

absence through illness of Miss Thorold, the Matron of the Middlesex Hospital—at the door of the first Gallery, receiving with a cordial welcome the hundreds of Nurses who quickly thronged the spacious rooms. The sight was quite unique;



the lofty chambers closely hung with beautiful pictures from some of the best English artists; enhanced by the pure soft electric light; the exquisite



strains of music, played by the Bijou Orchestra; and the bright happy crowd of Nurses in every imaginable variety of cap, and apron, and coloured dress, with a goodly sprinkle of Red Crosses and war medals amongst them; all this made up a picture which charmed the many artists who were present, and who were sketching the scene in every corner of the Galleries. I heard enthusiastic opinions expressed on all sides as to the advantages of the Association, and a good many bitter remarks concerning some ladies and gentlemen who apparently are trying to prevent Nurses obtaining these advantages. But if anyone wishes to understand what Nurses are at the present day, the *Conversazione* of the R.B.N.A. is evidently the place for him to go to. I pre-



sume that only the best class of Nurse are admitted to membership, for it is difficult for an unprofessional person to believe that all Nurses



are pretty and refined, and possess the social position clearly held by the majority of those whom I had the pleasure of walking amongst and talking to, last Friday evening.

But now to return to the Princes' Hall, where

by 9.30, the band was discoursing sweet music, and all were waiting, in a high state of expectancy. A minute or two more, and, with her usual punctuality, Her Royal Highness Princess Christian came on to the platform, accompanied by Prince Christian, the Princess Victoria, the Lord Chancellor and Lady Halsbury, Mr. Justice and Lady Jeune, Sir William Savory, Sir Henry Thompson, Sir Dyce Duckworth, Sir Joseph Fayer, Sir James Crichton Browne, and a number of other distinguished gentlemen. As their Royal Highnesses entered, the band struck up the "National Anthem," and Miss Selina East, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, who has a beautiful soprano voice, sang the solo part of the first verse. Then the whole audience caught up the refrain, and sang the verse with the greatest enthusiasm. The effect of the eleven hundred voices can only be described as magnificent.



When the cheering and applause had subsided, Sir William Savory, who stood at Her Royal Highness's right hand, came forward, and opening a small blue velvet case, took from it a Badge in gold, and in a few words, with all the graceful eloquence of which he is such an acknowledged master, told the Princess how deeply the Association thanked her for her constant and great work upon its behalf; that they thought the time had arrived when Members might fitly wear an emblem to make manifest their loyalty to the Association, and to the great work in which it is engaged; and that every Member would feel more honoured by her Badge if her President would accept and wear the first one ever given; and so in the name of the Association he begged Her Royal Highness to receive the President's gold Badge. I had been privileged to see this previously, and it is a beautiful work of art: the ordinary Badge made in solid gold, and with the words, "Helena—President," engraved upon the back. The Princess bowed and took the Badge, and immediately affixed it to

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)