

place himself in the hands of the meeting. He had a complete reply to those criticisms, but he was willing to spare the meeting. (Much laughter, cheers and hisses.)

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK: I move that Dr. Thorne be allowed to speak at as great a length as he pleases. (Cheers and hisses.)

The CHAIRMAN: The meeting expresses itself as quite satisfied, Dr. Thorne.

Dr. BEZLY THORNE, continuing, said he would obey the will of the meeting and the Chairman's ruling. (Laughter and cheers.) Dr. Thorne spoke at considerable length and so indistinctly that his remarks were generally inaudible. The words that were caught referred to the recent Jubilee procession, Royal carriages, waves of loyalty, and arts of oratory. He finally moved the following resolution:—

"This meeting of the Royal British Nurses' Association tenders to H.R.H. Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, its loyal duty and the warmest expressions of its appreciation of the labour and the solicitude which she has devoted to the welfare of the Medical and of the Nurse labourers of this Royal Corporation."

Miss WEDGWOOD formally seconded the vote of thanks to Her Royal Highness, and this was unanimously adopted.

Dr. BUZZARD was then called upon by the Chairman, and said,—It is my pleasing task to have to propose a cordial vote of thanks to the Hon. Officers of this Association, and I wish it were possible for me to propose that vote without any reference to the painful proceedings which have characterised this meeting. But I will endeavour to confine my remarks to the very fewest possible words. It does appear to me that the so-called charges which have been brought against the Hon. Officers of this Association are really of a very trifling description. (Cries of "No, no.") Had they even been substantiated to the hilt they could not possibly have justified any serious condemnation of the Hon. Officers. But it appears to me, and I have listened attentively to all that has taken place, that these charges have utterly broken down. ("No, no," and cheers.) I cannot imagine any dispassionate listener feeling otherwise than satisfied that these charges, so offensively circulated—whatever be the motives by which those who brought them have been actuated—do not present any real solicitude for the interests of the Royal British Nurses' Association. (Cheers.) There is something to my mind positively revolting to one's sense of justice, in the idea that the members of our Association who have so generously accepted the laborious and thankless task of carrying out the work and business of the Association should be singled out for attacks which are as vexatious as they, I think, have been proved to be baseless. I have myself, personally had the honour for some years past, from time to time, of serving upon one or more Committees of this Association.

(Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK here rose to order, and said if votes of thanks were made contentious he must oppose them as contrary to the Bye-laws.)

Dr. BUZZARD continued: I have been personally on one or two Committees, and although my attendance, I confess, has been, I fear, at times very irregular from force of circumstances, it has at least given me the opportunity of making myself acquainted with the character of the work done by the Hon. Officers of this Association; and I unhesitatingly

testify that the example of untiring energy and laborious exertion set to them by the gracious lady who is our President, has been worthily followed by the Hon. Officers—the ladies as well as the gentlemen—who have given their time and their energy, and their knowledge, and in many cases their money, to promote the welfare of this Association. Ladies and Gentlemen, in view of what has taken place to-day, it would be, I suppose, too much to hope that the vote of thanks which I am moving, and which I announced at the very commencement of my remarks I was going to move, will be accepted unanimously; but I feel convinced that there will be an overwhelming expression of opinion that the Hon. Officers of this Association are entitled to our strongest support, that we know that any charges of dereliction of duty against them have fallen to the ground, and that they deserve and will obtain the warmest sympathy at the hands of every right-minded member of the Royal British Nurses' Association. I shall move that "This meeting, having heard the reply which has been made to charges against officials of the Royal British Nurses' Association, desires to put on record its continued confidence in the Hon. Officers of the Association; (Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK "This is quite out of order.") to express its sympathy with them in the annoyance to which they have been subjected by the publication of vexatious and unfounded accusations, and to accord them its warmest thanks for their most valuable services."

Dr. BEDFORD FENWICK: I enter, sir, a formal protest against this illegal proceeding. You, last year, prevented a member moving a vote of censure on the officials, because you said her resolution had not come in a registered letter. (Great uproar, during which Dr. Fenwick advanced to the Press table and read the Bye-law in question, and said—Dr. Buzzard is now proposing a vote of confidence in the officials, and as you observe with their full knowledge, without even giving notice of his Resolution, and it is therefore a totally irregular and invalid proceeding.)

The uproar continued, and Miss Brey advanced to the Press table, and said she protested against the illegality of the action of the officials, which she thought was so palpably unjust that it carried its own condemnation. Order being at length restored,

The CHAIRMAN: I think, perhaps, it will be better to restrict this, and it will be simply a vote of thanks to the Hon. Officers. The Hon. Officers will well understand what it means.

Mr. BRUDENELL-CARTER: Mr. Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen,—When I undertook to second a vote of thanks to the Hon. Officers of the Association, I must say that I entertained the hope which Dr. Buzzard expressed, that such a vote of thanks would be unanimous, because, although I was well aware differences of opinion existed with regard to the proceedings which had been taken by the Hon. Officers, I think there should be no difference of opinion in this—that the Hon. Officers have been guided in all their actions by an earnest desire to promote the welfare and the efficiency of the Association, and that they were thoroughly deserving of the thanks, not only of those who agreed with them, but of those who differed also. I am sorry that that view is not taken. I think an immense flood of light has been thrown upon the reasons why some persons among us are unwilling to give this vote. It has transpired that the Hon. Officers during the last year

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)