

friend has kept a watch over her for me, and she has done well."

The Rev. J. Evans Hughes, Vicar of Llanwddyn, wrote to the Registrar: "I have known Miss Margaret Ellen Owen for the last three years, and especially from October 1929 to February 1930, during which time she resided at home in this parish, and have had ample opportunities to observe her good and irreproachable character, I have no hesitation in saying that she is a person of undoubted moral worth and excellent abilities."

(Presumably this is the gentleman who was invited by Miss Cordell to "keep a watch" over Miss Owen.)

Miss D. M. Kirtland, S.R.N., of 50, Bournville Lane, Stirchley, nr. Birmingham, wrote: "In reply to your letter re Miss M. E. Owen. As far as I am able to say her behaviour has been satisfactory during her year of probation."

And Miss Watson, Matron of the Birkenhead Maternity Hospital, wrote: "Miss M. E. Owen has been a pupil Midwife at the above for six months. She has been appointed temporary Staff Nurse pending her gaining the C.M.B. certificate."

It is a novel way of passing a year's probation while waiting the decision of the General Nursing Council as to the removal of her name for theft from the Register, to take midwifery training with a view to obtaining admission to the Midwives Roll. We wonder who supplied the necessary references.

DECISION OF THE COUNCIL.

The Council having deliberated decided "That in the case of Miss Margaret Ellen Owen, S.R.N., 48899, judgment on whose case was deferred for one year on 25th October, 1929, her name be not removed from the Register."

LETTERS OF PROTEST.

The Chairman then stated that two letters had been received (1) from the British College of Nurses and (2) from the Royal British Nurses' Association, which conveyed resolutions in regard to this case. She reported to the Council at its meeting on November 29th, 1929, that these two letters had been received, one addressed to the Registrar and one to the Chairman and Members of Council, in regard to a disciplinary case on which the Council acting under Rule 22 deferred judgment until October 30th. She was legally advised that in these circumstances the case remained *sub judice* and that it would be improper for her to publish or to present to the Council letters which might bias the independent judgment of Members of the Council, who were in the position of jury. She had therefore deferred the reading of these letters until the Council gave its final decision.

She further said that a letter on the same subject had later been received from the Infectious Hospitals Matrons' Association.

FROM THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES.

Miss Musson then read a letter from the Council of the British College of Nurses, dated 26th November, 1929, addressed to the Chairman and Members of the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, conveying the following Resolution and asking that it should be presented to the General Nursing Council at the first available opportunity:—

Resolution of the British College of Nurses—

"That the Council of the British College of Nurses learns with indignation that the General Nursing Council for England and Wales has decided for the second time to retain the name of a nurse proved to be a thief in a Court of Law on the State Register of Nurses. The Council of the British College of Nurses is of opinion that the policy of the General Nursing Council in this con-

nection is calculated to lower the moral standard of the Nursing Profession, and to deprive the public of protection from criminal persons acting as Registered Nurses." (It would appear that it has taken just a year for the Resolution to reach its destination.)

FROM THE ROYAL BRITISH NURSES' ASSOCIATION.

The following letter has been sent to the General Nursing Council with reference to the action of that Council in allowing the name of a nurse convicted of felony to remain on the State Register of Nurses for England and Wales.

"DEAR MADAM,—It has been brought to the notice of my Council that the name of a Nurse, found guilty of theft in a Court of Law has been retained on the State Register of Nurses by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales.

"As this is the second time that the name of a thief has been retained on the State Register, the Council of the Royal British Nurses Association desire to enter a strong protest against the action of the General Nursing Council in condoning an act of felony in that they have again permitted the name of a person convicted of this to remain on the State Register. Thereby, in the opinion of my Council, the General Nursing Council are pursuing a policy derogatory to the ethical standards of the Nursing Profession. Furthermore, the purity of the State Register is a matter of supreme importance alike to the Public and the Nurses being, as it is, the only means offered by the State whereby the former can ascertain whether a person is, in the eyes of the State, a fit and proper person to be entrusted with the care of the sick and to undertake the wide responsibility thereby involved. In the view of my Council it is a grave betrayal of the interests of the Public and an equally grave betrayal of the confidence of the Nurses that Registered Nurses, who have adhered to the generally accepted standards of moral behaviour, should be compelled to submit to be classified with thieves on their official State Register.

"I am instructed by the Council of the Royal British Nurses' Association to ask whether the General Nursing Council will give a pronouncement as to what they consider provides sufficient cause for the removal of a Nurse's name from the Register if theft is not to be regarded as giving cause for such removal?

I am, Yours very truly,

ISABEL MACDONALD,
Secretary.

The Registrar,
The General Nursing Council,
20, Portland Place, W.

Miss Gertrude Cowlin inquired why the letters had been held over.

The Chairman replied she had already stated that the Council had deferred judgment on the case, and she had been legally advised that as it remained *sub judice* it would be improper for her to present the letters.

Dr. Buchan said that he hoped in replying to the letters the Council would make it quite clear that they were not going to enter into any discussion on a matter which was entirely their own province.

Miss Cowlin remarked that the Nurses' Associations had the right to express their opinions.

Elizabeth Hunter Ashburner.

The next case considered was that of Miss Elizabeth Hunter Ashburner, S.R.N. 22927, which was briefly stated by Mr. Hewitt Pitt, of the firm of Pontifex Pitt & Co. Miss Ashburner, a Sister at the Wembley Hospital, who appeared before the Council, was charged at the Marlborough Street Police Court on July 4th last before Mr. Mead with stealing a lady's dress, value £3 19s. 6d.,

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)