

### THE ELECTION.

The General Nursing Council  
for England and Wales,  
12, York Gate, Regent's Park, N.W. 1.  
December 29th, 1922.

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

MADAM,—I have noticed from letters written to me that a few voters have not understood the system of the election, and propose, therefore, briefly to explain it.

In an election it is necessary to secure two things—the first, that no improper person shall vote; the second, that the voting shall be secret. In Parliamentary Elections, the first is secured by the personal attendance of the voter, who is identified by the officials in charge. In a postal election such as ours, the only such safeguard is the signature of the voter on the identification envelope. For further security I add a serial number at the top left-hand corner, which, on the covering envelope, enables me to check the addressing, and on the identification envelope prevents any fraudulent fabrication of votes. I find that the Registration number adds nothing of value for safety, and I shall, therefore, omit it in the coming issue.

Two or three voters seemed to think that their vote was not secret because they had to sign the identification envelope. Since the voting paper is inside this envelope, it is clear that before the latter is opened the vote cannot possibly be known. This envelope is opened either by myself, or in my presence, by expert election officials engaged to assist me, who have nothing to do with the office staff or with nursing. The voting papers are thrown into tin boxes, which are locked; and the identification envelopes are taken away and destroyed. When the voting paper has once been separated from its envelope, no human being can tell whose paper it was. The boxes are subsequently opened and from the confused mass of papers which they contain, the counting of the votes is carried out.

I may add that I was agreeably surprised by the large number of voting papers returned. I estimated the envelopes roughly before they were sent away to be burnt, and found them to amount to over 60 per cent. of the number of voters. The intelligence and public spirit of a constituency is often gauged by the proportion of its voters who go to the poll, and 60 per cent. is higher than many Parliamentary contests show. I had not expected more than half that number. I hope the result will be as good at the second trial.

I am, Madam,

Yours obediently,  
W. P. HERRINGHAM,  
*Chairman of the Council.*

Under the Rules governing the Election of Nurse-Representatives to the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, the candidates have a right to be present when the envelopes are opened and balloting papers counted. We understand some of them intend to exercise this right.

### ORGANISATION OF THE POOR LAW NURSING SERVICE.

[Communicated.]

The Nursing Section of the National Poor Law Officers' Association, Incorporated, is an important part of the Service organisation, and of late years much attention has been paid to its representation and development. Too often the fact is overlooked that Poor Law hospitals, infirmaries and institutions provide by far the larger number of sick beds in England and Wales, and that the nurses who tend them outnumber those in general and voluntary institutions, large and small put together. Now that nurses' registration has become an accomplished fact, obviously this major branch of the profession could not be overlooked, and in the election of the new General Nursing Council now taking place, Poor Law matrons and nurses of both metropolitan and provincial institutions will be given the opportunity to acquire direct representation as the result of direct nomination and voting by registered Poor Law nurses at October 1st. Details of the coming election have, of course, been published, but it may be useful again to recall that nomination day was November 24th, and that nomination papers must be signed by six registered nurses who must themselves be members of that part of the register for whom they nominate candidates. January 24th is the last day for sending in voting papers, which will be posted on January 10th. All papers received after noon on the 24th will be disqualified, and Poor Law nurses are particularly requested to note the dates. The Nurses' Sub-Committee of the Executive Committee of the National Poor Law Officers' Association, Incorporated, which for some years past has successfully striven to improve the organisation of Poor Law nurses by means of Nursing Sections of the Branches of the Association, has for chairman Dr. J. D. Williams, the well-known and popular medical superintendent at Cardiff (Glamorgan and Monmouth Branch). No nurses so far have been appointed to represent the Nurses Group 9 as members of the Executive Committee till the next annual meeting, and it has, therefore, been decided to ask for immediate nominations from the Nursing Sections of the Branches. To save time, the Nurses' Sub-Committee has been given power to appoint, and it is hoped the vacancies will shortly be filled, as the annual meetings do not take place till May next at Ipswich or Felixstowe. Dr. Williams and his colleagues have been keen supporters of nurses' registration from the beginning, and, as shown by a recent report submitted to the Association, are wholly pledged to a one portal system, which provides for equality of professional status, qualification and examination of Poor Law and General Nurses. They welcome the adoption of a standard for all nurses, and they have no mis-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)