

for, when the nurses controlled their own affairs, they not only paid their way, but in the first five years of their existence saved £1,000, and paid the expenses connected with obtaining their Royal Charter.

A NURSE VICE-PRESIDENT.

Upon the conclusion of the business part of the programme, the President took the chair, and proposed the list of Vice-Presidents for election. We note with satisfaction that at last one of the nurse members of the Nurses' Association has been considered worthy of the position of Vice-President. The list at present includes thirty-three medical men, but, so far, the names of nurses have been conspicuous by their absence. The first nurse selected for this position is not one who took any part in founding the Association, and she, indeed, did not join it until the Charter had been won, and its success assured; but, as creating a precedent, and as a matter of principle, we welcome her appointment.

THE CAFÉ CHANTANT.

Her Royal Highness then made the following statement with regard to the Café Chantant recently held at the Hotel Cecil, in aid of the funds of the Association:—

"I have a further announcement to make of an agreeable character. You know that I have been endeavouring to increase the funds of the Association. I am told it has been said that I have held up purses and the nursing profession as objects of charity. I am very sorry for the people who made that remark. I think the nurses themselves must have seen how, from the highest to the lowest, everybody came forward to help on a recent interesting occasion, and the result has been that I am now able to hand over to the Treasurer the sum of £1,551."

We are not aware that any journal has placed the onus of this distasteful affair upon the Royal President of the Association. The NURSING RECORD has, in accordance with well accepted constitutional principles, while regretting that the support of Her Royal Highness had been given to the scheme, blamed not the President but her advisers. We say without hesitation that the conduct of the Hon. Officers of the Association is reprehensible. In forcing all distasteful measures upon the nurse members they have sheltered themselves behind

the Royal President, and thrown all the onus of unpopular schemes upon her. For instance, not one of the Hon. Officers would have dared to propose the recent Café Chantant, except through the President. When they desired to place asylum attendants without general training on the Register of Trained Nurses—a scheme which aroused such indignation that they have never dared to carry it through—they ascribed the idea to the President. When the new Bye-Laws, bitterly distasteful as they were to the self-respecting members of the Association, had to be forced through, nurses were urged to come up and vote "to support Princess Christian." And at the recent meeting, when the name of a medical vice-president was proposed, which it is well known by those who have watched events is most distasteful to many of his fellow members, once again this name is proposed by the President, with the result that discussion of the desirability of the election was made impossible, without the immediate taunt of "insulting the Princess."

Such conduct on the part of the Hon. Officers we conceive to be—and we know we are widely supported in our view—disloyal both to Her Majesty the Queen, and the Royal Lady who, in all good faith, acts upon the advice given to her by those who should make it their business to protect the prestige of a member of our Royal Family, and thus prove themselves worthy of the confidence placed in them.

For the rest we see no reason, after reading the explanation made by Her Royal Highness, to alter our opinion, or, to retract from the position which, as Editor of the NURSING RECORD, we have considered it our duty to take up on this professional question. We are, moreover, quite satisfied from the many appreciative and sympathetic communications we have received, that educated nurses, and leading medical men, entirely agree with our views. It is indeed impossible for self-respecting nurses to adopt any other position than one of righteous indignation, at the fact that their professional Association has been publicly held up as a suitable object for alms obtained by the gyrations of the "ladies of the ballet." We ourselves are quite satisfied with the result of the wide publicity which has been given to the matter by the NURSING RECORD, especially as by this means the true feeling of educated nurses has been brought to the notice of the Royal Family and the public.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)