

A SERIOUS DANGER TO THE COMMUNITY,

In our issue of February 28th, under the heading, "An Amazing Criminal," we gave a synopsis of the career of "Sister Mary Leslie, M.A." thief, incendiary and bigamist, and, as we surmised, she proves to be identical with Sister J. Plant, M.A., who appeared in the dock in full nursing uniform at the Rochester Quarter Sessions on April 6th, and pleaded guilty to a charge of theft, for which she was sentenced to twelve months' hard labour.

The case brings home to the public the grave danger to which they are subjected from criminals of this type. Mary Leslie, or Esgate as her real name proves to be, apparently found it quite easy between periods of incarceration in jail, or in rescue homes, by assuming nurses' uniform to obtain employment as a nurse, or nurse companion; having absolutely no knowledge of nursing or qualification as a nurse, but the assumption of the uniform which she dishonoured, and a pleasing manner carried her through. Her form of crime was specially dangerous because her favourite method appears to have been to set fire to a bed, or room, providing herself with inflammable material for the purpose, and, during the ensuing confusion to possess herself of money and valuables. She appears to have had the faculty of making a good impression upon doctors and nurses, and represented herself on one occasion as having just arrived from the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, to fulfil an engagement, and later, as our readers are aware, possessed herself of the copy (and correct number) of the certificate of a nurse trained at St. Thomas's Hospital, whose name she assumed.

There seems to be no limit to the fabrications she weaved to suit her purpose, with an ingenuity worthy of a better cause. In one instance on being liberated from prison she spent her time for some weeks in London in calling upon influential people, to whom she described herself as "Sister Leslie," a rescue worker, and collected subscriptions on behalf of a fellow nurse, who, she represented, was in trouble. In this way she collected sums amounting to over £20.

In the course of the recent proceedings at Rochester, the Chief Constable, Mr. A. S. Arnold, handed in photographs of the prisoner in the uniform of a nurse, remarking that it was very annoying to members of the profession that she should have been dressed in that way, and that she was not entitled to wear the uniform at all. He further stated that he had heaps of documents from the heads of hospitals expressing indignation at this kind of thing.

Mr. Roderick Ross, Chief Constable of Edinburgh, who was present at the trial at Rochester, deposed that the woman posed as a good many things; as a nurse, a ward in Chancery, and a lady of means. She said she was the daughter of a

Colonel who was killed through a fall from his horse when she was two years of age. Her father was an engine-room artificer in the Royal Navy. He added that medical experts had said that she was not quite responsible for her actions, though the prison doctor would not certify her. Sir Thomas Clouston, of Morningside Asylum, held that she was insane and a danger to the community, "a human being devoid of any sense of right and wrong."

The Recorder in sentencing her said she should be kept under observation to see if this opinion was correct; "it was highly dangerous for a woman like her to be going about posing as a nurse. People were very easily taken in, and great sympathy was shown to a woman who appeared as a nurse. He had no doubt prisoner had learnt from experience that it was an easy method by which she could appeal for sympathy."

REFLECTIONS

FROM A BOARD ROOM MIRROR.

Princess Arthur of Connaught has accepted the presidency of the Ladies' Association of St. Mary's Hospital, an organisation which combines the bodies known hitherto as St. Mary's Hospital Ladies' Association (Paddington Branch) and St. Mary's Hospital Ladies' Central Association.

The Governors of Westminster Hospital have definitely decided to remove the hospital to the site on Clapham Common, and instructions have been given to dispose of the present site in Broad Sanctuary.

Presiding recently at the annual meeting of the Nottingham Women's Hospital, Miss Seely spoke in high praise of the work of the hospital. It is proposed to remove the hospital to a more suitable site and rebuild it with all modern improvements.

The governors, patrons and friends of Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, Dublin, have decided to hold a fête in June to celebrate the bi-centenary of the hospital. A popular committee has been appointed to make arrangements.

SYNONYMOUS WITH EXCELLENCE.

The name of Messrs. Allen & Hanburys is synonymous with excellence, and the value of their dietetic products is known to most nurses. The firm has secured Stands 1 and 2B at the forthcoming Nursing and Midwifery Exhibition at the Royal Horticultural Hall, Westminster, from April 27th-May 1st, when many of their dietetic products will be displayed and samples distributed.

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