

De Pledge. One of the methods of mismanagement of which we most bitterly complain is that the nurses' money has been used by the Honorary Officers to pay the legal expenses incurred by them in support of the trial resulting from their threat to remove Miss Barlow from the register, for her courage in appealing to the press when denied her legal rights; and again, in paying the expenses of Sir James Crichton Browne in the proceedings which resulted upon his outrageous ruling, denying to Miss Breay her right, according to the Bye-Laws, to propose a resolution at the Annual Meeting.

Very significant, however, was Miss De Pledge's statement, made at the late General Council Meeting: "Now that it is all over, I should like to say that I did not write the paragraph complained of!" A very natural question suggests itself: "Who then did write it?" And we would add another: "Who has been skulking all this time behind a woman?" We are not at all surprised that Miss De Pledge has resigned the editorship of a journal conducted by those who stab fellow members in the dark, and then hide themselves behind a woman. Personally we have long ceased to expect any other course of action from men who bully women behind closed doors, but dare not face them at a public meeting.

Mr. Fardon has been confiding to the *Daily Mail* reporter that it is proposed in the new Bye-Laws which he has drawn up, and jobbed through the Executive Committee in the most irregular, not to say illegal, manner, that the poor *ex-officio* matrons are to be permitted once again to have seats on the General Council of their own Association; but he entirely omitted to confide in the "*Mail* man" that he proposes to deprive all the *ex-officio* matrons of their seats on the Executive Committee—so that it would be possible for him to *select and nominate* every matron who for the future has a seat thereon, just as he has selected and nominated every person who sits on the present General Council; the result being that independence of opinion and action in the Executive Committee may be rendered absolutely impossible for the future. From past experience we are well aware that no one who dares to oppose the official autocracy, or to protest against its injustice and tyranny, will ever be permitted to retain a seat on this elected body if Mr. Fardon's Bye-Laws receive the sanction of the Privy Council.

Again, Mr. Fardon proposes that an equal number of nurses and matrons shall be elected on the Executive Committee—a very pretty arrangement, by which, no doubt, the maintenance of discipline in our training schools can be rendered impossible for any conscientious matron; and the sisters of wards under the medical superintendence of Mr. Fardon and his colleagues will be available

for their support. Imagine a sister or nurse voting at the Executive Committee in opposition to the wishes of the medical man in charge of the ward in which she is his subordinate officer! Of course voting against her matron would be quite immaterial, and only calculated to depreciate still further the official position of that lady—the very evident aim of those who set themselves four years ago "to smash up the power of the matrons" in the Nurses' Association. In this connection it is interesting to note that the vacancy on the present Executive Committee for a hospital sister, has been filled up, on the nomination of the Honorary Officers, by the sister of one of Mr. Langton's wards at St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Coming events cast their shadows before them.

One of the accusations we made publicly, and which was supported by letters at the late meeting of protest at St. Martin's Town Hall, was that the Honorary Officers and their supporters "bullied and attempted to intimidate the women who resisted their proceedings." In support of this accusation, the letter addressed to the editor of *Asylum News*, by Dr. Outterson Wood, a Member of the Executive Committee of the Royal British Nurses' Association, will be of public interest. Dr. Outterson Wood, so far as we can gather, has never been connected with a general hospital of repute, and can, therefore, have no personal experience in the training of educated nurses, or of their wishes and aspirations.

THE ROYAL BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION AND MENTAL NURSES.

To the Editor of "*The Asylum News*."

DEAR SIR,—You state in an editorial paragraph in your issue of September 15th, page 2—"Then comes the question of the registration of attendants. The Royal British Nurses' Society, in spite of Dr. Outterson Wood's activity, have refused to have anything to do with their sisters in asylums."

I am happy to say your statement is absolutely incorrect, for the General Council of the Royal British Nurses' Association have *unanimously* adopted the recommendation of its Committee (specially appointed to consider the matter) in favour of admitting to its register, in a separate department, the duly qualified and certificated nurses, *male and female*, of the Medico-Psychological Association.

It is only a few notoriety-seeking agitators in the Royal British Nurses' Association who oppose what every right-minded man and woman in the Association thinks is an act of justice to our asylum-trained nurses, who are every bit as good nurses for mental work as their hospital-trained sisters are for purely medical and surgical work.

I would ask you to pause for a little time longer before you advocate any movement among asylum nurses for independent registration. In my endeavour to champion their cause it has not been lost sight of; but I hold that it will be as much to the advantage of our asylum-trained nurses to be registered as a branch of a great nursing association as it will be to the members of the Royal British Nurses' Association to have them amalgamated with them.

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