

and coming to more recent years we find hypnotic suggestion used in our own country under various names by as varied exponents. To Dr. John Elliotson belongs the honour of first bringing hypnotism, in this country, within the ranks of recognised therapeutical measures. He was bitterly persecuted by his professional colleagues, and his career as a physician was ruined; but psychotherapy is to-day beginning to take the place he tried to win for it over seventy years ago! At Calcutta, in 1845, Dr. Esdhill performed numbers of major operations painlessly upon patients under hypnotic anæsthesia, and in England about this time Dr. James Braid appears to have had considerable success in treating various ailments, and also inducing anæsthesia by the same means. There are several different methods of inducing sleep by hypnotic suggestion, but in every case the co-operation of the patient is necessary to ensure success. Having cleared the patient's mind by a simple explanation of the process, he should be asked to concentrate his attention on some drowsy, mental picture, or he may repeat a monotonous verse, or the alphabet, over and over again. But the individuality of each patient should be studied and the suggestion for concentration adapted accordingly. It will be found helpful to make the patient fix his eyes steadily on some bright object—*e.g.*, a lens, held at a short distance away from him, and moved gradually upwards till the strain of following it causes a slight convergent squint, which is the signal for the operator to close the eyelids by a downward movement of his hand, repeating meanwhile that the eyes are heavy, that they are closing, and cannot re-open, etc. In a few minutes, if the patient is at all receptive, the continued suggestions of sleep and rest will begin to take effect, and the subject becomes really drowsy. In this condition there is an increased receptivity on the part of the subject, and suggestions suitable to the individual case may now be made with distinct benefit to the patient. A subject suffering from insomnia may have suggestions made to him that on retiring at night he will quickly become drowsy and sleep soundly without the use of drugs. When rousing a patient who has been hypnotised the operator should be careful to do so gradually, and to suggest that there will be a feeling of comfort and well-being on awakening, without headache or drowsiness. If these simple precautions are observed the patients will awaken as much refreshed as if they had had a long spell of natural sleep.

Nurses should do all in their power to discourage hypnotic exhibitions which are given for gain or amusement, but they should also

steadfastly uphold the safeguarded use of hypnotic suggestion as a therapeutical agent of very real value in all cases of nervous disorders, and as a means allaying the painful symptoms of many diseases in place of morphia and other narcotics.

GLADYS TATHAM.

Progress of State Registration.

A correspondent of the *Lancet* complains that in the district in which he practises a district nurse who has been appointed by a philanthropic lady, aided by subscriptions, whist drives, etc., acts as an unqualified practitioner. Wherever she hears of anyone being ill, irrespective of a medical man being in attendance, and uninvited even by the patient's friends, she presents herself. She also goes about soliciting for work as if she were a duly qualified practitioner. The Editor of our contemporary advises his correspondent that he has no legal remedy so long as the nurse does not pretend to be a registered practitioner.

If the Nurses' Registration Bill were passed a registered nurse acting in the manner described could be reported to the General Nursing Council, as it provides (Clause 23) that "Nothing contained in this Act shall be considered as conferring any authority to practise medicine or to undertake the treatment or cure of disease."

On the other hand, Dr. Thomas Laffan, Cashel, considers that this clause does not fully meet the situation, and thinks that it should be widened so as to prevent any nurse from attending a patient for a longer period than 24 hours without the attendance of a doctor. We agree with the Editor of the *Lancet* that "in a country place a medical man often could not attend every patient once in 24 hours; there is frequently no reason why he should so attend." It must be remembered that Clause 23 of the Nurses' Registration Bill is endorsed by the Central Committee for the State Registration of Nurses, which includes five official delegates of the British Medical Association.

IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Una, the organ of the Victorian Trained Nurses' Association, announces that a movement has been initiated in West Australia to introduce into the new Health Bill clauses enforcing the State Registration of Nurses and Midwives, and states that the object of the clauses—the prevention of unqualified persons from practising as nurses and midwives—has

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