

women as her ministers. We think that no gift which the British Empire can make to our beloved and revered Sovereign can be more in harmony with Her Majesty's known desires than the proposed augmentation of the Women's Offering, and we therefore wish the scheme all success. One other commemoration of this, the most glorious reign in English history, we venture to think, would be a pre-eminently happy one, namely, that as the nation is of one mind that no Sovereign before has ever reigned so wisely or so well, and has thereby proved, beyond all question, that sex is no bar to the right understanding of political questions, the time has come for a national recognition of woman's ability and woman's right to take her share in controlling the destinies of the Empire. It seems, therefore, a fitting opportunity to remove from women the degradation of being classed with criminals, lunatics, and paupers, as being ineligible to vote, and presumably, therefore, incapable of rightly voting; at Parliamentary elections; and that the sixtieth year of Her Majesty's most glorious reign should fitly usher in the extension of the franchise to women, than whom the Queen has no more loyal and no more devoted subjects.

Royal British Nurses' Association.

(Incorporated by Royal Charter.)

THE CONVERSAZIONE.



THE Ninth Annual Conversazione of the Royal British Nurses' Association was held in the Portman Rooms on the evening of Friday, 18th inst., and, as usual, presented a bright and pretty scene, although the number of Nurses present was many less than in former years.

Her Royal Highness Princess Christian, the President, came attended by Miss Emily Loch, and was handsomely dressed in petunia velvet brightened by beautiful diamonds; she was received by the Hon. Officers and a few Matrons in the ante-room, and was eagerly awaited on the platform by Mrs. and Miss Myra Langton, the latter, with pleasurable excitement, presenting a pretty bouquet to the Princess upon her arrival.

Considerable surprise was expressed, by those who were not aware how the leading Nurses have been shuffled off their own Association, that the Matrons of many large hospitals in London and the provinces were this year conspicuous by their absence. But this is the inevitable result of the present policy.

Mr. Clinton Dent, of St. George's, addressed

the audience in a short and kindly speech, after which the badges were presented by the President, three medical men being amongst the recipients. Upon leaving the dais, the President took a seat in the hall and listened to the concert, to which M. Johannes Wolff contributed Vieuxtemps' "Polonaise" and Thorne's "Andante Religioso" for violin; and Mademoiselle Giulia Ravogli sang "Che farò" from Gluck's "Orpheus," as well as the "Habanera" from "Carmen," while Miss Helen Jackson gave an exquisite rendering of "Spring."

It is to be regretted that the Conversazione was not nearly so large a gathering as usual. Amongst those present we noticed Lord and Lady Halsbury, Sir Borradaile and Lady Savory, Sir William Broadbent, Sir Henry Thompson, Dr. and Mrs. Bedford Fenwick, Miss Medill, Mrs. Coster, Miss Beachcroft, Miss Rachel Tweed, Miss Sophia Wingfield, Miss Georgina Scott, Miss Miriam Ridley, Miss Butler, Miss Elma Smith, Miss Bourne, Miss Alureda Burges, and Miss Shirley, but many old faces were missing. Most of the Matrons were most becomingly dressed in plain, handsome black silk gowns with dainty lace caps, and, knowing the responsibility and arduous nature of their daily work, one can but conclude, from their bright and youthful faces, that work brings happiness and contentment. The Nurses looked very fresh and charming in the usual variety of uniforms, and we were glad to notice no *outré* costumes such as have sometimes been worn at previous gatherings.

The members of the Registered Nurses' Society have adopted a distinctive flower for these festive occasions, and the few who were able to be present wore, in beautiful contrast with their blue linen gowns, a bunch of crimson geraniums to match the red and white badge worn on the left arm.

Unlike former years, the meeting was not altogether a social gathering, and, wherever one moved, the same topic of conversation seemed under discussion, and "What is your opinion on the Mental Nurse question?" passed eagerly from one to another. We are glad to say that the answer was almost unanimous, and that, with very few exceptions, Matrons and Nurses strongly condemned Dr. Outterson Woods' suggestion to place upon the Register of Trained Nurses those Asylum Attendants, male (especially male) and female, who have not been trained in the wards of a General Hospital. How the character flies out in answer to a leading question! how crisply and firmly and with what sound reasoning, Miss Cassandra Beachcroft (Lincoln) gave vent to her disapproval; how kindly, calm, and impressive Miss Ridley, Miss Ross, and Miss Butler; with

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