

in such a humiliating position of subserviency to a self-appointed body such as this Council is.

DETAILS OF THE SCHEME.

Coming to the details of the scheme, the Members are to be, first, the seven signatories, and next the members of the Council, of the Consultative Board, and of the Examination Board. But it is noteworthy that *the very day* anyone ceases to belong to one of these three bodies, he thereby ceases to be a Member of the Society.

The whole power of the Society is practically vested in the hands of the Council, which is to consist of *not less than nine, nor more than twelve, members of the Society*. The Council has power to appoint its own members, and even nominates to the annual meeting the persons to be elected by the Society on the Council. *At any meeting, either of the Council or of the whole Society, THREE members form a quorum*. So that practically a little clique of three can carry out all the great powers and responsibilities which the Society desires to undertake. The Consultative Board is to be appointed by the Council; the Examination Board, *which is not to exceed twelve in number*, is also to be appointed by the Council. In other words, three members of the Council could appoint the whole Society.

FINANCE.

It is noteworthy that no member of the Society pays any annual or other subscription. There is no statement made as to where the funds of the Society are to come from, except that nurses who enter for any of the Society's examinations are to pay such fees as the Council shall determine—which probably means that the nurses are to provide all the funds for a Society from which they gain no benefits, and upon which they do not possess the slightest representation.

The danger of a system in which their lay employers have absolute control over the funds subscribed by a body of workers for their organisation and government can surely not need demonstration. It is certain that the nurses who provide the funds would, under the proposed scheme, be reduced to a position of professional, educational, and industrial impotence.

It is noteworthy that, although the members of the Society take no responsibility as to the provision of funds for carrying on its work, they take power to fix the salaries and emoluments of such of their number as undertake the work of examiners and treasurers, &c. (presumably out of the Nurses' money).

AN AUTOCRATIC COUNCIL.

The Council can meet when it chooses, and do what it pleases, or transact business without meeting at all. The Consultative Board has the sole and rather doubtful privilege of being consulted. The powers of the Examination Board are limited to giving advice. But there is no compulsion

whatsoever upon the Council to take the slightest notice of the opinions expressed by either body.

The scheme, in short, provides for the formation of an omnipotent oligarchy, empowered to interfere with the methods of training adopted at four or five hundred hospitals in the United Kingdom, to dictate to hospitals, small and great, what training they are to give their nurses, to dictate to the nurses what examinations they are to pass, and, moreover, to settle, at their own entire discretion, which nurses actually pass those examinations, and which do not; to place on a Register of nurses such names as they choose, and, with or without reason given, to remove from that Register the name of any nurse of whom they disapprove. The scheme, in short, is a concentrated essence of tyranny, dangerous to every interest concerned, impracticable and intolerable. And we feel convinced that there are thousands of trained nurses and their friends in this country who will do all in their power to prevent such outrageous proposals being carried into effect.

As several nurses have written to us asking us what action they can usefully take in relation to the scheme which we have summarized above, we would suggest one or more of the following methods:—

1. If they are members of a Nursing Society or League, to arrange with its officers to call an emergency meeting and adopt a protest.
2. To bring the matter before hospital committees, asking them to take action.
3. To bring the matter to the notice of prominent medical men, and ask them to help.
4. To write themselves to the Comptroller of the Companies Department, Board of Trade, 8, Delahay Street, London, S.W., stating their objections.

Such objections will be received up to March 21st next, but the sooner they are lodged with the Board of Trade the better.

The *British Medical Journal* gives a brief account of the Meetings of Protest held in London and Dublin in connection with the application made to the Board of Trade for the Incorporation of the Society for Promoting the Higher Education and Training of Nurses, and notes at the same time that the proposal has been strongly opposed by some representatives of Nursing, and that the Council of the British Medical Association at its last meeting appointed a Sub-Committee to deal with the matter.

It is one which certainly affects the medical profession, as the only position accorded to its members under the scheme is that seats on the Governing Body may be allotted to medical practitioners as the nominees of that Body. Further, those who accept office are removable at the will of the Council.

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