

Medical Matters.**HYPNOTICS.**

TRIONAL is the name given to one of the most recent sleep producers. It may be described as a first cousin of Sulphonal, and produces much the same effect upon the human body. But it is claimed to do so, in a higher degree, and with less harmful results. It is well known that the introduction of Sulphonal marked a new departure in the treatment of sleeplessness. Formerly, medical men were largely dependent, in these cases, upon opium and the bromides. But the former, of course, is barred in many cases. In some, because of its harmful effects, as for example, in cases of kidney disease where the drug causes a tendency to suppression of urine; or in abdominal cases where it produces or intensifies constipation; or again, in many nervous diseases where it often causes excitement instead of sleep. In nearly every patient, the administration of opium, even when given hypodermically, sets up more or less disturbance of the digestive organs. Then, with regard to the bromides, a still greater uncertainty of action is usually found; because instead of soothing the nervous system, many patients show nerve irritation and excitement after the use of these salts. When Chloral was introduced, it was thought that a great advance had been made, and that a reliable hypnotic had at last been found. But, as all nurses are aware, not only does Chloral frequently fail to bring about sleep, but it also has the supreme disadvantage of giving rise to a craving for the drug, especially amongst women, which is strictly comparable to what is known as the "morphia habit," and with equally disastrous results to the victim's moral and bodily condition. At any rate, Sulphonal has, so far, not brought about these terrible effects, and no case has yet been placed on record of the "sulphonal habit." On the other hand, it has been found not only to act as a very reliable sedative, but also to exercise a remarkable effect upon the action of the skin, and to be almost equal to atropine in its power of controlling the night sweats of phthisis. Great things were therefore expected of Trional when it was discovered to be even stronger than Sulphonal. Very careful investigation of its properties has shown that these hopes were well

founded. Trional acts as a safe and reliable hypnotic, even in cases of extreme pain due to injury or disease. A further interesting fact is that patients suffering from morphia or cocaine craving, and unable to sleep without the drug to which they are addicted, have been treated by large doses of Trional with the result of not only bringing about long and refreshing sleep, but also of effecting a final cure of the craving. Even in insanity with delirium, and the delirium of various fevers, the drug has been found, when given in large doses, to produce the most remarkable sedative effects; and in some cases of mania in which the doses given were smaller and did not produce sleep, there was a very marked diminution of excitement and violence on the part of the patient. In fact, it seems probable that the most valuable use of the new drug may be found in cases of insanity, and in those suffering from the craving for other sedatives.

FAITH DIAGNOSIS.

AN excellent story is being told of a "faith healer" who, of course, dispensed with ridiculous old-world theories, as to the need for physical examination and so forth, in order to make a correct diagnosis of disease. This lady preached that medicines were quite unnecessary but that certain internal tumours might require surgical operation. She professed to diagnose most diseases however—as she professed to cure them—by mere faith, and after the inspection of a lock of the patient's hair. She did not, however, add to her reputation by her inspiration in a recent case submitted to her by a sceptic who sent her some of his hair with a request for information as to the disease from which it was presumed he was suffering. The answer which he received was startling, even if manifestly inaccurate, for it ran as follows:—"You are suffering from ovarian tumour, and you had better be operated upon at once." But it will take a great deal of ridicule to kill this foolish fad. The element of religion has been deftly introduced into the matter, and, as usual, has had the effect of blinding a large number of well-meaning but not over intelligent people, to the crass absurdity of the pretensions to celestial powers advanced by persons who are manifestly of the earth—most earthy. The gullibility of the public reminds one forcibly of the sentiments expressed by one of Mr. Gilbert's characters in a song which was very popular some years ago, and which had the catching chorus of "Up goes the price of Shoddy."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)