

of the electorate, whilst—owing to the State Register not having been published—Independent Candidates for election are deprived of knowing the names and addresses of their electorate.

When we realise that when a Matron urges a certain course a nurse may consider it expedient to acquiesce, it will be seen that the scheme of the subtle brain on the College Council which conceived Rule 9 (A) is working out according to plan, and the result of it is the coercion of subordinate nurses by their superior officers, and a systematic attempt to pack the Governing Body of the Nursing Profession by a College Caucus.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

WHAT ARE THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A REGISTERED NURSE IN REGARD TO THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS OF DIRECT REPRESENTATIVES FOR ENGLAND AND WALES, SCOTLAND, OR IRELAND?

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss S. F. Rossiter, Sisters' Quarters, Royal Naval Hospital, Haslar.

PRIZE PAPER.

The first duty of every nurse eligible to vote is to place a true valuation on the power it bestows. Those who have watched at various stages of the thirty years' campaign which gave us this power will not underrate it, and now is their opportunity to give the victory to those who have stood by their principles in the interest of those about to vote. There are many among the electorate who have chafed at the delay and unbusinesslike methods prevailing in the present Council; before they condemn any particular section it is their duty to look back with an open mind on the work of the Council during its term of office, then to look into the various departments, and find out who has been or should have been responsible for that work. Next they must compare that work with the duties possible under the Act entrusted to them, first by the pioneers of State Registration, secondly by the thousands of nurses to whom the Act belongs and who finance its working, and last but not least by Dr. Addison, who in good faith nominated sixteen members of the Council to carry out the obligations of the Act. If after an honest survey of the actions of all members of the Council the voter has any doubt who the defaulters are, let her ask this question. What is the primary object of State Registration for nurses? The answer is the same to-day as

thirty years ago (and the need has not lessened with time): the elevation of the status of the Nursing Profession. How can State Registration attain this? (1) By raising the standard of training; (2) by protecting the public from the unqualified and semi-trained; (3) by protecting the fully qualified nurse from competition with the cheaper amateur element.

Surely, now, the survey will not have proved in vain. The band of members who have stood by these principles have certainly been responsible for some of the delay in the work of the Council because they have refused to sink their principles, because they have refused to be party to unconstitutional methods, and because now, as always, State Registration means *the uplift of their profession*. It is therefore the duty of every member of the profession to support the true State Registrars.

I am, of course, aware that a vast number of nurses will not be able to take the foregoing survey. Many from apathy are ignorant of much that has happened during the past; others have thrown themselves wholeheartedly into the pursuance of the practical side of their profession to the utter exclusion of its political life; again, others have been satisfied to be governed by *anyone* as long as they "jogged along." The majority of these will have registered without any knowledge of the true policy of State Registration; the value of their vote will not be realised until too late, unless their sense of duty and loyalty to their colleagues wakens them to a realisation of personal responsibility. Some may think that ignorance justifies abstinence from voting: is it just to waste that which has cost others years of toil? Others may deem it *wiser* to vote for "matron," or the candidate "matron" supports. Many will feel that certain candidates must be safe because they are recommended and supported by well-known names in the nursing world. To all these would-be voters I say: "Be true, to thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."

HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention:—Miss P. Thomson, Miss E. P. Robinson, Miss M. Gooding, Miss R. Macpherson.

QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

Why is the purity of milk, and the clean handling and distribution of milk, of vital importance to the nation? What points are of special importance in this connection?

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