

Other amazing statements made by Commander Astbury were that "of the eighteen places allotted to women nurses, fourteen should be offered to societies, eleven of which are allies to each other, and who represent only a small section, less than 4,000 members of the nursing profession"; that "the British Nurses' Association claims to have a membership of 30,000"; and that "8,000 belong to nine other societies mentioned in the Bill, and they vote several times in the different societies"; and that the number of Matrons belonging to one of these societies was not known. On the other hand they knew that over 400 Matrons did not belong to that society, that there were not many more than 400 Matrons in the country, and, therefore, the number belonging to the society referred to must be infinitesimal!

It may interest Commander Astbury to know that over 500 Matrons signed a memorial praying for facilities for the Central Committee's Bill, and that the statements enumerated above are so entirely erroneous that he was misleading and wasting the time of the House in making them. We presume he was briefed by Miss Sparshott, whose mendacious attacks upon the nurses' self-governing organisations have been exposed in the Press on numerous occasions.

MAJOR HURST JOINS IN THE "WORRY."

Major G. B. Hurst (Moss Side, Manchester) seconded the amendment and asserted that on the permanent Council only eighteen of the members out of a total of forty-two were to be nurses, and the representation on the nominated Council of the College of Nursing, with a membership of 14,000, or something like two-thirds of the nursing profession in the country was insufficient. If Major Hurst will refer to the Bill, he will find that the number who *must* be nurses is twenty-six; and we may inform him that it is estimated from the last census that there are at least 80,000 nurses in the United Kingdom.

MONEY APPEALS TO MANCHESTER.

He further stated that there was nothing in this Bill holding out any attractions to nurses to become registered nurses, whereas, in the College Bill there was something much more than mere registration held out to attract nurses to the Register. There was the Nation's Fund for Nurses, the utilization of the existing Register of the College of Nursing, and a scheme for putting the nursing profession on a much more highly organized and much more educational basis than it is at the present time.

It was, he said, disappointing to hear from the Minister of Health that he could not accept the College of Nursing scheme in its present form, and that he regarded registration as something absolutely apart from the question of organisation and education. Those supporting the amendment did not look on registration in that light at all. He invited Major Barnett to withdraw his Bill, but asserted that he did not wish to wreck it

and that registration "undoubtedly must be desired by all right-thinking men."

MAJOR BARNETT REFUSES TO COMMIT HARI-KARI.

Major Barnett said: "I am sorry I cannot accept the amendment. I am quite prepared to accept the assurance of the mover of the amendment that it is not intended to be a wrecking amendment, but I can assure him that the effect of it would be to wreck the Bill at this stage of progress, when private members have only got two Fridays after Whitsuntide—and this is one of them—and we have only got up till five o'clock to deal with these amendments. If I were to accept this amendment, which goes to the whole root of the Bill, I say it would be fatal to the measure as it stands and as it has gone through Committee, and, therefore, I must oppose it. The hon. Gentleman who moved the amendment appealed to me to drop the Bill and then to the Government to pledge themselves to introduce a measure. A certain pledge has been given by my right hon. Friend, the Minister of Health, but I am bound to say that I am not prepared to commit *hari kari* even at the suggestion of my right hon. Friend. This is a Private Members' Bill. I have never asked for the assistance of the Government. We have made every attempt to meet the views of the College of Nursing. On the question of representation, they had originally only two representatives on the Council, as against twelve, but that has been increased in Committee to four as against eleven; and I have gone further to-day in order to make it eight as against eleven, and it is our Bill. That offer, I think I am not committing a breach of confidence in saying, is considered by the Government as a fair offer, and that has been refused. I stand by the Bill as it is. I am not going to discuss this amendment on its merits, and I ask my hon. Friends not to discuss it on its merits, but, if it goes to a Division, to vote it down."

LIEUT.-COLONEL MEYSEY-THOMPSON SUPPORTS MAJOR BARNETT.

Lieut.-Colonel Meysey Thompson (Handsworth) supported Major Barnett in his desire to carry this Bill through. It was said that the amendment was brought forward on democratic grounds. Nothing could be more undemocratic than the suggestion of Major Hurst with regard to the wearing of uniform. He should certainly support Major Barnett. He quite agreed that if you were to bring in amendments of this kind they might be multiplied to a great extent.

MAJOR NALL SUPPORTS HIS MANCHESTER COLLEAGUES.

Major Nall (Hulme, Manchester) supported the amendment. He felt that the Bill as it stood was absolutely undemocratic. He must press all the amendments standing in his name. The feeling in Manchester and the Lancashire district was very intense.

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