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## EDITORIAL.

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

In three months' time the quinquennial election of the Registered Nurses' candidates to the General Nursing Council for England and Wales takes place. This Council is the Statutory Governing Body of the Nursing Profession, and should conduct its business so as to merit the confidence and respect of the great body of its electors. What are the Registered Nurses doing about it?

We hope before recording their votes they will ascertain the convictions of the candidates on several fundamental principles. The Nurses' organisations would do well to draft a questionnaire to be submitted to candidates, so that the rights and privileges of Registered Nurses may under the Nurses' Act be safeguarded. Such questions as (1) Will you as soon as possible define the "prescribed scheme of training" as well as of examination, for student nurses, so that they may realise the scope of practical as well as theoretical work which is required of them before entering a nurse-training school? This is only fair to students before making a three or four years' contract with an institution. If this system was in force, we doubt if there would be so many failures by examination.

(2) Will you urge that all nurse-training schools shall be inspected by Registered Nurses before being recognised as Training Centres?

(3) Will you support the recommendation that the knowledge and fitness of Nurse Examiners be tested before they are appointed to their responsible duties?

(4) Will you protect the one portal to the Register by maintaining the exclusive power of examination by the General Nursing Council as provided for under the Nurses' Act?

(5) Will you enforce the right of Registered Nurses to communicate direct with the General Nursing Council, and to receive a reply direct from their Governing Body?

(6) Will you vote to exclude criminals, such as thieves, from the Register?

Unless candidates for election are prepared to maintain the authority and power of the Council and to protect the purity of the Register, they are not worthy of confidence either by the electorate or the public.

It is a common aphorism that people are governed as they deserve.

This is so, because if an electorate is supine and indifferent concerning common rights, and merely functions for its own personal benefit, it has no right of complaint when ignored.

### A PIOUS ASPIRATION.

We have been studying the Report of the 18th Annual Conference of the Mental Hospital and Institutional Workers' Union recently held at Edinburgh.

The President's Address, of course, emphasised the Political and Economic Crisis, and bewailed Drastic Wage Cuts, a distasteful and disagreeable problem we none of us enjoy, but it is when Mr. C. Bartlett expresses the pious aspiration of controlling the whole nursing profession, that we feel constrained to quote him in full. We read: "There is one other matter to which I desire to refer. The name of our organisation has been changed, and its scope extended, and, after abortive discussions with other trade unions that have nurses within their ranks, with a view to securing a working agreement in the form of a federation for the organisation of nurses employed in general hospitals, mental hospitals, or as private or district nurses, or in any other capacity, the T.U.C. have now deputed to us the task of organising all nurses. A meeting was convened in Bournemouth of district and private nurses, and members of the Executive, who were appointed to attend, were astounded to learn of the conditions under which these nurses had to earn their livelihood. They must join an efficient organisation in order that their conditions, wages, and environment may be improved at the earliest possible moment. *The Lancet* Commission's report was very definite in its recommendations for improvement in the nursing service. We are anxious to establish independent sections to cater for all nurses. This is not beyond accomplishment. If we can rely upon the rank and file of our organisation to advance the aims and ideals of our movement, and to assist the N.E.C. in their task, I feel sure that before many more annual conferences have gone by we shall have gone a long way on the road to organising all nurses."

In the vernacular of the T.U.C. we venture to express the opinion that it has "chumped off more than it can chew," and it will not find the altruistic highly-trained professional nurse, whose work and not her wages is the mainspring of her existence, amenable to trade unions ethics.

Materialism saps the life-spring of worship and service, and leaves the life of a nurse an arid waste.

The constant stress laid by trade unionists on the hardships endured by women in various branches of Nursing, of which they have no experience, is monotonous nonsense.

We often make enquiries on nursing conditions. A College girl recently replied, "Strenuous work is a privilege, it bears me away on wings and others follow." A happy-faced probationer said "We are very well done by here. I have never been waited on at table before."

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