

but which has been kept away from them." (Cheers).

NURSES' REGISTRATION A NECESSARY COMPLEMENT TO THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH BILL.

Sir DONALD MACLEAN (Peebles and Southern): "Just one or two words from this bench to support the Second Reading of this measure. First of all, I would urge its support on the ground that some such measure as this is an almost necessary complement to the Bill which passed through Committee yesterday. Secondly, I urge it on the ground of the much needed recognition of the splendid work which women have been doing all these years without a proper official status being granted to them. Thirdly, I urge it on the ground of the overwhelming necessities of the nation at the present time, that the effective units, and much more the defective units, should be kept protected and repaired as speedily as possible for effective use on behalf of the nation. That can only be done by the proper and skilful attention of the professional services of medical men, working with the professional skill of nurses."

Sir Donald then drew attention to points on which he considered the Bill should receive attention in Committee. (1) The three years' standard, on the ground that the training at the London Hospital is about two years; (2) that no State assistance is asked for. He concluded by advising Members "to make the life of the Government so uncomfortable that they will have to 'star' the Bill and take it up as part of their programme."

APPOINTMENT OF CENTRAL BODY BY THE STATE A RECOMMENDATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

MAJOR SIR SAMUEL SCOTT (St. Marylebone): "I think as a rule all private Bills in this House are looked upon with some suspicion by the Government, and also by a great number of hon. Members—at least, that has been my experience in the past. I listened with great interest to the concluding remarks of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. I most earnestly hope that this Bill will prove the exception to the general rule so far as the Government is concerned, and that they will take it up. I would urge this still more strongly on them because, as has been pointed out by the hon. and gallant Gentleman who moved the Second Reading, this is no new question. It is a question which has been most carefully considered by two Select Committees of this House in 1904 and 1905. My hon. and gallant Friend told the House that these Committees unanimously reported in favour of the principle of this Bill. I would like to tell the House that these Committees went even further, and made certain recommendations. They recommended that,

"It is desirable that a register of nurses should be kept by a central body appointed by the State, and that while it is not desirable to prohibit unregistered persons from nursing for gain, no person should be entitled to assume the designation of 'registered nurse' whose name is not upon the register."

They recommended that this central body should be set up by Act of Parliament and that its constitution should be defined in the Act. They further recommended various people of whom they considered this body should consist."

Sir Samuel Scott further supported the Bill on the grounds that it not only carries out the principle of State registration of nurses unanimously approved by two Select Committees, but that it embodies the recommendations which these Committees made. In regard to the point made by previous speakers that there is at the present moment no guarantee whatever to the public in regard to the efficiency of the nurses they employ, he said this presses far more heavily upon poorer than richer people, as the latter have more opportunities of being able to find out the qualifications of the nurses they employ.

He emphasised further that there is no compulsion under this Bill. It interferes in no way with the woman who is nursing, who has been nursing in the past, or wishes to nurse in the future; but unregistered women cannot claim to be registered nurses. It is entirely voluntary whether they register or not.

Sir Samuel Scott said in conclusion:—

"I should like to add one word to what my hon. Friend has said with regard to the document which has been issued by the College of Nursing. So far as that College is concerned I know something of its work, and I have the greatest admiration for it, and I hope the work they have taken up will continue, and that the college will prosper. I do not think that an institution which describes itself as limited by a guarantee, not having any share capital, and precluded from making profit or paying a dividend, is a proper authority to undertake such a vast work as that which will be imposed upon the Nursing Council under this Bill. That ought to be an entirely different matter for the State alone. My hon. Friend has dealt with the criticisms with regard to the finance of this Bill, and I entirely agree with my right hon. Friend opposite who spoke a few minutes ago that even if it is necessary to have to come to this House and ask for a small Grant towards the expenses of this Bill it is far better that the working of this Bill should not depend upon private charity, although we hope most sincerely that no demand will ever be made upon the public purse.

I will only make one other remark respecting this document, which to my mind is a first-rate document in support of and not against the Bill now before the House. It criticises the present Bill because it is limited to securing for the nurse the right to call herself a registered nurse, and to having her name upon the State register. That is exactly what the Bill does and what the promoters desire, and they do not desire, as it suggested in the last paragraph of this document, to set up any educational institution. I see a member of the Government on the Front Bench, and I make a strong appeal to him to use his

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