

Miss L. L. Dock (Hon. Secretary International Council of Nurses), Miss E. C. Shannon (Matron Western Infirmary, Glasgow), Miss Christina Forrest (Matron of the Victoria Nursing Institute, Bournemouth), Miss A. J. Hobbs (Secretary Royal British Nurses' Association), Miss Edla Wortabet (formerly Superintendent of a Training-School for Nurses at Beyrout), Miss Beatrice Kent (an unattached private nurse), and Mr. M. C. Walshe (Managing Director of the Male Nurses' Temperance Co-operation).

*Medical Men.*—Sir Victor Horsley, Sir James Orichton Browne, Professor White, Dr. Bedford Fenwick, Dr. Langley Browne, Dr. Shuttleworth, Mr. J. S. Whitaker, Dr. Bezly Thorne, and Dr. Hyla Greves.

*The Public.*—The Lady Helen Munro-Ferguson, Mr. J. Patten MacDougall (Vice-President of the Local Government Board for Scotland), and Mr. James Russell Motion (Inspector of the Poor, and Clerk to the Parish Council of Glasgow).

*Against Registration.*

*Matrons.*—Miss Lückes (Matron of the London Hospital).

*Medical Men.*—Dr. Norman Moore and Dr. W. G. Dickenson.

*The Public.*—The Hon. Sydney Holland (Chairman of the London Hospital), Mr. Charles Burt (Chairman of the Central Hospital Council for London), Sir Henry C. Burdett, and Mr. Archer M. Upton (Clerk and Solicitor to the Society of Apothecaries).

*Neutral.*

*Medical Men.*—Dr. Percy Allan.

*The Public.*—Mrs. Charles Hobhouse, and Mr. G. W. Duncan (Secretary to the Central Midwives' Board).

It will thus be seen that the witnesses for Registration included representatives of important medical and nursing associations, such as the British Medical Association, numbering 20,000 members, the Birmingham and District General Medical Practitioners' Union, the Medico-Psychological Association, the Asylum Workers' Association, the Royal British Nurses' Association, the Matrons' Council of Great Britain and Ireland, the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, and the International Council of Nurses, as well as of the Local Government Board for Scotland and the Parish Council of Glasgow.

The opposition was represented by one Matron, two medical men speaking merely as individuals, the representative of the Central Hospital Council for London, and of the Society of Apothecaries, and the editor of the anti-registration organ.

Another point of importance and interest is that while witnesses attended to give evidence in favour of Registration from both London and the provinces in England, as well as from Scotland and Ireland, not one witness out of London tendered evidence against the principle, a fact which supports the statement made by Dr. Langley Browne, that the opposition comes mainly—almost altogether—from London, and that there is a very strong feeling in the provinces in its favour.

Further, it is noteworthy that out of all the thousands of nurses in the United Kingdom, the only one to offer evidence against Registration was Miss Lückes, Matron of the London Hospital. The London, it is true, has always been the *fons et origo* of the anti-registration movement, and its Matron was naturally regarded as the chief witness of the opposition. But where were her supporters? The United Kingdom over, not

another nurse came forward as an anti-registration advocate. The "influential opponents" of registration, of whom so much has been heard, melted away like snow in harvest, and appear to be comprised in a phantom army, illusive and invisible when the time for action came. For posterity, so far as nurses are concerned, there stands out, as the opponent of registration, the solitary figure of the Matron of the London Hospital.

What, now that the Select Committee has declared in favour of the State Registration of Nurses, is the position of those Matrons who, having previously avowed themselves supporters of the Registration movement, deserted the cause, when the fight was at its most critical stage, for the opposition camp? Scarcely an enviable one. When a fight is over it is possible, in spite of hard knocks given and received, to re-adjust relations on terms of mutual goodwill and respect with an opponent who (however mistaken as we may believe), has given expression to the faith that is in him. But neither in war nor peace is the deserter esteemed. If one has once found it possible to turn one's coat there may be no insuperable difficulty in another volte face. The difficulty must be that the support of those who have once sacrificed principles on the altar of apparent expediency can scarcely be welcomed with acclamation by either side.

THE EVIDENCE.

It is impossible on the present occasion to do more than refer briefly to some of the points in the evidence offered during the last session.

*For Registration.*

Important evidence was offered by Sir Victor Horsley and Dr. Langley Browne for the British Medical Association which Sir Victor, Chairman of the Representative Meeting, claimed to be the only voice of the medical profession, inasmuch as the Representative Meeting consisted of delegates chosen by each division of the Association. The meeting in 1904 passed *nem con* a resolution approving of the principle of registration, and resolved that it be transmitted to the Select Committee. (The resolution is the more important because the matter of the registration of nurses had been previously referred to the divisions by a memorandum sent out from the headquarters of the Association nearly two months before the Representative Meeting, in order that it might be considered, and the vote taken at the representative meeting was a consequence of that).

Sir Victor advocated the institution of an examination with statutory authority, managed by an Examination Board appointed by a Central Council, that examination alone qualifying a nurse for the registration of her name. He considered the contention that a competent nurse might become incompetent after registration absurd, "a person does not lose his knowledge." He opposed the suggestion to register the training-schools instead of the nurses as "of no value whatever." "It would practically be putting the present system on a statutory footing." He objected to the registration of two classes of nurses, as he "did not think the public would discriminate between them." "The registration would be the minimum that would be recognised by the State as a professional nurse. There will always be the others." The system of "cottage nurses" which had been devised was an "indirect and cheap way of doing what could perfectly be done by a properly-trained person, if the public chose to pay for it."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)