

The story, however, has morals which, especially at this juncture, it will be not without benefit to consider. In the first place, it may be asserted without fear of contradiction, that public institutions maintained by public charity, sustained by contributions from all classes of the community, and from persons professing all religions—or none—should recognize no particular sect in selecting, or refusing to select, its officials. And, inasmuch as Hospitals notoriously do not refuse subscriptions from Unitarians, they should not in justice bar from their employment persons who profess similar principles. It is only within the last few years, however, that this simple fact has been recognized and acted upon, and that certain Hospitals have permitted ladies to enter their services irrespective of the particular sect or Church to which they happened to belong.

In the next place, we consider that a very serious objection, to religious disqualification of any kind in the admission of Probationers, is that it throws upon the *Matron*, who, by the rules of her office, is therefore called upon to enforce such a test—a most invidious task. Because under such circumstances it would be possible that a person who might appear to be in every way admirably suited to fulfil the duties of a Nurse, would be disqualified merely because she professed different religious views from those upheld by the governing body of the Hospital; and, consequently, eligible candidates would be refused and the Hospital service would suffer. We would desire, in saying this, to leave no room for misapprehension, however, for we yield to no one in believing that the spirit of self-sacrifice, of devotion, and of upright living, which symbolize true religion, are absolutely necessary to a true Nurse, and form the essential element in the foundation of good Nursing. But, while thus contending that a Nurse must, of necessity, be a woman actuated by the highest religious motives, we cannot comprehend the reason, except upon the narrowest sectarian grounds, why the particular doctrine or creed, which the Probationer may profess, can have anything to do with her ability to perform the duties required from her in the wards of a Hospital. If the question be debated on these grounds no valid argument can be, or ever has been, advanced in favour of religious intolerance, or in support of sectarian bigotry, so far as the training of Nurses is concerned. There are, unhappily, still training schools in this country which are known in the Nursing world under the generic nick-name of "Ritualistic Rookeries," but signs are not wanting which prove that their days are numbered, and that Probationers will in future be chosen, because of their peculiar fitness for the work which they propose to undertake, and entirely independent of the particular creed in which they have been brought up and nurtured.

SCIENTIFIC BURGLARS.

The latest news from America goes to prove that the fraternity of thieves is advancing with the times, and are calling in the aid of science to a constantly increasing extent. They are not content with merely mechanical devices, with chemicals which shall make forgery easy, with keys and electrical contrivances to simplify their procedures, or to nullify attempts to frustrate them, but they have now, it would appear, adopted in deadly earnest the administration of chloroform. It is reported that a number of attempts have recently been made in the United States, by burglars, to narcotise their victims, while asleep, by means of this anæsthetic. Theoretically, there can be no doubt that a person under the influence of chloroform will be entirely incapable either of defending himself or his property, and that if the process could be successfully carried out the scientific burglar has in this drug a most powerful weapon. The news, however, will be received with some reserve by professional people, because they are aware that it is no easy matter to administer chloroform to a sleeping person without at once arousing him; to do so, indeed, requires an amount of skill and experience which we can only hope the company of thieves has not yet attained to. The first or second inspiration of the vapour causes sufficient irritation in the nose and throat to awaken the sleeper, and then as much force would be necessary to complete its successful administration as though the victim had been originally in complete possession of his senses. It therefore is much to be doubted whether the fraternity will not find it a somewhat expensive, laborious and roundabout proceeding to attempt to chloroform their prey before robbing him.

HYGIENIC DRESS.

An interesting example of the progress of sanitary knowledge, and its influence even upon women's dress, has recently occurred in an important Metropolitan Hospital. In former days, Sisters at this Institution were always clad in woollen dresses. But with the advent of improved knowledge concerning the influence of germs and the consequent necessity for absolute cleanliness, the garments were changed for a washing material. We are informed, on good authority, that recently the older Sisters at this Institution have expressed the desire to return to the woollen dress inasmuch as it was more comfortable and more becoming. But the younger members of the staff of Sisters have protested against such a sacrifice of hygienic principles, regarding external adornments as entirely subservient to the necessities of science, and while admitting the force of the arguments advanced in favour of a return to the old dress, have petitioned that no change should be made, on the ground that however unbecoming, the washing material is the more sanitary, and that they decline, even in their clothes, to adopt a retrograde policy. After this, who will say that there is no self-sacrifice in Nursing? who will venture to depreciate this clear indication of the spirit in which modern Nursing is pursued?

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