

abandonment of bed. As strength increased, physical exercises began, and, in a carriage or bath-chair the patient was able to spend a good deal of time in the open air. Later she took walking exercise.

It was a stiff case—the most obstinate of its kind that I have been in charge of. The want of development of the chest and of all the muscles, the lack of vigour in the digestive organs, the low condition of nervous vitality which had existed all her life, made hers a particularly up-hill case.

After four months' treatment she returned home, not as vigorous as one would have wished, but without invalid ways, able to take up home duties and lead an ordinary life, and having gained the habit of self-control. A year later she came to see us in good health, though not robust.

Another patient, aged thirty-one, of a widely different character, may be referred to as another example. She was sent by the same London physician, also without realising what form the treatment was to take. She came by herself, and chose the week before Christmas Day as the one on which to begin her exile. She was a clever, amusing lady of society, brilliant and witty. Her own description of herself was, no doubt, an accurate one. "I have been adored all my life. I was adored by my father. I am adored by my husband. I do not know what it is to be contradicted." She had been a patient of the London consultant all her life, and frequently referred to the despair that he would feel if he knew what her present trials were! In her case there were great compensations for all the neurotic cranks one had to cope with. There was an intellectual sparkle and a delightful power of repartee and a sense of humour (which she was quite able to direct against herself), which were very refreshing, and though there was at first a morbid self-centred twist, flashes of real sympathy and kindness showed themselves not infrequently.

The neurosis that she suffered from took the form of an inability to eat more than three or four certain articles of food without strange results. The one she took with the greatest pleasure was an egg tipped out of the shell as an unbroken whole into a wine-glass. She swallowed it like a pill. If she had egg in any other form whatever, it acted like a poison on her, and an attack of catalepsy followed. Insomnia was, as is usually the case, a marked symptom.

For the first few days she gave full vent to her feelings of disgust and anger at "the very extraordinary treatment that had been ordered for her gastric disorder. If only she might write again to her London doctor and remonstrate with him once more he would understand the folly of it."

On Christmas Day I was surprised on entering her room to be greeted with "A Happy Christmas to you!" After a few explosions on the subject of the mistakes she was suffering under, she suddenly asked "Sister, what are *your* feelings with regard to

this treatment?" I, being just then rather near the end of my tether, having had a rapid succession of these patients, and having learnt that influenza had invaded the Home, ejaculated that "my life at this moment would be a very different one if Dr. Weir Mitchell had *never been born!*" Her astonishment was ludicrous. She begged for forgiveness for all the naughty things she had said, gave in on the spot her loyal adherence, and became a most considerate and affectionate patient. She made herself perfectly happy, and when she left and reported herself to the physician she was so devoted to as cured—she "gave him permission to send her to the same place whenever he liked!"

Her treatment was carried on on very similar lines to that of the patient I have already referred to. In this case the first stage of complete rest in bed was a shorter one. After four weeks she was ready to move about. The usual highly nutritious diet, consisting very largely of milk, and, later, of fats (cream, butter, &c.), was given, and in this case little by little the diet was made to include all the articles of food of which her morbid imagination had acquired a special terror. Massage was as usual of great value.

There were many humorous incidents in connection with this patient. On the day of her arrival she had the "privilege" of writing a first and last letter to her husband, to explain that he would only hear from her guardians during the following six weeks. On welcoming the husband when permission had been given for his first visit, an air of surprise was noticeable on his face. His wife related how on reaching her room he accosted her with, "Why, oh why did you write to me that you had been placed in the hands of two *grim old hags!* They are not old, and they are not at all grim." "No," she replied sweetly, "but I found that my doctor had ordered a treatment that I felt sure would make me suffer, and I did not see why *you* should not suffer too. I knew how miserable that description would make you feel during the six weeks of silence!" It was very naughty, but it was very characteristic. Gifts of game and expressions of gratitude arrived after this visit, and the patient explained "He is very angry with me for behaving as I did at first. I told him everything that I had said. He wants to show you how sorry he is."

One of quite the most important points in the cure of a neurotic patient—whether the trouble takes the form of neurotic spine, knee, digestion, uterine disorder, or anything else—is to keep her under the treatment for some little while after the symptoms have disappeared. A mistake very commonly made is to allow the patient to return to her home life and all the old associations as soon as she appears to have thrown off neurotic tendencies. For a permanent cure it is essential that she should remain under supervision and in a bracing mental atmosphere until she has had time to acquire

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