

electric fire alarms are being fitted, and other precautionary measures adopted."

That report was made in 1909. In our opinion the congeries of old houses called the Nurses' Home at Bart's might still prove a death-trap in case of fire. It may or may not be true that, owing to the perished condition of the outside walls, an outside escape stair could not safely be attached. Anyway, the present condition of the structure is a tremendous responsibility for the Governors to accept, and should a tragedy occur after the Treasurer's report of 1909, they would not be held blameless by the public and the subscribers.

At the invitation of Miss Barton, on January 18th, Mrs. Pember Reeves, from the Ministry of Food, addressed a meeting at the Chelsea Infirmary on the subject of the "Food Crisis." The members of the Poor Law Matrons' Association had been specially invited. Mrs. Reeves, in a moving address, asked those present to act as missionaries in urging the most rigid economy, not only as to food, but as to clothing and any article that has to be made or imported. A great many questions were asked as to ways of economising in domestic matters. Mrs. Pember Reeves advocated Communal Kitchens for all classes of the community. She explained the great work being done in connection with the Ministry of Food, in teaching cooking from a scientific point of view, the object being so to manage that not a drop of grease was wasted. Cooks were taught and lecturers sent out who could visit houses and institutions and explain the methods. Several of the Matrons present asked the speaker as to whether she would visit their institutions, and she replied that she would be pleased to do so, and that any letter addressed to Mrs. Pember Reeves, Ministry of Food, Grosvenor House, Upper Grosvenor Street, W., would be promptly attended to.

The training in midwifery at the Dudley Road Infirmary, Birmingham, is excellent, and nurses thinking of entering for the C.M.B. examination would do well to write for conditions. The fees for trained nurses are £10 for six months.

We regret to learn that Miss Catherine Johnson (Hamilton), a nurse from the Camberley Hospital, was severely injured in the accident which occurred to the Midland Scotch Express, fifteen miles south of Carlisle, last Saturday morning. Miss Johnson sustained fractures of both legs. A number of the injured pas-

sengers were taken to Carlisle, where they are now in hospital in a critical condition. There were four military nurses on the train, and they, it is said, behaved heroically, and Captain Bernard Booth, of the Salvation Army, who was travelling by the train, spoke most warmly of the way in which they helped in the work of rescue. A V.A.D., though herself injured, also gave valuable assistance. It was owing to the presence of mind of a woman police patrol that the lives of three women were saved. One woman jumped through a doorway (the door was carried away) and was killed; three others were attempting to follow when the police patrol woman (who was thrown on the floor), spread her legs across the open doorway and pushed them back.

### SHOULD PRIVATE NURSES' FEES BE RAISED?

A private nurse writes:—"Surely as everything is so much more expensive private nurses ought to be paid more."

This sounds incontrovertible, but there is another point of view.

The law of demand and supply governs private practice. As nurse says, "everything is so much more expensive." Patients realise this. For instance, the patient has to pay more for the nurse's transport by taxi and train, and much more for her board and service. If fees are to rise materially, private nurses will not be employed to the same degree. The minority of patients will pay more; the majority will pay nothing. From our enquiries on this question we quote from replies. Several doctors say: "We have fewer patients. The employment of a private nurse is a serious consideration to many; still less will be employed if fees are raised." Superintendents of Nursing Homes and others appear to agree "that there is very little private work." One writes:—"All my doctors have flown. I have no work to give to private nurses, as in times past." Another writes:—"These are hard times: we have just got to grin and bear them. Some nurses who lodge here want fees raised; others do not. I have not raised *my* fees for board and lodging for nurses between cases, although everything—food, washing, service—all cost me more. I work very hard to keep things going—often do housework and cooking—and as long as my health holds out I don't intend to profiteer. This is my 'bit,' as I am too old for war work." We shall be pleased to put forward our readers' point of view on this question, and we hope many will express an opinion.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)