

them the best medical advice, it would appear that the sum of five guineas is a large consulting fee to pay for a patient presumably in the Metropolitan area. The answer given by the Board is unsatisfactory, as it supplies no reason for the apparently exorbitant fee charged by the consultant.

A CORRESPONDENT writes with reference to a complaint in our last number by "Fastidious," that a growing practice among Nurses is to wear open-work and embroidered stockings and very low buckled shoes in the streets. "I quite agree with the remarks made by your correspondent. One morning in the West End I counted ten Nurses whose foot-gear was more suited to an evening party than to outdoor wear in the daytime. It seems to me that the whole tone of the uniform is altered and spoiled by this unsuitable touch; and I do hope that Nurses will be better advised than to persist in such a fashion. While on the subject of shoes, may I add that I also deprecate the wear by Nurses in uniform of *brown* or *tan* shoes and stockings. To thoroughly accord with Nursing uniform, nothing but black shoes and stockings should ever be worn. This gives a tone of harmony and a last finishing touch of fitness. Brown shoes, on the contrary, give an air of being at the seaside, and altogether convey an impression of unconventionality and 'go as you please,' which it is very important that Nurses should avoid. Of late there has been so much tendency to criticise Nurses, that it is wise to give as few handles as possible."

THE Clutton Board of Guardians has decided not to engage a trained Nurse for the Infirmary.

THE St. George's Guardians have before them the momentous decision of the outdoor uniform of their Infirmary Nurses. A sample was laid before them. But on so vital a question as woman's dress it behoves Guardians to be cautious, and more time is to be taken before fashion's fiat goes forth. Meanwhile Dr. Myers deprecates the "adoption of a garb that would convey the impression that their Nurses were members of a Sisterhood." As we have not seen the sample submitted, we are not able to express an opinion.

Miss Maud Thackthwaite, formerly Sister Cotton of the London Hospital, and Superintendent of the Hospital at Adelaide, died on the 20th inst. at Hitchin, at the age of 47.

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Medical Matters.

MIDWIVES' BILL.



CONSIDERABLE interest has been aroused in the medical profession by the announcement of the introduction into the House of Commons of a new Midwives' Bill. Upon this we hope to comment at some length in the future number of this journal. Meanwhile, the fact of its introduction has led to a renewed agitation on the part of medical men against such legislation. They point out that midwives claim to be independent of medical practitioners and to exercise one of the most important and one of the most critical branches of the healing art, without control or supervision, although they are manifestly but little qualified for such important duties. While medical men are required to pass through five years of systematic study and instruction before they can obtain a licence to legally practise obstetrics, midwives desire to have the same legal rights and privileges conferred upon them after some five or six weeks' work in the wards or out-patient departments of some small lying-in hospital, and after passing an examination which can hardly be described as searching, while its successful passage obtains for the candidate a gorgeous diploma of no legal value whatsoever. It is, therefore, argued not only that an Act which would transform midwives into an independent and inferior order of medical practitioners would be merely placing a hall-mark, by the State, upon persons ignorant, and therefore incompetent for many of the duties which devolve upon obstetric workers, but also that such legislation would be fraught with danger to the public, although it is pretended that legislation is desired for their protection. It would be most unfair, medical men contend, to their profession and it would be detrimental in the highest degree to the practice of obstetrics, and, therefore, once more to the public. Under such circumstances it is urged, with some reason, that those who propose such legislation should show sufficient cause for such an innovation; while it is equally certain that the medical profession will very strongly oppose the passage of any Midwives' Bill through Parliament.

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