

was placed promiscuously on the table with the other medicine bottles, and it was pleaded that the Nurse, suddenly awakened from sleep, and dazed, helped the boy, as she imagined, to his cough medicine, from the bottle of irritant poison.

Unhappily, similar cases have occurred before, and perhaps some of our readers have heard of others, within their own experience, in which a fatal result has been warded off. But it is beyond dispute that such catastrophes should be impossible of occurrence, and that, if the most ordinary and simple precautions were observed, they could never occur. For example, it should be laid down as a law of the Medes and Persians which should never be broken, that a bottle containing poison should never, under any circumstances, be placed, or be permitted to remain, with the other medicine bottles of the patient; but should invariably be kept in a place by itself, and, whenever used, should immediately be returned to that place. It is also a salutary rule that receptacles of poisons should always be kept locked so as to prevent ignorant or mischievous interference with their contents. All private houses should be provided with a poisons' cupboard, where strong liniments, narcotics, and such like drugs which may have been ordered, should be safely secreted.

With regard to poison bottles, numberless suggestions, and some very ingenious proposals, have been made, chiefly as to their shape or colour. As, however, some of the worst cases of accidental poisoning have taken place at night, and have been, as in the Bengoe College case, ascribed to semi-unconsciousness on the part of the administrator, or, as in other cases, to deficiency of light, both these protective measures are liable to fail in their intention. To our minds, some further and more distinctive alteration is required in bottles which are designed to hold poisons, and it ought not to be a difficult matter to provide some absolutely safe, because absolutely unique, difference between such vessels and all others which are used in the sick room.

At any rate, we feel confident that the problem is one which should be solved as speedily as possible for the safety of the public, because there can be no doubt that, to the untrained mind, nothing appears more appropriate than to place all the medicines, and most of the utensils required for the patient, higgledy-piggledy, on one table, on the principle that anything that is required can then be found, and oblivious of the dangers which may thus be caused. It is, perhaps, too much to hope for, that the tragedy which the whole nation now mourns, will effect a general reformation in this matter; but its lessons should certainly, and we earnestly hope will, not be lost upon trained Nurses.

#### THE NURSE PAYS.

It affords us much pleasure to call the attention of our readers to a letter, which appears in another column, from Mr. Francis STONE, the Chairman of the Leicester Nursing Institution, which, together with other information we have received, enables us to modify the remarks which we made a fortnight ago in relation to this matter. It was stated in the newspaper and other reports which we had received, and upon which we commented, that the debt of £250 on the District Nurses', was to be taken over by the Private Nursing Department, and, against the principle involved in such a proceeding, we strongly protested. We are, however, now privately informed, on the best authority, that though the statement was correct, it is the intention of a generous benefactor of the Institution to repay this debt, and not permit it to become a charge upon the Private Nurses' earnings. This is a fact of which we, like others, were unaware, and we hasten to express our pleasure that our inference from the published statements was, therefore, erroneous, and at finding that the Nurses of Leicester have so generous a friend. We earnestly hope that other towns where it is openly admitted that the principle, against which we protested, is enforced, will cease to do their charity for the sick poor vicariously at the expense of their Nurses; and that the inhabitants of Leicester will emulate the generosity of one of their fellow-citizens by according their hearty support to the valuable work done by the District Nurses in that town. By an annual subscription to this Institution everyone can help in bestowing great and immediate benefits upon their poorer neighbours, and can, practically, fulfil the Divine command to "visit the sick."

#### DEATH IN THE BATH.

The report of another death of a patient in a bath draws renewed attention to a subject of the greatest importance. These accidents are becoming distressingly frequent, and reflect the gravest discredit on everyone concerned. It is a well recognized fact that, even in healthy people, faintness is often induced by the immersion of the whole body in hot water, and that the tendency to syncope is proportionally greater when the system has been enfeebled by disease. It should, therefore, be a cardinal rule that a sick person should never be left in a bath without an attendant being close at hand. A fainting attack in any other position may have no evil results, but the chances are strongly against the recovery of anyone who loses consciousness while in a bath. The face would almost inevitably fall beneath the water, and then the very respiratory efforts of revival would fill the lungs with water, and drown the victim. If an attendant were at hand, the catastrophe would be immediately averted, and this measure of precaution should certainly never be omitted.

**AN EXCELLENT CHRISTMAS PLUM PUDDING.**—Take three-quarters of a pound of flour, two ounces of Borwick's Gold Medal Baking Powder, two ounces of bread crumbs, one and a half pounds of suet, two pounds of raisins, one pound of currants, ten ounces of sugar, two ounces of almonds, one pound of mixed candied peel, salt and spice to taste, mix ingredients well together, and add six eggs well beaten, and three-quarters of a pint of milk, divide in two and boil eight hours. This receipt is unequalled.

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