

(2) "The Council has been 'packed' with ten Nurses from this Institution." The assertion is incorrect. *Five* Nurses, not *ten*, as you state, have been nominated to seats on the Council this year, and I am reluctantly obliged to remind you, that this does not exceed the number originally proposed by yourself, and whose names, for obvious reasons, were through your instrumentality removed from off that body a year ago. With regard to the "active part" you are good enough to credit me with having taken in the transaction; I am afraid it has existence in your imagination only. Until I received the balloting paper in the usual course, I was in complete ignorance as to who had been suggested either for retirement, or re-election, this year.

As I trust this may be the last occasion in which I shall have to call your attention to such a matter, I must ask you to be so obliging as to publish the letter *in extenso*.

I remain, yours faithfully,

JOSEPHINE L. DE PLEDGE.

Chelsea Infirmary,
August 3rd, 1896.

[It is our pleasurable duty to publish the above letter, because, in these columns, a fair hearing is always given to everyone; but at the same time we are justified in requiring that those, who imagine they can correct our statements, shall not misquote our words. In the above letter, Miss Josephine L. de Pledge, for obvious reasons, has done so, as the following context shows:—

OUR STATEMENT, JULY 25TH, P. 66.

"The Chair was taken by Sir James Crichton Browne, and there was a large attendance of members, the Nurses from the Middlesex Hospital and the Chelsea Workhouse Infirmary being especially noticeable in large numbers."

This perversion both of the sense and of the words which we used, requires no further comment. Of course, we accept Miss de Pledge's statement as regards her own Nurses. Miss de Pledge next states that only *five* of the Nursing staff of the Chelsea Infirmary "have been nominated to seats on the Council this year." The following are the names of those from this Institution nominated by the Executive Committee to the Council, at its meeting in April last, and accepted by the Council, to go out to the members on the balloting list:—*Josephine L. de Pledge, Sarah Allbrook, Martha Brown, Mary Ann Coates, Martha Humphries, Georgina Jackson, Fanny Ponter*. Seven is not *five*, we must regretfully inform Miss de Pledge. We, on the other hand, never stated that *ten* Nurses had been "nominated" this year. Her next statements are equally incorrect. The two Nurses from Chelsea, who retired from the Council last year, did so not "through (our) instrumentality," but solely because they had been elected on to the Council in 1892 and, having served for three years, had therefore to retire in rotation. We consider that two representatives on the Council would have been amply sufficient for the Chelsea Workhouse Infirmary. Finally, we must contrast two further statements made by Miss de Pledge, the first being written, of course, some time before the *Nurses' Journal* was issued in May.

MISS DE PLEDGE'S MIS-QUOTATION (AS ABOVE).

"At the Annual Meeting of the Royal British Nurses' Association, the Chelsea Workhouse Infirmary Nurses were noticeable in large numbers."

EDITORIAL STATEMENT IN *Nurses' Journal*, MAY, 1896.

"Much anxious thought and consideration have been given to the subject, and the proposed list is one that must commend itself to all impartial readers of the *Journal*, for the conspicuous fairness and ability with which it has been drawn up."

The inference is obvious. Miss de Pledge, in April and May last, must have assumed a knowledge she did not possess, and praised a list as to the contents of which she was "in complete ignorance." This revelation will naturally tend greatly to increase the respect felt for the Editorial pronouncements in the *Nurses' Journal*.—ED.]

STATEMENT IN ABOVE LETTER.

"Until I received the balloting paper in the usual course (*i.e.* enclosed in the issue of the *May Journal*), I was in complete ignorance as to who had been suggested either for retirement or re-election, this year."

CONSPICUOUS FAIRNESS.

To the Editor of "*The Nursing Record*."

DEAR MADAM,—I should like to point out some more discrepancies in the new General Council List. I observe that 35 Matrons have been removed, although the Bye-law states that it is only necessary to remove one-third, that is 34, and that the name of Miss Jane C. Child, the late Matron of the Lewes Hospital, has this year been removed, although she was only elected in 1894, and has, therefore, only served for two years. On the other hand, I observe that Miss Anna Simpson, Lady Superintendent of the Nurses' Institute, Windsor, was elected upon the Council in 1893, and her name still remains on the Council of this year's list. The Bye-law provides that the members shall *retire in rotation*; then may I ask why one member is removed after two years service, and another is kept on for four. This is another instance, no doubt, of the conspicuous fairness to which Miss de Pledge alludes in her support of the present Council List in the *Nurses' Journal*.

I am, yours faithfully,

FAIR PLAY.

To the Editor of "*The Nursing Record*."

MADAM,—I attended the Annual Meeting of the Royal British Nurses' Association, held in the historical Banqueting Hall of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, on July 22nd, and I regret that so distinguished an Institution was utilised for that purpose. That three energetic supporters of the present conduct of business, were the only representatives of the St. Bartholomew's Hospital medical staff present is at least a hopeful sign. Many happy years have I spent in the past in the wards of this splendid old Hospital; the keynote of its management being justice, liberty, and kindness to all its employees; and it would have indeed been surprising to me if the three gentlemen above mentioned had received the support of their colleagues. Old Barts. Nurses do not understand such methods of government as packing the Council. I was not surprised to observe that only half-a-dozen of the members of the nursing Staff of St. Bartholomew's Hospital attended the meeting.

Yours faithfully,

FREE SPEECH.

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