

MEMOIRS

GEORGE KING

By the death on the 2nd July last of Mr George King a striking personality passed away and the actuarial profession lost one of its most eminent members. Mr King had been a Fellow of the Institute for 58 years, and during this long period he had rendered outstanding service to the Institute and to actuarial science. Mr King was educated in London; he commenced his business career with an East India firm, but later he transferred his services to the Alliance Assurance Company Limited and subsequently he filled important and responsible positions with other leading assurance offices. It was however as a private consultant, work for which he was perhaps temperamentally better suited, that he achieved outstanding success, and his skill, courage and judgment secured for him a great reputation and a valuable connection. His professional renown was world-wide, and as the author of the *Institute of Actuaries Text-Book on Life Contingencies*, a work that was translated into at least four languages, he provided students in many lands with a solid foundation on which to base their professional education. It is unnecessary to enumerate the many services Mr King rendered to the State and to his profession; they were happily referred to on the 31st October, 1927, by Sir Joseph Burn, then President of the Institute, when presenting to him a gold medal, the first the Institute had ever given, "in recognition of long and distinguished service rendered to the Institute of Actuaries and actuarial science." A report of the proceedings on the occasion is contained in the *Journal*.

The translation of the Institute Text-Book into French was undertaken by M. Amédée Bégault, the eminent Belgian actuary, and it was largely due to the close association and friendship of Mr King with M. Bégault and with the late M. Léon Marie, who was General Secretary of the French Institute of Actuaries, that the idea of holding an International Congress of Actuaries matured. The first congress was held in Brussels in 1895 and was so successful that it has already been followed by eight others.

Mr George King was born in Ayrshire on the 22nd July, 1846, and was therefore nearly 86 years of age at the time of his death. He was the eldest son of the Rev. Dr David King of Glasgow and Elizabeth, the sister of the late Lord Kelvin. His younger brother, David Thomson King, was a man of great scientific promise who lost his life while engaged in the laying of the first American cable, being then only in the early twenties. His mother and two unmarried sisters were artists of considerable skill, and the latter exhibited a number of times in the Royal Academy. A portrait of Lord Kelvin by the elder of them, Miss Eliza-

beth Thomson King, was offered to and accepted by the National Portrait Gallery where it has hung for many years. His eldest sister married Dr J. H. Gladstone, F.R.S., and her daughter, Margaret Ethel, who died in 1911, was the wife of the present Prime Minister, the Right Honourable James Ramsay Macdonald. Mr George King married in 1880 Isabella Morland Cutmore, daughter of Dr Cutmore: she died in 1924 leaving a son, Mr David Thomson King of Richmond, and a daughter Emmeline Grenville, the wife of Mr Francis Clifton Hilbery of Teddington. In later life Mr King had no special hobbies, but as a younger man he spent much of such leisure as he allowed himself—he was always an indefatigable worker—in boating, mountaineering and rifle shooting. He was a first class shot, and while in the old London Scottish Regiment he won many trophies, including the Queen's Cup; this trophy he won three times in succession against the picked marksmen of the British Isles and it then became his own property. He was also at one time a billiard player of considerable skill.

Although his main interests were his work and his family life, there was a kindness in his nature that secured for him many friends. It was a pleasure to him to associate with his professional brethren, and until comparatively recently, when he felt the weight of advancing years, he was a regular attendant at the dinners of the Actuaries Club, the senior members of which mourn the loss of a personal friend whom they will ever hold in kindest remembrance.

W. P. P.