

To the Right Honourable the Lords of Her Majesty's Most
Honourable Privy Council.

THE HUMBLE PETITION of the PRESIDENT AND CENTRAL COUNCIL of
the INCORPORATED MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS' ASSOCIATION.

SHEWETH:

1. That the Royal British Nurses' Association was founded in 1887, for the benefit of Nurses, for the assistance of the medical profession, and for the protection of the public. Its chief object was to improve the training and education of nurses, and to afford the public some means of distinguishing well trained nurses from ignorant and inefficient women who assumed that title.

2. That the work of nurses being always performed under the direction of medical men, it is of the utmost importance that there should be independent and representative members of the medical profession on the executive and governing bodies of the Royal British Nurses' Association, and on the body entrusted with the maintenance of the list of trained nurses compiled by that Association.

3. That, on March 21st, 1892, the Central Council of the Medical Practitioners' Association considered a letter, dated March 15th, 1892, from H.R.H. Princess Christian, asking for assistance to her Petition for a Royal Charter for the Nurses' Association. In consequence, a special general meeting of the Medical Practitioners' Association was held on April 5th, 1892, at which three members of the Executive Committee of the Nurses' Association attended as delegates from that body, and, in response to questions then asked, promised on behalf of that Association:—(a) that there should be six general medical practitioners upon the Executive Committee of the Nurses' Association instead of four, as was then, and had previously been the case. (b) That medical associations should be officially represented upon the said Executive Committee. (c) That such medical bodies should be represented officially upon the Board entrusted with the registration of trained nurses.

4. Trusting in the good faith of these verbal promises, the Medical Practitioners' Association gave, and obtained, a large amount of medical support to the petition for the Royal Charter; and, when the Royal Charter was granted, the promises referred to were faithfully fulfilled, the Bye-Laws, sanctioned by the Most Honourable Privy Council on July 17th, 1893, giving permanent *ex-officio* seats on the Executive Committee of the Nurses' Association to the Presidents for the time being of the Medical Practitioners' Association, and of the British Medical Association, and providing that six general practitioners should be always placed on the said Executive Committee.

5. Also, on October 3rd, 1893, an official letter was received from the Secretary of the Royal British Nurses' Association asking the Council of the Medical Practitioners' Association to formally accept this permanent seat for its President for the time being. The said Council formally accepted this official position, and, in consequence thereof, certain of its Presidents have held that *ex-officio* seat. Also, on October 17th, 1893, the Executive Committee of the Nurses' Association made a Regulation giving a permanent constitution to the Registration Board of the said Association, unlike that of other sub-committees, and giving the Presidents of the two Associations, above named, permanent *ex-officio* seats thereon.

6. That these provisions were maintained until November, 1896, when the Executive Committee of the Nurses' Association, on the proposal of the Honorary Secretary, rescinded the said Regulation, and deprived the said Presidents of the said *ex-officio* seats on the said Registration Board, in deliberate breach of the promise and agreement referred to. The correspondence which took place on this occasion is appended hereto.

7. That there is the gravest dissatisfaction with the management of the Nurses' Association amongst a large and influential section of its members, as evidenced by the appended protests which have been published in the press, and the demand which has been made by several public meetings, and which will be brought before Parliament next Session, for a public inquiry into the said management.

8. That the officials—five in number—in order to prevent opposition and criticism, have, without any authority from the members, and without any necessity, framed new Bye-Laws, the chief results of which would be to place them in complete and undisputed authority over

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)