

#### BIRMINGHAM AND MIDLAND HOSPITAL FOR NERVOUS DISEASES, EDGBASTON.

The Hospital was decorated throughout with ropes of holly leaves and spiders' webs of silver thread, with bunches of mistletoe. The oak-panelled hall, with its pierced screen, is peculiarly well adapted for this scheme of decoration, whilst the impression of evergreens touched with frost was further enhanced by a centrepiece in the form of an old stone pedestal and vase filled with ferns and entwined with climbing ivy; the orange-shaded lights gave the necessary touch of colour.

On Christmas Eve Father Christmas visited the wards and filled the patients' stockings with good things. He also replenished the larder with turkeys and plum puddings; whilst on Boxing Day all the children who had been in-patients during the year were entertained to tea and a Christmas tree laden with gifts for every child.

The Christmas festivities concluded on New Year's Eve with a dance for the nursing staff.

#### PRACTICAL PSYCHOLOGY: JEALOUSY.

Most of us have encountered at some time or other the devastating force of jealousy in relation to health and human affairs, but comparatively few have studied the psychological aspect of the emotion. Many refer to this defect of disposition as trifling or even amusing; some state with a certain pride that they have a jealous nature. The new psychology teaches that jealousy is an intense form of selfishness, an exaggeration of the possessive sense, whether applied to matters of affection, wealth, or worldly success. It is most frequently found in that person who is also greedy. In the case of young children I have noticed its association with the habit of sucking fingers, or the deadly dummy, some children naturally rejecting both. Therefore the finger-sucking habit, which later resolves into incessant sweet-eating or cigarette smoking, may be regarded as an indication of a double defect, which, if recognized in infancy, may be trained out of the character by the cultivation of its opposite virtues, namely, self-control in eating and drinking, and a generous view of the rights and desires of others.

Nurses know how quickly a fit of acute jealousy will send up a patient's temperature, and how smouldering jealousy will retard recovery; while in many cases the continued indulgence of this class of thoughts may even upset the reason.

A great step in the understanding of invisible forces in human lives was taken when M. Blondlet, of the University of Nancy, discovered the N-rays and the fact that these rays can be increased by the will and the state of mind. It has since been established that they are identical with the coloured *auras* or ovoid-shaped emanation surrounding man, described by *sensitives*—that is,

those having developed psychic faculty. As human thoughts change in nature, corresponding changes instantly occur in the *aura*—noble, unselfish thought producing clear, beautiful colours, while jealousy, greed and anger are expressed in coils and vortices of livid or dark colours or thunderous blackness, intense anger darting out in the form of fiery red arrows. These changes occurring in the ovoid mist are also the sign of corresponding changes in the physical man, evil emotions generating toxins which in a greater or less degree poison the whole organism. So that, to take no higher ground than that of physical health, jealousy should be avoided as the plague, and if mothers and nurses understood its ultimate effects they would think no trouble too great to eradicate jealous tendencies in the infant. The natural law of action and re-action operates here with unmistakable results. The swirling, unseen force of jealousy and anger travels far; when it meets a receptive mind it sets up similar vibrations and the evil force, strengthened, returns to the mind in which it was generated, like a boomerang. To indulge in jealous thoughts is thus to ensure certain pain to oneself.

Those amenable to reason—and unfortunately the temperament prone to jealousy is one which usually has a strong will divorced from reason—should have pointed out to them the fact that jealousy never yet attracted any good thing to the mind in which it is born. Affection thus demanded is slowly but surely killed by its operation; material gain, if granted, brings conditions which make it dust and ashes. Like attracts like. If we would have love we must send out thoughts of unselfish affection. It is useless to clamour for affection and to worry because it is not given, or to demand other good things of life. The immutable Law compels us to win them in accordance with its decrees, and many of us have to work silently and steadily, perhaps for long years; but no loving thought is wasted, and the reaping of a golden harvest at some future time is assured. Children especially should have it explained to them that jealousy hurts no one so much as the one whose mind sends it out. Sometimes it hurts no one else at all. Also, that there is no limit to the power of loving; as it is exercised so it increases, until it finally expands into the Love Universal exemplified by the Christ.

Of all the most desirable qualities in the soul of man it may be said that they bless equally him who gives with him who takes; and, reversely, ill-will operates evilly on both giver and receiver.

That there is a Science of Thought, and that we may know and apply scientifically the laws which govern it, should be realised by every nurse, for to treat disease without reference to the mind and soul of the patient too often merely amounts to tinkering at the outer case of a delicate and complicated mechanism whose life-springs require a skilful, tender, and sympathetic readjustment. The potent law of affinity is unerring and unchanging in its operation and its basic power is Sympathy.

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