

THE REGISTERED NURSES' PARLIAMENTARY COUNCIL.

There was quite the old buoyant spirit abroad amongst the members of the new Provisional Committee of the Registered Nurses' Parliamentary Council—many of whom inspired and worked for the State Registration movement, and who, through almost superhuman efforts, landed the Nurses' Bills on to the Statute Book—at its meeting at 431, Oxford Street, W., on Friday, October 8th. There was new work to be done for the profession, and all present appeared in fine fettle to tackle it. The Council Chamber, which has recently been re-decorated in Spring green, looked charming with its well polished Sheraton furniture, and English "blue-and-white," the lovely *garniture de cheminée* receiving the admiration which is its due. Mauve asters, and yellow chrysanthemums, the gift of Miss Julia Hurlston, gave a delicate touch of colour, and Sister Cartwright presiding over large silver teapots, "creamee" and cakes, made it evident that the political deliberations to follow, would be mellowed by a sense of domestic comfort, so necessary to the non-controversial consideration of social problems.

Mrs. Bedford Fenwick presided, and with the exception of Miss A. Cattell, Miss Hawkins and Miss Fowler, the whole Committee as follows was present:—

General Nursing.—Mrs. Fenwick (Memb. Gen. Nurs. Council), Miss M. Heather-Bigg, R.R.C., Miss Bickerton, and Miss M. Breay.

Children's Nursing.—Miss Bushby and Miss E. B. Kingsford.

Poor-Law Nursing.—Miss A. Dowbiggin, C.B.E., R.R.C. (Memb. Gen. Nurs. Council), and Miss Elma Smith.

Infectious Nursing.—Miss S. A. Villiers (Memb. Gen. Nurs. Council) and Miss A. Stewart Bryson.

District Nursing.—Miss S. Marsters and Miss H. Clayton.

Private Nursing.—Miss A. Cattell (Memb. Gen. Nurs. Council), Miss E. J. Hurlston.

Municipal Nursing.—Councillor Beatrice Kent.

Public Health Nursing.—Miss I. Macdonald (Memb. Gen. Nurs. Council).

Nursing Homes.—Miss E. E. Fowler.

Maternity Nursing.—Miss L. Ramsden.

Venerneal Nursing.—Miss H. Hawkins.

Insurance.—Miss B. Cutler.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Miss Breay read letters from Military Sisters and others at home and from India, approving the movement for Rank for Service Nurses promoted by the Parliamentary Council at its inaugural meeting last June.

The Chairman made a brief statement concerning the policy of the Council in which she emphasised the fact that the work of a nurse was interdependent with that of allied health and domestic workers, and that in the future legislation in many directions might affect their duties and status.

It was, therefore, necessary now that they had won State Registration, and accepted the responsibility of professional women, to give time to the special consideration of legislation, and to study political as well as social questions. A thoroughly representative Council of registered nurses holding a watching brief on health legislation might do very useful work in this connection for the benefit of the nursing profession. Many members of the Council were now conversant with Parliamentary procedure and had willingly placed their services at its disposal.

HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT BILL.

The Chairman explained the Hours of Employment Bill as it affected the Nursing Profession, and spoke of the various expressions of opinion and decisions in relation to it, of the nurses organisations and the College of Nursing, Ltd. With the exception of naval and military nurses and those holding responsible positions of supervision or management, the Bill included nurses under contract of service, the question was (1) whether nurses should remain in the Bill as provided; (2) be placed in a special Schedule as proposed by the College of Nursing, Ltd., with a 56-hour instead of a 48-hour working week; or (3) whether they should, as a class, be eliminated from the Bill. She asked for an expression of opinion from those present, individually.

The District Superintendents said the Queen's nurses only worked the 48 hours weekly. The Fever Hospital Matrons stated M.A.B. nurses worked 50 hours with a month's holiday annually. The General, Poor-Law Infirmary, and Children's Hospitals representatives approved the 48 hour week but suggested a term of grace should be allowed to effect the reform, owing to increase of staff and housing difficulties. The L.C.C. mental hospitals had adopted a forty-eight hour week, or ninety-six hour fortnight. Some municipal nurses worked less than a 48-hour week.

It was agreed that the majority of nurses in private practice and maternity nurses preferred to remain outside the scope of the Bill, so as to be free as doctors were to attend their patients as convenient. As drafted the Council had been advised that private nurses who worked independently or in co-operation were not included in the provisions of the Bill, but that those employed for gain by a middleman would be affected. It was also advanced that Ward Sisters and Superintendents holding positions of supervision, and who are not employed in manual labour, should be excluded as provided for in Section 8 (1) (c) of the Bill.

After full discussion the Council voted unani- mously that nurses should remain in the Bill, adding the expression of opinion that it provided an opportunity for settling this difficult economic question on a definite basis which should not be missed.

RANK FOR SERVICE NURSES.

The Chairman reported letters and enclosures from Miss Julia C. Stimson, Major, Superintendent, Army Nurse Corps, U.S.A., who had been good

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