

# Royal British Nurses' Association.

Incorporated by



Royal Charter.

**THIS SUPPLEMENT BEING THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE CORPORATION.**

## THE ELECTION OF THE GENERAL NURSING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

Since the publication of our last Supplement the results of the Election of Members of the General Nursing Council have been made known, results that have been anticipated since the moment when Rule 9 (A) passed the Council last Spring. Many people have told us that, since this Rule went to keep company with other and juster rules, it was useless for Independent Candidates to stand for election. But this view was wrong. Independent candidates *had to stand* so that the independent nurses might not feel that they had been "let down" and deprived even of an opportunity to support a free policy. Had these candidates not stood they would certainly have felt that they had failed the nurses just at the time when the greatest sacrifices, financial and otherwise, were called for from them. Moreover they stood to put Rule 9 (A) to the proof.

### THE NOTORIOUS RULE 9 (A).

Rule 9 (A), proposed by Dr. E. W. Goddall, effectively opened an attack, and a successful one, upon the one portal system of Registration, because it permitted College Members to enter by one portal while those nurses, who had stood outside the College for conscience sake, or from conviction, had to choose another portal. The Rule under discussion secured to the College a majority in the State Register.

The first list of candidates passed by the Council, after the passage of Rule 9 (A), gave proof of how the Rule would operate in the elections shortly to fall due. It packed the electorate for the College, but, apart from this, it destroyed the confidence of the independent nurses in the justice of their Statutory Council, and many were so indignant at the preferential treatment meted out to one large organisation, weighted with social and financial influence, that they would not place their names on the Register. "Too dirty for me," said one of our most active members, and *nothing* would induce her to register.

But not only were College Members packed in. At the first meeting at which the Rule was in operation numbers of nurses from St. Thomas's and the Royal Free Hospitals were passed through on preferential terms, and before others who had

applied months before them. We may add that, after the first meeting at which Rule 9 (A) was in operation, no indication was given to Members of the Council of how many nurses were being passed through on preferential terms. Miss MacCallum used every means possible to obtain this but was refused, although, as a Member of the Council, she was clearly entitled to the information.

### THE PACKED ELECTORATE.

But Rule 9 (A) is not the only injustice that has operated in the recent elections. We will give only one example of what has happened in a number of instances to our own knowledge. A nurse called at the office only a few days ago, most deeply distressed because she had not been able to support the candidates of whose policy she was in favour. She had relied upon the statement of the Council that nurses who applied for Registration before October 1st would be able to vote at the elections, and she sent up her application in July in order to be in good time. Her name is not on the Register yet, but that of Miss Geraldine Bremner, who applied in the latter part of September, and who has a lower qualification than her own, was passed through at once, because the College had nominated her for election to the Council, even before her belated application was considered by the General Nursing Council with the result that this lady, who holds no hospital certificate, is now elected to "represent the private nurses of England and Wales," with their fine three years' certificates, many of them, like the defeated candidate, possessing a second qualification as well. So much for a packed electorate and preferential treatment for the College of Nursing, Limited!

### ECONOMIC DAMAGE AND PROFESSIONAL INJUSTICE.

Yet we hear many pious platitudes from College supporters on the benefits of unity. *Until they learn to play the game there is not the faintest hope of unity* for always there will be people who feel bound, whether they like it or no, to fight injustice, cowardice and wrong. Again, we hear remarks to the effect that the College Matrons did their utmost to work harmoniously with others on the Council, but unfortunately they much too frequently adopted the course of dressing an ugly thing up in beautiful clothes in order to achieve harmony. They trace the great cleavage in the Council to incidents connected with the proposal

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)