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NURSING THE INSANE.

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(Concluded.)

At this point we may fittingly introduce the subject of occupation, which has done so much to revolutionize the treatment of the insane, to banish objectionable restraint, and to mitigate almost every symptom the insane present. By occupation is meant anything that takes up your patient's time and directs his mind in useful and pleasant ways. Idleness and loafing are a curse to the insane as to the sane. Almost every patient is better employed in some way, and, moreover, it lightens your tasks. The amount and value of the work done are but secondary. The first consideration is to find some suitable employment, no matter how simple, that will have its salutary effect by exercising his mental and bodily powers. If the work done is useful, all the better; but whatever he does should be for his own good alone. Unless better employment is found, patients are apt to occupy themselves thinking of their delusions, in noise or violent demonstrations, pacing the floor, indulging secret vices, in gossip or constant Bible reading, going from bad to worse. By employing you introduce new thoughts into the mind to crowd objectionable ones out. One's thoughts are not changed by an effort of the will, but by inviting others in. Occupation finds suitable outlets for morbid energy, and turns restless movements into healthy channels. It arrests the deterioration to which insane brains tend, and even in settled dementia prevents degraded habits. It re-educates the dement's brain.