

to prevent its reflection of light hurting her.

5th. Sensibility to cold, causing her to envelop her head in a shawl on a warm June day.

On finding all these symptoms of extreme and long-standing exhaustion, Dubois decided to go cautiously at first, and proceed to his moral orthodoxy after starting the usual cure of rest and isolation. The first day he did not allude to the psychic origin of her troubles, as he had been told that the patient had a dread of any "suggestive influence."

But on the second day he felt it safe to "give up useless diplomacy, and, burning his ships behind him, he explained—during a full half-hour—his views as to the purely mental nature of all her impotencies."

As he expected, from his long experience, "the patient accepted, without difficulty, this declaration, though it threw over—like a house of cards—all the scaffolding of her former convictions."

She made only one feeble objection; begging him to allow her to continue to take Hoffman's drops, since they gave her relief in her crises of contractions.

Very well, he answered, I will give you this anodyne medicine, but allow me to tell you that I do not believe in its efficacy. You may replace it with cold water, or take nothing at all. Your illness can only be acted on medicinally by suggestion.

The patient then related that this could not be the case with these drops, as her doctor had given her them, after trying many other stronger drugs; saying that these anyhow were harmless. She perceived his scepticism as to their use, and participated in it, but yet these drops did her a great deal of good!

Dubois told her that this proved nothing, though the same reasoning was adopted by many doctors. Suggestion is commonly imagined to proceed by conscious syllogisms, and that one believes when one wants to believe. It is not always so: "belief is often born unconsciously, in spite of our scepticism, which is only superficial, before, during, or after taking a remedy, especially when a chance amelioration due to other causes coincides with taking the remedy. The chain of cause and effect is then established, and in future all the effects expected from the medicine are obtained.

The patient made no further difficulty, but quietly reassumed: You believe, then, that I could read and write, and endure the light if I really believed I had the power?

Yes; you have good eyesight, as the oculist told you. You have no other symptom of cere-

bral affection. Since then the eye and the brain are the only organs used in reading, there is no material basis for this impotency. When a person has no material cause for being unable to read, but yet cannot do so, I am certain that the cause is moral, and that is, the conviction of powerlessness.

You believe that I could stand and even walk if I could only be convinced of the power of doing so?

Yes; for you have no cerebral, medullary, or peripheral paralysis; your bones, articulations, and muscles are in good condition. The seven material causes which would prevent your standing and walking do not exist; therefore there must be a moral one, and it is again—the conviction of powerlessness.

Good. I see that I must radically change my way of looking at my illness. Why did they not tell me so sooner?

This conversation took place on a Saturday. On the Monday following the Professor found his patient sitting up in bed, reading over a letter which she had written to her mother. The curtains were drawn open and the mirror placed in its former position. Her woollen shawl was discarded. Three days later she got up. All those impotencies of nine years' duration had disappeared under the influence of the idea! She rapidly recovered, and took up philosophical studies.

When the Professor saw her a year later, he found that she had become a completely normal human being, thanks to her "logical mentality and noble soul," which by means of two psychical conversations had recovered their dominion.

This, and a multitude of like examples, are Professor Dubois' proofs of the solidity of his aphorism—the "Leitmotif" of his system—*à mal psychique, traitement psychique*. A few psychical conversations enable patients to overcome maladies which for years have been vainly treated by physical agents—rest cures, hydropathy, hypodermic injections, hysterectomy. Has he not good reason for exclaiming: *Pourquoi quand, on pose le diagnostic d'hystérie, c'est à dire celui de la plus mentale des maladies, a-t-on recours aux moyens physiques?*

Whilst as preventive against return of the neuroses, is he not also right in appealing to the nobler side of humanity, in teaching his patients that *notre préoccupation majeure doit être le perfectionnement constant de notre moi moral; . . . pour trouver le bonheur intime et la santé, il faut détourner notre attention de nous mêmes, et l'intérêt pour les*

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