

THE PASSING OF A PIONEER.

MISS M. AGNES SNIVELY.

Our sincere sympathy goes out to the Canadian Nurses' Association on the loss of its beloved and revered Founder, Miss M. Agnes Snively, who, at 85 years of age, died in the private pavilion of the Toronto General Hospital on September 26th, where for twenty-five years (1884-1910) she was the honoured Lady Superintendent. In 1901, at the time of the International Congress of Nurses in Buffalo, to celebrate the New Century, we had the pleasure of being her guest for two happy days, and had the opportunity of observing the high standard of proficiency which had been attained under her wise and expert rule, and the professional tone which, emanating from its chief officer, characterised the School. On the many occasions when we had the pleasure of association with Miss Snively we were always impressed not only by her personal charm, but by the very high altruistic standard which inspired her thoughts and actions.

Miss Snively was born in St. Catherine's, Ontario, on November 12th, 1847. Her father, Martin Snively, of Swiss descent, was born at Niagara Falls, Ontario, and her mother, at five years of age, came from Armagh (Ireland) to Lewiston, New York. Did the diverse influences of her early years—Switzerland, Ireland, Canada and the United States of America—help to arouse her immediate interest in the International Council of Nurses, of which she was Hon. Treasurer from 1900-1904, and of which she was a Councillor (Foundation Member) at her death? Certain it is that her interest in it was true and steadfast, and it was a deep disappointment to her, and to her many international friends, that medical orders prohibited her from attending the Nurses' International Congress in Montreal in 1929, as she had planned.

Miss Snively's childhood was passed happily in the home where she was born, and on graduating from the high school, she was appointed to the staff of the Public School Board in St. Catherine's, a position in which she showed remarkable gifts. An inspector's report at that time testified that she was an excellent teacher, a faithful worker, that her methods were good, and that she exerted a wonderful moral influence in dealing with children—gifts which were to stand her in good stead when, at the instigation of Mrs. Hampton Robb and Miss Louise Darce, she entered the Nurse Training School at the Bellevue Hospital, New

York, from which she graduated in 1884, and straightway assumed the position offered to her of Lady Superintendent at the General Hospital, Toronto, and reorganised its Nursing School, so that it gained a reputation throughout the nursing world, not only for technical efficiency, but for the altruism and high principles which characterised its graduates.

Miss Snively was an honoured member of the International Congress of Nurses in London in 1909, when the Canadian Nurses' Association (then the Canadian National Association of Trained Nurses) was received into the International Council, and as its Founder and President was welcomed on its behalf by Miss Margaret Huxley, Foundation Member.

During this Congress, by special permission of King Edward VII., Miss Snively had the honour of placing a magnificent wreath on the tomb of Queen Victoria in the Mausoleum at Frogmore. It was, perhaps, the supreme moment of her life, when surrounded by the Canadian delegates and members of the Congress, she reverently placed the wreath at the foot of the exquisite marble tomb on which the effigies of the Queen and her Prince Consort—in lifelike replica—lie side by side in sculptured robes of state, and said:—

"By the permission of his most gracious Majesty, King Edward the Seventh, it is our exalted privilege this afternoon, reverently to stand beside the tomb of the greatest of English monarchs, Victoria, Queen of Great Britain and Empress of India. As loyal British subjects, we recall with pride and satisfaction the grandeur and power of her Kingdom, and the wonderful wisdom and progress which characterised her reign over many races and peoples, but above all these we delight to remember the womanly gentleness of her character, and that every effort for the alleviation of human suffering found a ready response in her sympathetic nature. These qualities have

for ever enthroned Queen Victoria in the hearts of her subjects, not only in England but in her Dominions across the seas.

"In the name, therefore, of the Canadian National Association of Trained Nurses, and as their representative I most loyally and reverently place this tribute of heartfelt homage and undying devotion from the nurses of the Dominion of Canada on the tomb of our late beloved Sovereign, Queen Victoria."

A loyal Address of Thanks for the privilege accorded them was subsequently sent by Miss Snively to King



MISS M. AGNES SNIVELY,
Founder Member and first Hon. Treasurer,
International Council of Nurses. Founder of
the Canadian Nurses' Association.

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