

A large sphere of action is thus reserved for the above-mentioned salts of quinine in practice for all those whose work lies out-of-doors, or for country labourers and those who work at night. Thus for the peasants employed on large farms infested with malaria in time of harvest this method of preventing fever should be extensively used.

(To be continued.)

### The Select Committee on Nursing.

The Select Committee of the House of Commons on Nursing met at 11.30 on Thursday, May 18th, to take evidence. Mr. H. J. Tennant was in the chair, and there were present Lord Morpeth, Sir John Batty Tuke, Sir John Stirling Maxwell, Mr. Pierpoint, Dr. Ambrose, Major Balfour, Mr. Charles Hobhouse, Mr. Mount, and Mr. Charles Douglas.

The first witness called was Miss L. L. Dock, who wished to have a correction made in the proofs of her evidence submitted to her. It was agreed to delete two questions and answers.

#### EVIDENCE OF SIR VICTOR HORSLEY AND DR. LANGLEY BROWNE.

Sir Victor Horsley, F.R.S., Chairman of Representative Meetings of the British Medical Association and member of the Council, and Dr. Langley Browne, President of the Midland Medical Society, and also a member of the Council of the British Medical Association, were then examined together.

Sir Victor Horsley said he wished to report to the Committee that the British Medical Association, which he represented, consisted of 20,000 medical practitioners. It was the only voice of the whole medical profession. Other witnesses had represented corporate Bodies or the Councils of those Bodies, but he spoke as the Chairman of the Representative Meeting of the British Medical Association, which was composed of delegates from each division of the Association.

The Representative Meeting of the Association held at Oxford last year passed the following Resolution, and further resolved that it should be sent to the Select Committee:—

“That this meeting approves of the principle of the Registration of Nurses.”

The Memorandum furnished embodying the recommendations of the Association as to the two Bills before the House had been drafted by its Medico-Political Committee, not by the whole Association.

In reply to the Chairman, the witness said the Resolution was carried *nem. con.* The number of elected delegates present was 154. It was a full meeting. Some of the delegates said they were not directly instructed how to vote, but they had full power to vote. The matter had previously been referred to the branches for their consideration, and they had had before them the report of the Medico-Political Committee. One or two speeches were made against the Resolution, but there was no opposition on a division. Practically all supported it. The feeling was so clear that, in the opinion of the witness, a resolution rescinding the one at Oxford, of which notice had been given for the Agenda of the next Annual Meeting at Leicester, had no chance of passing.

The question of the Registration of Nurses had been under the consideration of the Association for the last twenty years, but the first vote was taken ten years

ago, on July 30th, 1895, at a General Meeting held in London, when it was resolved with one dissentient—

“That in the opinion of this meeting it is expedient that an Act of Parliament should, as soon as possible, be passed providing for the registration of medical, surgical, and obstetric nurses, and the Council of this Association are therefore requested to consider the matter and to take such measures as may seem to them advisable to obtain such legislation.”

The views embodied in these resolutions were a matter of settled opinion on the part of the Association. That was his own opinion.

In regard to the revision of a Register, if established, the witness was of opinion that the difficulties connected with such revision were surmountable, and that the benefit would be great. It was a question of machinery. He considered that disciplinary control should be vested in a Central Board. He did not think that any sub-committee should have the power to take away a nurse's means of earning her living, which would be involved in removing her name from the Register. There might be a Standing Committee to deal with penal cases, as in the case of the General Medical Council. If this Committee considered a *prima facie* case were established, it would then be dealt with by the Central Board.

In answer to a question as to whether a system of Registration would be likely to bring a nurse into competition with the doctor, the witness said this was a matter of personal opinion. He did not consider it would do so more than was the case at present. Competition was the wrong word. What was really meant was that the nurse might undertake responsibilities which she was not competent to carry out. She did that sometimes at present, but whereas there was now no authority to call her to account, under a system of Registration such an authority would be established.

Dr. Langley Browne said that the better trained the nurse the less likely she was to come into collision with the doctor. It was always the ignorant woman who overstepped her province.

In regard to the examination of nurses, Sir Victor Horsley thought this should be under Statutory Authority by a Board appointed by the Central Council.

Dr. Langley Browne said that no one had ever been able to suggest any test other than examination.

In reply to the Chairman, who drew the attention of the witness to the statement which had been made that a nurse once registered might be going about with a false hall mark, he said that the contention was absurd. The same applied to every professional man. He contended that a nurse who had attained to a certain standard of professional knowledge was justified in applying to the State to recognise that knowledge. A nurse did not lose the knowledge she had once acquired. If she did not keep abreast of the times she would lose her work. Further, she could be removed from the Register for proved misconduct. The public were very keen critics of nurses—not always just, but very keen. They would be ready enough to direct attention to any nurse who was not up to the mark. In his opinion Mr. Sydney Holland's argument as to the false hall mark had nothing in it at all. The witness had heard Mr. Holland say the other day that a woman nearly a hundred years old might be on the Register, but this fact would be made clear by the Register.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)