

THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES.

THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

The Sixth Meeting of the Council of the British College of Nurses was held on December 18th, at 431, Oxford Street, London, W., at 3 p.m. The President (Mrs. Bedford Fenwick) was in the Chair and the following Members of the Council were present:—Miss M. Breay and Miss H. L. Pearse, *Vice-Presidents*; Miss M. G. Allbutt, Mrs. Lancelot Andrews, Miss A. M. Bushby, Miss M. S. Cochrane, R.R.C., Miss J. M. Cruickshank, R.R.C., Miss D. K. Graham, Miss I. Macdonald, Miss S. A. Villiers, *Fellows*; Miss E. J. Haswell, *Member*.

Minutes.

Prayers having been read, the Minutes of the last Meeting were confirmed.

Correspondence.

A letter was received from Miss Grace Reynolds Hale, reporting that she was leaving the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital on January 3rd. It was agreed to invite Miss Hale to take up her duties as Secretary to the College on February 1st.

A letter was received from Mrs. Strong relative to the appointment of Life Members. The President said this was provided for, but that an equitable fee in comparison with the subscription would be too high for the majority of nurses, few of whom had private incomes.

Several letters expressing gratification upon election as Fellows and Members, and offering help in furthering the work of the College, were read.

Reply from the General Nursing Council for England and Wales.

The following letter was received from the General Nursing Council for England and Wales in reply to the Protest sent to it as to the inclusion in the Register, of Nurses for 1926, published under its authority, of the name of a nurse proved guilty of theft at Great Marlborough Street Police Court in 1925, and placed on probation by the magistrate for 12 months, and asking the General Nursing Council what steps it intended to take to remove the name from the Register of Nurses.

20, Portland Place,
London, W.1.

December 17th, 1926.

MADAM,—I am instructed to forward to you in reply to your letter of November 30th, 1926, copy of a resolution which was passed by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales at its meeting to-day.

I am, Madam,

Yours faithfully,

MARIAN S. RIDDELL,

Registrar.

To Miss Breay,
Hon. Secretary,
British College of Nurses,
431, Oxford Street, W.1.

RESOLUTION.

"That the conclusions at which the Council arrives in the exercise of its discretionary powers may be the subject of public criticism, but the Council must always form an entirely independent judgment and cannot discuss its decisions with any outside body."

The President expressed the opinion that as a body

of Registered Nurses, they had the right to communicate with the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, if in its opinion the Council, in the extremely autocratic spirit in which it exercised its discretionary powers, failed in its duty to the public and the Nursing Profession. In dealing *in camera* with Penal and Disciplinary matters the Council had assumed a very dangerous degree of power over the moral and material status of every Registered Nurse, and in the case alluded to the Council had in its indifference to professional feeling, retained the name of a thief on the State Register, the whole matter having been decided in secret.

The President strongly objected and believed every Registered Nurse present had a right to object to being classed in the Nurses' Register with a thief, and as the Resolution forwarded by the Registrar in no way replied to the question to which the Council of the British College of Nurses invited an answer, *i.e.*, "What steps the General Nursing Council intends to take to remove the name of Elizabeth Shand (No. 39279) from the Register of Nurses." She advised further action in the matter.

After discussion it was agreed to acknowledge the letter from the G.N.C., to point out that the Council of this College of Registered Nurses took strong exception to the principle of privacy pursued by the G.N.C. in this connection, and maintained the right of publicity in connection with penal cases, as established by precedent by the General Medical Council and the Central Midwives' Board, in the interest both of the public and the accused nurse. Nothing could be more dangerous to the accused than that the case against her should be heard in private, especially as the Chairman of the Disciplinary and Penal Cases Standing Committee was not a Registered Nurse.

The matter was then referred for future action to the Political, Economic and Legal Defence Committee.

Delegates to National Conference Convened by Labour Party.

The President (Mrs. Bedford Fenwick), Miss Allbutt, Mrs. Lancelot Andrews, and Miss M. S. Cochrane were appointed as Delegates to the National Conference of various organisations interested in Nursing, to be held in the Caxton Hall on January 28th, 1927, convened by the Labour Party, at which the Draft Report on the Nursing Profession, prepared by a Sub-Committee of the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations, and the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Public Health, will be submitted for consideration.

Election of Fellows and Members.

Applications for Fellowship and Membership of the College were then considered, and action taken thereon.

Report of the Finance Standing Committee.

AN ENDOWED PENSION FUND.

The Report of the Finance Standing Committee related to the matters referred to the Committee by the last meeting of the Council, concerning the legal protection of Fellows and Members, provision for Sickness, Accident, and Old Age, and Pensions.

It was decided upon representations from the Trustees

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)