

PRACTICAL PSYCHOLOGY.

WORRY.

Probably every nurse can recall a case where the patient's progress appeared to be arrested by some unknown factor, and the doctor had bidden her try to discover whether the patient were worrying about something. And when this was found to be so how little could be done to remove it, for often the worry was due to unhappy and complicated conditions beyond either doctor's or nurse's power to alter.

It is just here where a knowledge of practical psychology may prove invaluable to a nurse. The new psychology teaches that the Consciousness is a thing apart from the brain and the mental body, and that the mischief of worry proceeds outside it; the Consciousness suffers by the tyranny of his servants but cannot control them; the Will remains inactive. The Consciousness has had to dwell on a subject at once painful and insoluble. He gives it up in despair, deciding that no solution can be reached. Then the factor automatism steps in and the vibrations which have wearied the tired brain and mental body continue to repeat remorselessly, as the tendency of movement is always in that direction already practised. A restless, anxious condition giving rise to an irregular flow of energy results. Action and reaction set up a vicious circle.

This automatism or tendency to repeat former vibrations may be used as the instrument with which to conquer the worry. Thought continued on one line creates thought-forms, channels for future thought, and any much dwelt on thought tends to recur by the fascination of either pain or pleasure. For this reason painful thought should never be allowed a moment longer than is necessary. If wrong conditions can be righted, think out the best way in which to change them, then deal quickly with them. If, as often happens, they cannot be righted—at least immediately—thoughts of them should not be allowed to remain and form a strong thought-current, digging inharmonious channels in the mind into which the unemployed energy of mental body and brain will naturally flow. To attempt by an effort of will to turn back such a stream of thought is wasted energy. We may find a useful analogy in engineering. Water flowing into a dangerous channel is not pressed back into its former limits; a new and useful outlet is found for it by digging a fresh channel. So in the case of worry the already made channel should be left alone and energy applied to forming a new channel of an opposite character, using the same tool that formed the

channel for worry, namely, definite, regular, persevering thought in which auto-suggestion and automatism work beneficently instead of injuriously.

The opposite of worry is peace. Let the victim of worry, then, give five minutes, morning, noon and night, to the realisation that his centre, the real Self, is entirely at peace, that it is only his temporary vestures, which he wrongly identifies with the Self, which suffer pain and anxiety. Let him dwell on the sense of his detachment from all that can hurt, and think of himself as undying, fearless and serene. Peace will dig a new channel and in this way will replace Worry until it will become the atmosphere of the soul. With this should be formed the habit of content, realising that our fate is but the result of our use or misuse of the power of thought. Long ago a wise King of Israel, when giving a warning against association with an evil man, said, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

A nurse who understands the influence of vibrations in our lives can double her value to her patient, not only by placing simply before him the fact that his best remedy lies within himself, but also by seeing to it that those who come in contact with him bring him only harmonious vibrations, thus facilitating his control of his own thoughts. For this reason music is a great healer and for one type of patient is the best medicine. A good gramophone, or even a mediocre one at a distance, should always be available for the sick, as in all who are responsive to music it awakens the highest vibrations of the nature, which are harmonious and healing.

M. M. G. BIELBY.

NURSING ECHOES.

It is officially announced that paid acting rank held by members of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service during the war of 1914-19, if followed by substantive promotion to that rank before retirement, shall count as service in that rank towards the rank element of retired pay.

We have received a letter from a Queen's Nurse asking us to notify the needs of her patients—many are acutely ill and cannot afford the extra nourishment required. They would like gifts of Bovril, Horlick's Malted Milk, Vicol, Nestlé's Milk, Glaxo, Bournville

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