

sleeping. Many patients begin the night by feeling certain they will not sleep, and in imagining the disastrous effects of this sleepless night on their well-being the following day. They count the bad nights they have already passed, persuaded that equally bad ones are going to follow.

"Dissipate these phobias, which prevent the mind attaining the necessary calm; lose all fear of insomnia, attain an attitude of perfect indifference towards it, saying to yourselves—If I sleep, all the better: if I do not sleep, so much the worse. *Si je dors, tant mieux; si je ne dors pas, tant pis!* It is only then that the mental vibrations cease, and sleep comes of itself. . . Sleep is like a pigeon. It comes to you, if you appear not to try to catch it; it escapes, so long as you make efforts to do so."

The Professor admits that when insomnia lasts for very long, or when the patient cannot get away from the impression of a bad dream, it is *sometimes* well to get up and drink a glass of water, turning on the light; but he warns against any repetition of this, lest it should grow into a habit, to which the patient becomes a slave. In this case he is not *cured* of insomnia; he is dependent on subterfuges which are only useful when employed as an exception.

Doubtless it is very difficult to practise this psychotherapeutic method with the majority of patients. Public opinion clings to something tangible; patients demand drugs as a means of immediate relief from their symptoms. They will seldom listen to the doctor who gives only counsel in hygiene. Yet, as Dubois remarks, "it would be far simpler to write them a prescription than to show them how to arrange their lives." Doubtless the purely psychotherapeutic treatment is not easy. It demands much time and patience, especially from the patient, but also from the doctor. The practitioner often grows weary of the labour, and feels tempted to return to the easier task of medicating.

"But when one has reflected on this matter, when one has seen one's patients, after years of suffering, recovering robust health and the power of working . . . one again takes courage, and with joy and unflinching patience, pursues the task of leading one's patients back to a life of healthiness—physically, intellectually, and morally."

The following illustration will show what power Professor Dubois draws from his convictions.

"A doctor friend, recovering from a crisis of melancholia, announced his general improvement, but showed himself still anxious in

regard to insomnia. He had taken—without success—valerian, warm baths, bromide. Do not trouble yourself, I told him, do not seek for sleep; pursuit will only drive it away. There is no danger in a few sleepless nights, even when they are more complete than in your case. I have been treating neurotics for more than twenty years, and I can assure you that I have never in one single case found that insomnia was an obstacle to their recovery. One may neglect insomnia without any risk, and that is, in fact, the best way to recall calm and sleep. Do nothing, take neither baths nor medicine, and you will soon recover your rest."

"You have guessed my thought, was the answer. I was much preoccupied about these sleepless nights. Especially since one of the Sisters told me that a lady I enquired about (one of your patients) was no better, *since she could not sleep, and that the insomnia, so tiring to her nerves, prevented her getting well.*"

"Your phobia is unfounded, answered the Professor. The patient you mention is suffering from a quite different form of malady to yours. The Sister is mistaken in thinking that it is insomnia, which causes continuance of her illness. Believe me, sleeplessness, even when persistent, is not dangerous. Do nothing, fear nothing, and you may be certain that all will go well."

The next day the patient told Professor Dubois he had slept! And he quickly recovered his health, and the power of intellectual work above the medium.

We will pass over in silence the part the Sister plays in this story!

(To be continued.)

Wedding Bells.

On September 18th, at St. Faith's Church, Waterloo, the marriage took place of Miss Mabel Catherine Glover Wood, of "Rostrevor," Waterloo, eldest daughter of the late Dr. J. W. Wood, of Ramsey, Isle of Man, to Mr. John David Bailie, E.E.M.E.S.E., of Crossfield House, Calverley.

Miss Wood was trained at the Children's Hospital, Myrtle Street, Liverpool, and afterwards at the Leicester Infirmary, where she remained as Sister during the past five years. She is a member of the Leicester Infirmary Nurses' League.

Miss Wood was the recipient of handsome presents from members of the Medical and Nursing Staffs of the Infirmary.

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