

## REGISTERED NURSES' PARLIAMENTARY COUNCIL.

### PUBLIC MEETING OF PROTEST.

The Public Meeting convened by the Registered Nurses' Parliamentary Council to protest against the conduct of Members of the General Nursing Council in absenting themselves from meetings for ten weeks, and with the object of petitioning the Minister of Health not to sign two new Rules carried by the votes of those persons on February 17th, and to invite the Minister of Health to dissolve the nominated Council in which independent nurses have no confidence, at an early date, so that the Registered Nurses may elect their own Representatives, was held at 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, on March 10th. Councillor Beatrice Kent, President of the Council, presided with the utmost dignity and success, and was supported on the platform, gay with spring flowers, by Miss E. B. Kingsford (Member Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland), Mrs. Paul (Chairman Professional Union of Trained Nurses), Miss G. Lord (Chairman National Union of Trained Nurses), Miss Anderson Parsons (Member Professional Union of Trained Nurses), Miss Margaret Breay (Hon. Secretary R.N.P.C.), Miss G. Le Geyt (Member Royal British Nurses' Association), Miss F. Wise (Chairman, Association of Trained Nurses in Public Health Work), Miss E. J. Hurlston (Member League of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Nurses), and Mr. T. W. Craig.

The room was filled to the doors with an enthusiastic audience, some of those at the back finding only standing room.

The notice convening the Meeting having been read by the Hon. Secretary, Miss Breay said she would like to remind the meeting that on March 10th, 1910, that great and good woman and true friend of nurses, Isla Stewart, passed to her rest. Many times, she added, Miss Stewart occupied the chair on this platform in support of the State Registration of Nurses. Never once during all the years that she held high office in the Nursing Profession did she fail to respond to an invitation to preside when the liberties of the Nursing Profession were threatened. Were she alive we know well she would have been with us to-day. Perhaps she is. Who knows?

### CORRESPONDENCE.

MISS BREAY then announced a letter from Dr. H. C. Crouch expressing his regret at being unable to be present, and enclosing a cheque for £5 towards the expenses of the meeting to show his sympathy with its object.

Miss Pell Smith (Leicester) also telegraphed her regrets, adding "donation follows."

Miss Margaret McDonald, President of the Victoria and Bournemouth Nurses' League, forwarded a Resolution strongly protesting against the Resolution proposed by Dr. Goodall, and the Instruction proposed by Miss Cox Davies at the last meeting of the General Nursing Council, as likely to reduce the value of Registration, and

stating further that the Victoria and Bournemouth Nurses' League wished to abide by the Rules already sanctioned by the Minister of Health and by Parliament under which they had already registered.

Miss A. Bosworth (Yardley) wrote that she wished as a Registered Nurse (No. 398) to protest against the proposed alteration in the Rules drawn up by the General Nursing Council, "under which Rules I entered my name for Registration with the understanding that no nurse was received on the Register except her certificate and a certified copy thereof had been carefully scrutinised, and work and character also, by *Members of the Registration Committee*, as announced in the Press. If these Rules are not adhered to it seems to me that we who have registered with this understanding must be allowed to withdraw our names from the Register and claim back our guineas, if we wish to do so. I also ask for a public announcement in the Press why certain members of the General Nursing Council were allowed to go on strike for 10 weeks and thus hold up the business of the Council."

Miss Ethel M. Wallis, A.R.R.C., wrote: "I wish I could be present at the meeting as I feel very strongly on the matter to be discussed. The late action of certain members of the General Nursing Council is very disloyal to their fellow nurses whose interests they are supposed, apparently wrongly, to be out to look after. Their behaviour is so petty and unbusinesslike and will bring much adverse criticism on women's management of their own affairs, and their capacity to do so. I wish you all every encouragement and success at the meeting, we all owe much to the disinterested champions of the Nursing Profession."

Miss Clara Lee (Letchworth) also wrote protesting strongly against the conduct of the members of the General Nursing Council who absented themselves from their duties for ten weeks. She asked "Why are we Nurses to be singled out for such treatment? Would medical, legal, or other professional bodies accept such a condition of affairs without very strong protest? They would hardly be worth their salt if they did not protest."

### THE CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS.

COUNCILLOR BEATRICE KENT, who, on rising to speak, was warmly applauded, gave a brief survey of the work for Registration leading up to the formation of the Registered Nurses' Parliamentary Council. The Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, the daughter of the Matrons' Council, was formed in 1902, its one object being "To obtain an Act of Parliament providing for the State Registration of Trained Nurses." That Society, said the Chairman, was the live wire of this great reform movement. It saw the fruition of its work on December 23rd, 1919, when the Nurses' Registration Acts received the Royal Assent. Its one object was then accomplished, but it was reconstituted as the Registered Nurses' Parliamentary Council the objects of which are (1) to initiate, if necessary, legislation for the

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)