

eagerness, and that she will put everything and every-one right. What is the real state of the case? Very often, though it is fully realised that help must be had, the patient is dreading the idea of a perfect stranger about him, the mother, wife or daughter is full of jealousy at the thought of an outsider taking out of her hands the ministrations which she would gladly give unaided. The servants are resentful at the prospect of having to wait on a nurse "who is paid like themselves." Well, the nurse arrives. She at once assumes command of the sick-room, she takes the nursing into her own hands, she practically excludes the mother or daughter from a share in it. The patient is made to swallow medicine and nourishment the very moment it is due, he is allowed no voice in any matter, there is to be no appeal against nurse's decision. All very right no doubt, but there are two ways of doing these things. Then the servants are rubbed up the wrong way by nurse's dictatorial manner, and the result is that the wife or mother says, "No more trained nurses for me. I had one *once*—" and here follows an awful and most expressive pause!

How easily all this feeling of irritation might have been avoided with a little tact, a little "nice perception" of the feelings of others—a little "putting oneself in their place." If nurse had on arriving made it to be understood that she did not wish to "oust" the patient's mother or daughter as the case might be, but only to help her by doing such things as her training had taught her to do better than an amateur, the mother would very quickly come to see the nurse's superior skill, and would gladly leave the real nursing entirely in her hands. If the patient were humoured and coaxed, and consulted a little until he felt confidence in his nurse (and how quickly patients *do* get to feel confidence in a skilful nurse) he would henceforth be as wax in her hands. If the servants felt that nurse's great desire was to *help*, and to avoid making extra work, if they found that she asked them pleasantly and courteously for anything she might require, they would very soon see that nurse did not "set up for being a fine lady," and would do their best to help her in a difficult time, and the result would be that the mistress of the house would say, as I am glad to say one does hear it said sometimes, "Nurse was the greatest possible help and comfort to us. I don't know what we should have done without her." There is, I think, no doubt that the "fine lady" type is nearly always found amongst nurses of an inferior class. The daughters of officers, clergymen, and professional men generally, *being* ladies, do not need to assert themselves. It is the woman of the lower class who takes up nursing because ladies do so, thinking to raise herself in the social scale, who is always on the look out for slights, and who is afraid to do this or that for fear of not being thought a "lady." She need not trouble herself! No one is quicker to recognise true gentility than the domestic servant, and no amount of self-assertion on the one hand, nor of courtesy and consideration on the other, will ever cause the gentlewoman and the woman of lower class to be mistaken the one for the other. I do not for one moment suppose that in the friction which often arises between nurses and their employers the fault is always on the nurses' side; but I do say this, and I am sure I am right in saying it, that if when patients are trying, friends interfering, and servants resentful, the nurse would honestly try to "put herself in their

place," and act accordingly, the result would be that hospital-trained nurses would be far more generally valued than is I fear at present the case.

I am, dear Madam, Yours faithfully,
M. HARRIS, M.R.B.N.A.

NURSING BY THE HOUR.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—The papers published in the NURSING RECORD by Miss Kimber upon "Trained Nursing for People with Moderate Incomes" have interested me very much. Can you tell me if any nurses in England are working on at all the same lines? It seems to me that Miss Kimber's scheme is just what we need. I believe that many persons would be glad to avail themselves of the services of a nurse if the difficulties of providing board, lodging, and the full fee of £2 2s. were overcome. Nurses also would, I think, embark more readily upon private work if it meant more nursing, and less of the work which a lady's maid or upper servant could, with ease, perform.

I am, Dear Madam, Yours faithfully,
ANXIOUS TO KNOW.

[There are several institutions in England which send out nurses by the hour. We believe that Miss Wood, formerly Lady Superintendent of the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, was one of the first ladies in England to initiate this arrangement. Daily nurses are sent out by Miss Wood from the Nurses' Hostel, 27, Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road. Mrs. Edwards, formerly matron of the North-Eastern Fever Hospital, sends out nurses in the same way from 102, Holland Road, Kensington; and Miss Young, Superintendent of the Nurses' Home, Cambridge, works on the same lines.—ED.]

CYCLING.

To the Editor of "The Nursing Record."

DEAR MADAM,—Your article on cycling is, I think, very hard on private nurses. We nurses, what with constant changes, irregular hours, close confinement in sick rooms, and many masters and mistresses, do not have too good a time of it, and why should we not be allowed to indulge in the perfectly legitimate pastime of cycling when we are able to get off duty? You say that we can have our cycles sent after us if necessary, but, may I ask who is to send them? The old lady who looks after my room in my absence would certainly not be able to despatch mine, and nothing would induce me to allow her to do so.

I venture to think that your editorial duties have not allowed you to become a devotee of the wheel, or you would not suggest handing over a cherished bike to the tender mercies of a caretaker and the railway company.

I can only say that I have not had the smallest objection raised to my bicycle, and I always take it about with me.

I am, Dear Madam, Yours faithfully,
A CYCLIST.

[Our correspondent may be interested to hear that, though we have scanty leisure to devote to the absorbing pastime, we have made some little progress in the art, to the interest and amusement of our neighbours. We may also add that bicycles do *not* form part of the equipment of the Grecian Nursing Corps.—ED.]

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)