

dangerous to the public and valueless to nurses themselves. As we have before pointed out, Miss Wedgwood and Mr. Fardon, therefore, on behalf of the Royal British Nurses' Association, repudiated the principle publicly advocated by Princess Christian, and for the support of which the officials of the Association persuade nurses to pay one guinea each. So far as we are aware, Miss Wedgwood has never apologised for having thus, without the slightest authority, publicly condemned, as the delegate of the Association, the very system which the Association was founded to carry out. Her action, however, will not be forgotten, and they receive a brilliant side-light from her remarks to which we are now alluding.

We call upon our readers to observe the best that can be said by the officials and their friends for their recent proceedings—the best which a hospital matron can say in favour of the policy of destroying the matrons' influence in the Royal Corporation of Nurses—and the views which a woman holds, and is not ashamed to publish, concerning the mental powers of other women. Miss Wedgwood, then, gives it as her deliberate opinion and belief that, as regards the new Bye-Laws, Nurses *"have given their votes too, but it is quite likely that was because they were asked to do so by people whom they respected and trusted, and not because they had carefully weighed themselves (sic) the respective merits of the old and new Bye-Laws. PERHAPS SOME OF THEM WENT HOME NOT QUITE SURE WHAT THEY HAD DONE, but very certain they had done right, for they had heard H.R.H., the President, say she approved of the Bye-Laws. H.R.H. knew they felt what was best for the Association, AND IF SHE WISHED IT, OF COURSE, THE NEW BYE-LAWS HAD BEEN PASSED. I do not know, after all, that there is so much to regret in this attitude; discipline and obedience are excellent qualities, and WHEN PEOPLE THINK TOO MUCH FOR THEMSELVES ON INDEPENDENT LINES, THEY VERY OFTEN THINK WRONG."*

We hardly know whether to marvel more at the style or the sense of these remarks; but they have a delicious irony of their own when the fact, to which we have above alluded, is remembered—that Miss Henrietta Wedgwood not only thought too much for herself "on independent lines," but that she went in flagrant opposition on that occasion to the gracious lady whom she is pleased to designate throughout her article with casual and scarcely well-bred

familiarity as "H.R.H." According to Miss Wedgwood's own showing, therefore, she "thought wrong" in "thinking too much for" herself on that occasion, and we trust that in future she will read her own lesson to herself, and will exhibit a greater subservience and less irresponsibility.

As a matter of mere loyalty, we are compelled to express our absolute disapproval of the manner in which the blame for the new bye-laws is now being thrown, both publicly and privately, upon H.R.H. Princess Christian. It has been everywhere stated, in defence of the officials, that the new bye-laws have been framed at the desire of "H.R.H."; that faith has been broken with the two leading medical associations in this country, at "the desire of Princess Christian;" that faith has been broken with the leading matrons in the United Kingdom, by "command of Princess Christian;" that, in fact, the whole liberal and just constitution of the Association which worked so well for six years, has been destroyed simply "by order of Princess Christian." Everyone knows that these excuses have been made privately everywhere; but we confess we are surprised that the officials have had the audacity to print and publish such a statement in the official organ of the Association, from almost the only London hospital matron who supports their policy—flatly announcing, in so many words, that the Nurses' passed the Bye-Laws, *"not because they had carefully weighed themselves,"* for they were, it seems, *"not quite sure what they had done;"* but that, "of course, the new Bye-Laws had been passed," simply and solely because "H.R.H. wished it."

Everyone will understand why the officials have thus shuffled all the blame off their own shoulders upon "H.R.H." They know now that the new bye-laws have excited general indignation; that the leading hospital matrons by whose work the Association was built up are resigning their membership; that, throughout the United Kingdom, there are few hospitals in which the attempt to destroy the authority of the matrons is not indignantly condemned. In fact, the officials are bowing to the whirlwind of indignation which has been excited by their conduct, and they are becoming aware of the fact that there will never be any rest in the nursing world until their conduct has been publicly inquired into.

We will refer to the other "points" advanced by Miss Wedgwood next week.

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