

The meeting next considered recommendations from the Executive Committee altering the originally proposed Constitution of the General Nursing Council in the Bill of the Society. Mrs. Fenwick explained that after the Deputation had been received by the Lord President of the Council on the subject of State Registration of Nurses, there was an informal meeting at Mr. Tennant's house, with the object of obtaining some idea as to whether it were possible to get the two Bills into line. Subsequently, a letter was received from Mr. Tennant containing a proposition made at that Conference as to the Constitution of the General Nursing Council, which was laid before and considered by the Executive Committee. This proposition was that the Council should consist of sixteen persons—five lay, five medical, and six nurse representatives. The Executive did not think the Constitution referred to satisfactory, inasmuch as the nurses were in a minority of nearly one-third compared with the laity and doctors. It was felt that this was not a just proportion. In regard to the numerical reduction of the General Nursing Council the Executive were of opinion that this could only be effected by making all the nurse members the direct representatives of the registered nurses. The Bill accepted by the Special General Meeting provided for fifteen Matrons and nurses, seven of these being nominated. It was now proposed that on a Council of seventeen members there should be ten registered nurses, all of whom should be directly elected by the registered nurses, and one half of whom must be Matrons.

Miss Mary Burr, as a member of the Executive Committee, said that, in drafting the Bill originally, its object had been to endeavour to give representation to various Societies of Nurses. Then came the Report of the Select Committee recommending that the Governing Body should not exceed fifteen members. (Those present knew the effect of that recommendation on the R.B.N.A. Bill. At one fell swoop the direct representatives of the Nurses of the United Kingdom, with one exception, had been cut out and the nominated members left in.) The Constitution now suggested to the members largely consisted of direct representatives, either medical or nursing. She regretted that the nursing representatives had been cut down to the lowest limit, but there was a very strong opinion against a large Central Body. If any members were nominated it would be difficult to know where to stop, and it seemed, therefore, desirable to go straight for a simple Constitution.

Mrs. Fenwick said that since the Constitution

now suggested to the meeting had been drawn up by the Executive, she had been in communication with Dr. Harding, Medical Superintendent of the Berry Wood Asylum, Northampton, where the training given to the attendants was of a higher standard than that required by the Medico-Psychological Association.

Dr. Harding was of opinion that the interests of mental nurses should be represented on the Governing Body, and she thought the claim a just one. She proposed that the Council should include a registered medical practitioner to be appointed by the Medico-Psychological Association, and a past or present Matron of an Asylum for the Insane to be elected by the nurses on the Mental Nurses' Register.

Miss Stewart supported the proposition, if the mental representatives suggested were to be in addition to the seventeen members of the Council suggested.

She pointed out that the lay and medical members of the Council would be persons of comparative leisure, they would be able to put in consecutive attendances and thus have a thorough knowledge of the business. As a Matron who was very busy in her own hospital she was convinced that the attendance of the Matrons and nurses in active work must be broken attendances, and they might thus lose this important consecutive knowledge. She thought a Council of seventeen too small, but the Executive had been very much pressed to reduce the original number. Members of Parliament and others considered a large Council unwieldy, but it must be large enough to do the work.

Ultimately the decision must rest with Members of Parliament, but they could not know what we wanted if we did not make this plain. She thought the representation of mental interests on the Council most important, and supported the addition of two members bringing the Council up to nineteen.

It was then put from the Chair, seconded by Miss Macvitie and carried, that the meeting approves the suggestions made by the Executive Committee.

THE PROVISIONAL COUNCIL.

The appointment of a Provisional Council to carry out the preliminary organisation for the first six months and create the electorate was then considered and approved.

The Chairman said the need was obvious, and the Bill with its various clauses was remitted to the Executive Committee with power to act.

A PETITION TO THE PREMIER.

The next business was the consideration of the following Resolution, which was proposed

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)