

nurses. He thought that when disciplinary questions arose nurses would not wish to be judged by their Sister nurses alone.

The Resolution on being put to the meeting was lost.

Miss Forrest then proposed :—

“That in the interests of the Nursing Profession there should be a fixed majority of nurses on the Central Board elected from among the nurses to be placed on the State Register.”

She pointed out that in the Bills prepared by the R.B.N.A. Executive of 1904 and 1905 the proportion of nurses to medical and lay members was four nurses to three medical and lay persons. The proportion in the present Bill was seven nurses to nine medical and lay persons. If the former proportion was right a year ago why was it wrong now? One and all of the members with whom she had been in communication were in agreement that the Central Board must have upon it a fixed majority of nurses, directly elected by the nurses so as to secure representation of the class governed by the class governed.

She appealed to the Executive Committee to alter the present proportion.

This was seconded by Miss Barton, and strongly supported by Miss Georgina Scott, who said that this was the first time in a membership of twenty years that she had gone against the Executive. The resolution, on being put to the meeting, was lost.

Miss Forrest then proposed :—

“That the members of the Association assembled in General Meeting hereby protest against the unbusinesslike and unjust conduct of the Hon. Officers of the Royal British Nurses' Association at the meeting of the General Council* which was held at 11, Chandos Street on the 7th of February, 1906, and now place on record their disapproval of the procedure adopted at such meeting.”

Miss Forrest then read a protest, drawn up subsequently, from members of the Association which was published in our issue of March 24th. Miss Forrest said it was painful to her to propose this resolution, but she must do so in defence of herself and others at the meeting referred to, and to protect others who were nervous but who had a right to express their views.

This was seconded by Miss Georgina Scott.

Sir James Crichton Browne said that the resolution was not merely painful but amounted to a vote of censure on the Hon. Officers. He had heard the Resolution with considerable surprise. (He had the agenda paper before him.)

The business was conducted on the occasion referred to in the face of great difficulty and with great ability (The speaker conducted it himself.) Discussion bordering on license was permitted. He asserted (1) that Miss Forrest should have submitted the Protest to the Executive Committee first, and (2) that vague denunciations did not amount to much.

In regard to the name of the lady whose alleged irregularity in voting had occasioned the summoning of a second special general meeting, he had good reason for not giving the name, he didn't know it, and he did not know it now.

*N.B.—This was a Special General Meeting.

He confidently believed that the meeting would say that the business on February 7th was conducted with scrupulous fairness, and with due regard to order, and that those present would resent and condemn the most unjust slight cast upon their Hon. Officers.

Dr. Berkeley alleged that in cases where members were not summoned the blame lay with the post office. He asserted he had counted the votes on the occasion referred to and therefore no one but himself knew who had or had not been counted.

Miss Eleanor Clarke said that she has never in her life been treated in so uncourteous and ill-bred a manner as she had been by the Medical Hon. Secretary when she said at the meeting on February 7th that she had received no notice.

The conduct of business on that occasion was most unjust, she never attended any meeting of the R.B.N.A. where nurses whose views were not in accordance with those of the Hon. Officers were treated with anything but contempt.

Sir James Crichton Browne here mentioned a letter received from Miss Burr, and asked if the meeting desired it read. No vote was taken, but on one or two members saying no, he asserted it did not, and the letter was not read.

In reply, Miss Forrest said that the protest had been sent to the Executive in the first instance, and she had been told they could do nothing with it. She further observed in relation to various remarks made by the chairman that “sarcasm is not argument.”

The resolution was then put to the meeting and declared lost, but, even in that obsequious meeting, no one ventured to propose the amendment suggested to it by the Chairman. Thus terminated one more of these disgraceful meetings.

The Hon. Officers of the Royal British Nurses' Association have evidently not yet learnt the lesson that women holding honourable positions in the nursing world will not tolerate the treatment accorded to them under their autocratic management, or consent to give their support to an association so conducted. Further resignations are inevitable, and we learn that those of Miss Barton and of Miss Forrest, who was one of the signatories to the Royal Charter, and who won warm admiration by the way in which she championed the nurses' cause at the meeting last week, have already been tendered. The Association can ill afford to lose any of the few representative Matrons who still retain their membership.

Miss Forrest asks us to publish her letter of resignation :—

Cambridge Road, Bournemouth.

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,
R.B.N.A.

SIR,—I regret very much to be obliged to resign my membership in the R.B.N.A., but I feel that it is necessary to do so as my appeal for a movement towards unity at the annual meeting was so entirely ignored, that it is useless to hope that the governing section of the R.B.N.A. will make any effort to be more in harmony with the general trend of opinion

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