

it was practically made essential that all medical men should become Registered, and should pay a considerable fee for the privileges thus obtained, but the entire control of Registration was placed in the hands of a General Medical Council, composed of representatives of the Crown, and of a number of corporations, not one of which contributed one farthing per annum to its working expenses. But, on the other hand, no provision was made that the medical men who were, so to speak, taxed to maintain the Council, should have any direct representation thereon. It is wonderful that such an anomaly continued to exist for nearly thirty years, during which time enormous sums were paid to, and spent by, the Council. It is needless to say that the work of that body was, on the whole, most excellently done, and that it accomplished great things for medical education, for such was only to be expected from the honourable and eminent gentlemen who composed it. But the anomaly was there, all the same, until 1886, when another Medical Act was passed, which recognised the ancient principle and gave the medical practitioners of the United Kingdom five direct representatives of their own, on the General Medical Council. In England and Wales a considerable number of candidates came forward in 1886 for this honourable position, and finally Mr. Wheelhouse and Sir Walter Foster, a Yorkshire Surgeon and a Birmingham Physician, and Dr. Glover, a London general Practitioner, obtained a large majority of the votes. The five years of office for which they were elected has just expired, and the new election takes place this week. On this occasion there are, however, only two new candidates in addition to the late members. It appears to be universally admitted that in their recent representatives the medical profession in this country has, upon the whole, been very fortunate; for they are men of the highest worth and practical knowledge. It has, therefore, caused no small surprise that their re-election should be opposed by new candidates. The reason is so significant, so instructive, and so important, that we must draw the most careful attention of our readers to it.

Last year, it will be remembered, the Midwives' Institute was, by outside wires, galvanised into a semblance of new life, and promoted a Bill, which was introduced into Parliament, but which was so ridiculously unworkable, that even its best friends were fain to describe it, publicly, as an "utterly bad Bill." It was therefore withdrawn,

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quite remodelled, and re-introduced last Session, into the House of Commons. For some time last year we stood alone in denouncing this mischievous measure, but at last had the satisfaction to find two or three of our medical contemporaries, and a very large section of medical men—who we are glad now to number amongst our readers and correspondents—adopt our views, and actively work against the Bill. The result was, as our readers are aware, that the Bill was withdrawn, the Government declining to take any steps to forward legislation, the promoters of which were so clearly ill-advised. But, before this occurred, the medical profession had been thoroughly awakened to the public and professional dangers involved in the passage of such legislation, and the gravest dissatisfaction was widely aroused by the fact that Sir Walter Foster and Dr. Glover openly and strongly supported the proposed Bill. Many months ago we referred to this matter in these columns, and prophesied that these gentlemen would be opposed at their re-election upon this ground. And so it has happened, and it is an open secret that Drs. Brown and Alderson, the new candidates, will be largely supported by the general practitioners and by many consultants throughout the country, chiefly because of the strong feeling which exists against the Midwives' Bill. We learn that the opposition is largely intended, in fact, as a protest, because it is not thought likely that such strong and influential candidates as the late representatives naturally are, can be beaten. But our information leads us to believe that the protest will be sufficiently marked to astonish those who have not realised how very widespread is the opposition to the Midwives' Bill.

It would be beyond our province to say more, but we wish to point the moral of this story—the immense advantage of direct representation in affording those who are represented the opportunity of expressing their views, with effect, upon any question in which they are interested. And, therefore, it is with no small pleasure that we learn that at the last meeting of the General Council of the Royal British Nurses' Association, notice was given that, at the meeting next month, it will be proposed that, in future, each Member should be entitled to vote by a balloting-paper for the election of the Members of the General Council—the governing body of the Association. This is practically once more the adoption of the same doctrine which we have been discussing, and we cannot but feel that the Association would

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