

## In Memoriam.

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RICHARD DANCER PUREFOY,  
M.D., LL.D. (*Honoris Causá*), UNIV. DUBLIN;  
FELLOW AND LATE PRESIDENT, R.C.S.I.; EX-MASTER OF THE  
ROTUNDA HOSPITAL, DUBLIN; M.R.I.A.

WITH deep regret it becomes our painful duty to report the death, on the night of Friday, June 27th, 1919, at his residence, 62 Merrion Square, Dublin, of this well-known, able, and highly respected member of the Medical Profession.

RICHARD DANCER PUREFOY was born on the 4th of August, 1847, at Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary. He was a son of the late Dr. Thomas Purefoy, of Lucan, Co. Dublin, who had married a daughter of Thomas Dancer, of Hilton, Co. Tipperary. His paternal ancestors had come to Ireland in the year 1620 from Fenny Drayton, Norfolkshire, and had settled at Woodfield, Co. Galway.

The school-days of the subject of this memoir were spent for a time at Bective College, and afterwards at Raphoe Royal School. From the latter he entered Trinity College, Dublin, graduating with Honours in the University of Dublin in the autumn of 1871, when he won a Junior Moderatorship in Natural Science along with his class-fellow, friend, and subsequent colleague, William Josiah Smyly, now Sir William Smyly.

Meanwhile RICHARD PUREFOY was pursuing his medical studies with assiduity and success, and in 1871 he obtained the License in Medicine and Surgery of the University of Dublin, graduating in Arts, Medicine and Surgery early in the following year. In 1875 he took the License or "Letters Testimonial" of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, proceeding to the Fellowship of that College in 1879. It was not till 1892 that he became a Doctor of Medicine of his Alma Mater, which twenty years after conferred upon him the degree

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of LL.D. *Honoris Causá*, on the auspicious occasion of the Bi-centenary celebration of the School of Physic of Trinity College, he being at the time President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

Long before this date PUREFOY had made his mark in professional circles in Dublin, and especially in the domain of obstetrics and gynæcology. He began his professional life as House Surgeon in St. Mark's Ophthalmic Hospital, serving as such for two years. He then became Assistant Master of the Coombe Lying-in-Hospital, passing thence to the like important position at the Rotunda Lying-in-Hospital. In 1879 he was chosen to be Lecturer in *Materia Medica* at the Ledwich School of Medicine, in Peter Street, Dublin. For 21 years he acted as Obstetric Surgeon to the adjoining Adelaide Hospital. Such were his early appointments from the clinical side.

With such a record it was not surprising that, in 1896, DR. PUREFOY was unanimously elected Master of the Rotunda Hospital—the appointment in the United Kingdom most coveted by obstetricians. During his tenure of office, which drew to a close in 1903, his reputation as a gynæcologist attracted students from all parts of the world. While Master of the Rotunda he organised the Lucina Bazaar—a highly successful *fête*, which freed the hospital from debt. A well-equipped Pathological Laboratory was among his gifts to the Hospital. A bronze bust, by Oliver Shepherd, presented to him by the Nursing Staff, stands in the fine Entrance Hall.

In 1912 DR. PUREFOY became President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and occupied the Chair with great distinction and dignity until 1914. In the following year he succeeded Dr. Walter George Smith as President of the Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland. He took the keenest interest in the Academy, was hardly ever absent from the Council meetings during his three years' Presidency, and contributed many papers of sterling value to the Section of Ob-

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stetrics. Nor was he forgetful of the claims of hospitality on the Chair, both in private and in public. In his third year of office he invited a large and representative company to meet His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland at dinner in the Halls of the Royal College of Surgeons.

So far as to his professional life and standing. But RICHARD PUREFOY had many tastes and social interests apart from Medicine. Gifted by Nature with a fine bass voice and a passionate love for music, he often delighted his friends by placing his musical talents at their disposal. He was elected President of the Hibernian Catch Club so recently as last December. He was an ardent Freemason and a member of the Order of the Friendly Brothers of St. Patrick. A lover of Art, he gathered together a fine collection of quaint old furniture and glass, coloured prints and water colours, and other articles of vertu.

RICHARD PUREFOY was a man of characteristic personality, who held to his views even in the teeth of strong opposition on occasion. But all respected him because of his transparent sincerity. He was generous and liberal to a fault, and possessed a deep well of sympathy with those in trouble or in sickness. A loyal member of the Church of Ireland, he took a leading part in its activities. One who knew him well wrote the following words, with which this brief memoir may well conclude :

“ He did not talk of religion, but no one could know him without perceiving that it was the foundation on which his life and character were built.”

J. W. M.