

the private Nursing staff, although, no doubt, these profits had been greatly decreased of late years by the adverse criticism to the system of nurse sweating, with the result that probationers' services could no longer be utilised with safety in the Metropolis, although the system still largely prevailed in the provinces. Mrs. Fenwick agreed with Miss Poole that the supervision of the Matrons over the Nurses attached to institutions in connection with hospitals, had much in its favour, owing to the facilities the nurses had in keeping up to date in their practical experience, by returning to duty from time to time in the wards, but as nothing could exceed the skill of such nurses, a just fee should be charged for them; for charitable institutions to systematically undersell the market value of such workers was wrong, because no attempt to benefit the thrifty middle class was advanced by it. It was merely rotten philanthropy and rotten finance. The question of bringing the best skilled nursing within the means of the most deserving and self-respecting middle classes, would come under discussion on Miss Breay's forthcoming paper.

III.—CYCLING FOR PRIVATE NURSES.

The Member who was to have raised this question, and who is the Superintendent of a large Institution for Private Nurses, was unhappily unable to be present; she wrote as follows: "I am most really disappointed to find that I cannot be absent next week for the Council Meeting. I have been looking forward to it for some weeks. I want nurses to have all the recreation they can, but to carry a machine into anyone's house seems likely to add one more objection to a private nurse, and one knows that their name is legion already, people are often so unfair to private nurses, of course it is the bad ones who do us harm."

DISCUSSION.

Miss Mollett (Southampton) was of opinion that the custom, if adopted by private nurses, might be attended with serious inconveniences. As an instance of what nurses consider suitable luggage she mentioned the arrival of two probationers with two American dress baskets, two tennis racquets, two bicycles, a mandoline, and a parrot in a cage. She was as much in favour of cycling for nurses as anyone could be, but she thought a bicycle out of place as part of the luggage of a private nurse.

Miss J. P. Jamieson (London) suggested that the objection might be overcome by leaving the cycle in the cloak room at the station until the views of the employer had been ascertained on the subject.

Mrs. Spencer (London) said that she was strongly opposed to private nurses carrying bicycles about with them. She certainly would greatly object to it in her own house. Her house was not large, and a bicycle would be a serious inconvenience, as it would of necessity take up a considerable amount of room. Illness upsets everything, including the domestic arrangements, and the further question arose as to who was to clean the bicycle. The maids in the house might reasonably object to having this work put upon them in addition to their other duties,

and if the nurse herself performed the work, then, time was taken up which ought to be devoted to the patient. In addition to this the dust and dirt which a bicycle brought into a house made it objectionable to many careful housewives. As a matter of good breeding, an invited guest would not take a bicycle to a house where she was going to stay, without enquiring whether it was convenient for her to do so, and the same amount of consideration might reasonably be expected of a private nurse. Another objection was that bicycling was a tiring occupation, and consequently the nurse who indulged in it expended energies upon it which ought to be at the service of her patient.

Let nurses bicycle by all means, but private nurses should certainly do so in the intervals of their cases. With district nurses the same objection did not exist; indeed, many district homes supplied their nurses with them.

Miss Mareddydd Harrison (Southport) was much opposed to private nurses taking bicycles about with them. She thought it was altogether out of place.

Miss Elinor Pell-Smith (Leicester) enquired whether in the future, when the custom had become more general, it might not be looked upon as a matter of course that a nurse should take a bicycle. All novelties met with a certain amount of opposition, and two years ago she herself did not think it possible that nurses should bicycle at all. Now she was a keen cyclist herself, and her aim and object was to get every nurse over whom she had any influence to bicycle also, as she found it such an exceedingly healthy and invigorating recreation.

She did not think Mrs. Spencer's objection, as to a nurse expending her energies upon bicycling rather than upon her patient, held good, on the contrary she thought that the nurse would return to her work brighter and better for the recreation.

At the same time she quite thought that private nurses should consult the wishes of their employers on the question.

The opinion of the meeting on this matter was evidently practically unanimous, that nurses should refrain from taking bicycles to private houses, when summoned to cases, and should only send for them if they were invited by their employers to do so.

The further report of the Conference will be continued in our next issue.

Appointments.

MATRONS.

MISS KATE HEATHCOTE has been appointed Matron of the School for the Indigent Blind, Wavertree, Liverpool, out of 180 applicants. She was trained for two years at the Children's Hospital, Pendlebury, and also for two years at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, after which she worked for three years at the Royal United Hospital, Bath.

Miss Heathcote was then appointed Matron at the Western General Dispensary, London, a post which she held for three years, in June, 1893, she was elected Matron to the Hospital of St. Cross, Rugby, and in 1895, she was appointed Matron to the Royal National Hospital for Scrofula, at Margate.