

Mother House, when the warden, in the presence of the congregation, reminds them that they must regard themselves as (1) Servants of the Lord Jesus Christ; (2) Servants of the poor and needy for His sake, and Servants to one another. The warden then says: "And now, dear Sisters, have you duly considered how weighty an undertaking this is, and do you believe that God has called you to the office and work of a deaconess in the Christian Church? Then answer 'Yes,' and give me in confirmation your right hand." This done, they kneel on the altar steps and are blessed by the warden and his two assistants. In the afternoon of the same day there is a social function, when the new deaconesses are welcomed into the community. The deaconesses are not bound by any vows, but are free to leave the Order when they choose; indeed, every five years they are asked whether they are willing to stay.

In this country the "Grey Ladies" are typical deaconesses. Formerly also the Prince of Wales' Hospital, Tottenham was nursed by Deaconesses who also sent some of their number to The Royal Infirmary, Sunderland, Perth, and elsewhere.

Nuns are members of Religious (monastic) Orders, and after a novitiate in which their vocation is tested are "professed," taking usually life-long vows of poverty, celibacy and obedience. They live together in communities, bound by a rule of varying strictness—that of the Augustinians being probably the most severe. Other monastic Orders are those founded by St. Basil, St. Benedict and St. Francis of Assisi.

Nuns may be "enclosed" (as the Carmelites), when after they are professed, they never again appear outside the convent walls, or they may, subject to the rule of their Order, undertake work in the world.

#### A TRUE INCIDENT OF THE LIGHTER SIDE OF LIFE AT GENEVA.

Scene. The Place Neuve on a sunny morning. Three English sisters arrive with a camera.

The owner of the camera poses her friends near the fountain. Suddenly a stalwart gendarme approaches and addresses her in a torrent of French; he seizes the camera.

Useless for her to expostulate, she doesn't understand a word of what he is saying.

Visions of unknown Swiss laws and prisons pass before her eyes. These fears are unfounded for the gendarme, with a charming smile, waves her over to the side of her friends.

He takes the photograph himself and returns the camera with a courtly bow.

#### ART AND MEDICINE.

BY VIOLETTA THURSTAN, F.B.C.N.

If the nineteenth century was pre-eminently the century of great surgical discoveries, the twentieth century has seen the birth of mental hygiene. In the eighteen hundreds if a patient was getting proper medical attention, skilled nursing, palatable and well cooked food, it was considered that time only was wanted to complete the cure. The cult of mental hygiene received its great impetus during the War, when hundreds of thousands of people were suffering acutely from shell-shock, bomb raids, gassing, neurasthenia. It was then that the importance of mental happiness for the sick was fully understood, and the "entente cordiale" between art and medicine firmly established.

The influence of colour on the recovery of the sick is

now keenly studied. Slowly but surely, soft pastel grey or green walls, blue ceilings, sunshiny yellow curtains, are displacing the old white-washed walls and miles of dark green or chocolate paint that once prevailed.

Decorators are now employed who have studied the psychology of colour, and who know how to impart to a hospital the cheeriness of a home rather than the bleak cleanness of a prison.

The work of occupational therapy (or, translated, curing through work) is now receiving earnest attention. Hand-work is sometimes the only cure for patients who perhaps from a long exhausting illness, or some other cause, have become permanent invalids. If they can be interested in a bit of work of a bright colour, or of a nature that attracts their fancy, it is amazing to those who have not seen it how this hastens the recovery.

It is the *transference of the patient's interest from his own condition to his work* that does the good. The completion of some article of handweaving, of basketry, or chip-carving removes that most terrible of all thoughts, "I shall never be any more good."

In America occupational therapy plays an increasingly important part in hospital wards. Patients are encouraged to make two articles of the same kind, the hospital providing the material. The patient is allowed to keep one, the hospital retains the other.

An occasional sale of patients' work is held, and the proceeds are devoted to buying more materials.

In many hospitals in America student nurses are trained for 6 hours a week for 6 months in simple handicrafts, so as to be able to teach these to their patients.

A few of the big hospitals are going a step further, and giving some of their student nurses who show a special aptitude for this work a travelling scholarship for a few months in the summer, so that they may take complete handicraft courses in Sweden or other countries where such holiday courses are given.

Perhaps in the near future some of the hospitals in England will follow this lead.

Occupational therapy is useful for both surgical and medical cases. Weaving on a hand loom, in which every part of the body takes its share, can often take the place of other exercises for stiff joints and muscles. Many disabled soldiers have learned to weave tweeds and other materials, and a special loom was invented during the war for enabling legless men to weave.

Large looms are, of course, quite impossible for bed patients to use, but there are fascinating little table looms on which purses, belts, scarves, and other small articles can be woven. A table loom of this description will be shown at the forthcoming exhibition of Hand-weaving, November 14th to 19th, at the Challenge Gallery, 24, Great Russell Street, W.C.

Spinning is one of the most soothing exercises for nervy overwrought patients. It is much better than knitting, as the click-clack of the knitting needles is very irritating to many people. The musical rhythm of the spinning wheel has, on the contrary, a decidedly calming effect on the nerves.

Vegetable dyeing is a most suitable craft for many mental cases. The long walks in the open air, searching for suitable plants, the mild intellectual stimulus of botanising, in some cases the awakening of a creative faculty and artistic taste in producing the beautiful soft colours, all have their effect in inducing a more normal mental poise.

We commend the above article to the consideration of Matrons of hospitals and institutions, private nurses, and others in charge of sick, convalescent, and crippled persons. Occupational therapy is a subject which has so far not received sufficient attention in this country.

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