

sionally under the control of persons the majority of whom know nothing of their work and status, and who in the past have shown themselves devoid of any degree of statesmanship whatever, and inspired with a spirit of unreasoning autocracy, to which no class of thoughtful worker intends to submit. The mental nurses to whom we have spoken mean to wait for the election of the new Council in December, and if the College of Nursing policy of the executive control of the Nursing Profession by influential and wealthy members of the laity and powerful members of the medical profession is further emphasised in its *personnel*, an Amended Act will become a plank for a new Parliament, to provide self-government for the Nursing Profession on the same principle as that enjoyed by the medical and other professions. The Male Mental Nurses will have the support of the women nurses' organisations and their registered members in such a demand, as the present policy is as out of date as the dodo.

The Mental Nurses are specially interested in the financial management of the Council, which has practically been handed over to the small unrepresentative General Purposes Committee of five persons, controlled by a lady of title who has never spent a week in an office or in a hospital ward in her life, and which is apparently to be permitted to supersede the decisions of the Finance Committee, upon which the nurses have some say as to how their fees are to be expended; and they naturally object to those members of the Council who do not contribute to its upkeep controlling expenditure and squandering their money. The position is naturally intolerable to wage-earning, self-respecting nurses.

#### THE VOTE.

Only those nurses who are registered by September 22nd next will be eligible to vote for the nurses' representatives on the new Council which comes into office in January, 1923. Time must, of course, be given to receive nominations at the office and to conduct the election. It is to be hoped that the Register will be published at an early date, so that the names and addresses of their constituents will be easily available by the candidates for office.

We are glad to note that the Nurses' Organisations, including Registered Nurses' Parliamentary Council and the members of the London Centre of the College of Nursing, Ltd., will hold meetings at an early date to discuss the election.

Great responsibility will rest in the hands

of the limited number of nurses registered in nominating their representatives, and the less party spirit exercised the better.

Each nurse on the General Register will have the right to vote for eleven persons—six past or present Matrons of General Training Schools and five other Registered Nurses, who should be experts in their own Sections of Nursing. A Sister Tutor we must have, a Public Health Nurse, and a Private Nurse, and it is very necessary that the candidates should realise that they cannot perform their duties satisfactorily unless they are prepared to give much time and thought to them, and, moreover, that as members of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, they must conscientiously acquaint themselves with the opinions and wishes of the whole Nursing Profession, not stand as Party women for one organisation or group of persons. The general good of the community should be their objective. Efficient theoretical and practical nursing education; efficient examination tests, in which nursing experts take a sufficient part; courteous communication with their constituents; a large share of self-government in the Council. These are benefits the elected members must be prepared to work for. The Executive positions of Chairs of Standing Committees should be allotted to Registered Nurses, especially those of Education, Registration, Discipline, and Office Expenditure. To place a medical practitioner or a member of the laity in the Registration Chair—to control the nurses' professional status and uniform; or in the Disciplinary Chair—to control her personal conduct; or in the General Purposes Chair—to control the clerical staff and office expenditure; is treating the Act for the organisation of a Nursing Profession with contempt, and enforcing a dangerous system of economic control over thousands of expert, self-supporting workers which it is their right to resent.

We evidently need new blood on the Council, preferably women with a deep sense of professional responsibility, and of liberal outlook and sympathetic social views. Let us hope we shall get them.

The sooner the Registered Nurses select and nominate their candidates the better. In the meantime their constituents should adopt a clearly defined policy and a list of questions to submit to candidates, upon the replies to which votes can be given. The Nurses on the Special Registers select and nominate their own candidates, and they alone can vote for them, and as the constituencies are very

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