. "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. I die a loyal member of the Church of England—neither Puritan, nor Roman, but Catholic."

He found time, in spite of many responsibilities outside the House of Commons, to act as Vicar's Churchwarden of Christ Church, Albany Street, N.W., an office which he held continuously from Easter, 1917, until the day of his death, and at the morning service on Sunday, October 19th, the Vicar, the Rev. Richard Swann Swann-Mason, preaching on "the Great Commandment" said: "It is now common knowledge that something has happened which has interrupted all our plans in connection with our church life. Early on Friday morning last our beloved churchwarden, Richard Whieldon Barnett, passed to his rest."

"His father was of the honourable profession of St. Luke the Physician. His mother was a daughter of the Rectory. Heredity and environment are powerful factors in the making of character, and I think I see in that home training some of the influences which moulded his life, and which were expressed in his activities. Those Sisters who give their lives to nurse the sick would be a common sight in a doctor's home, those stories of childhood and peaceful days in the country rectory, told by her who daily watched her son

grow in wisdom and stature, would fall on impressionable ears. These early impressions found expression in the Nurses' Registration Bill which Sir Richard Barnett piloted successfully through the House of Commons, and his twelve years as Vicar's Warden in this church may have sprung from those memories of her whose early childhood was under the shadow of the village church.

"Those two things in a life full of activity indicate that Richard Whieldon Barnett had two great desires, to serve God and to love his neighbour."

A churchman of the school of Pusey and Liddon, an English gentleman, and a cultured alumnus of the University of Oxford, he was "a patriot who was ready to accept military duty when the call came, a lover of the Church of England who had a corner in his heart for any and all who had the slightest claim on his affection, one who did many kind deeds without any advertisement. Such men are rare."

Sir Richard graduated at Oxford University (Wadham College) taking honours in jurisprudence in 1887, and his M.A. and B.C.L. two years later. He was Captain and Instructor of Musketry of the 22nd Middlesex R.V. (The Rangers) 1889-1897. A crack rifle shot who represented Ireland in International matches for the Elcho Shield on 37 occasions and twice made a record score. He was one of 12 representatives of the United Kingdom at the Olympic Games in 1908 and Captain of the winning team in the Lords v. Commons match at Bisley, 1921-1928. He was champion chess player of Ireland, 1886-1889, and President of the House of Commons Chess Circle, 1923-1929; Vice-President of the Institution of Petroleum Technologists, President of the British Controlled Oilfields, Ltd., and a prominent Freemason. In September, 1914, he was Musketry Officer 41st Infantry Brigade, and two months later Staff Officer for Musketry (graded as Brigade Major) Ulster Division. He designed the Barnett Optical Sight for S.M.L.E., and was mentioned in the Secretary for War's list, 1917. He was President of the Commercial Committee of the House of Commons in 1923-1924 and was its Acting President at Versailles in 1928. In 1928 to 1929 he

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