

nature of soil, and immediate surroundings, which unquestionably require due consideration in each case. Indeed, attention to such points is almost as necessary, in some instances of sleeplessness, as it is in the cases of sufferers from spasmodic asthma.

The best drug to employ in such cases, if they must be employed, are the bromide of potassium or chloral hydrate. Henbane, in full doses, is also of service.

Persistent odours will prevent sleep. Thus flowers in a sleeping apartment,—where, by the way, they never should be placed—giving off aroma, will affect certain people powerfully, causing headache and cerebral irritability (*vide* Moore on *Going to Sleep*, page 37. London, 1868). I have known the effluvia of certain embrocations to act in preventing sleep for a time in some patients; belladonna, tar, and citronella, in particular, are to be blamed.

While laying stress upon securing pure air for sleeping apartments, as far as possible, attention must also be paid to the amount of moisture present in the air. In many instances, the air is deficient in moisture, and the dry air inspired, often laden with dust, is a source of discomfort to the nasal and bronchial membranes; not only so, the influence of a too dry atmosphere is perceived by the whole cutaneous surface, and thus a source of irritation exists which is not unfrequently the last to be suspected.

In the case of bedridden persons, or during long illness, this point is to be attended to, and the absence of moisture is to be met by keeping water in the room, and, if need be by sprinkling water on the floor. I am sure that many persons have additional cause for their sleeplessness in the dry air they inspire in the bedrooms of hotels, after doing a hot season on the continent of Europe. They are committed, perhaps late at night, to a room that has been shut up and baked by a fierce sun all day, and that has not had an ounce of water in it for days. To open the windows may entail a plague of mosquitos, or give entrance to a still more deadly malaria. In such a case, I recommend a very free distribution of water to various parts of the floor. I have known quarts of water to evaporate in a single night when used in this manner, showing the urgent necessity for the employment of it.* The same condition of dryness is met with in winter in all apartments warmed by artificial heat. This is not felt where there are open fireplaces; but if stoves be employed, then all the unfavorable conditions for insomnia are present, unless the amount of heat and moisture be duly regulated. According to Dr. Cornelius Fox, air, containing a healthful amount of moisture, exhibits a difference of about five degrees

between the wet and dry bulbs of a hygrometer. If the difference be greater, moisture should be added.

As to the best posture to assume on going to sleep, I think little need be said. Dr. Radcliffe has lately recommended natural decubitus to ensure sleep, but, lest this seem paradoxical, it should be added, that this advice is for bedridden persons, the subjects of chronic nervous disorders, and the plan suggested is in opposition to a sitting posture to be maintained during the day by a suitable bed support. In the case of otherwise healthy people who suffer from heat and throbbing in the head as part of their insomnia, a posture with the head somewhat high is desirable in order to promote sleep upon physiological principles. A hard pillow should also be employed in such cases.

In conclusion I should remark that the best knowledge we now possess, as to the action of the drugs commonly used to secure sleep, shows us that both bromide of potassium and chloral hydrate cause diminished amount of blood to circulate through the brain; and hence, as in many similar cases, the advance of the science of therapeutics has shed light upon the mysteries of pathology.—*British Medical Journal*.

POST-PARTUM HEMORRHAGE.

In the *British Medical Journal* for January 11, 1873, Dr. Robert Barnes says: "In discussing the action of powerful styptic injections in arresting flooding after labor, the conditions under which the practice I have recommended is indicated have not always been accurately appreciated. The great agent, of course, in stopping hemorrhage, is the constriction of the uterine vessels by the muscular wall in which these vessels run. All the ordinary means of arresting hemorrhage are aimed at producing muscular contraction. But muscular contraction depends on nervous power. Thus cold, grasping the uterus, introducing the hand, galvanism, all depend for their efficacy upon the spinal cord being able to respond to the peripheral call. When, therefore, these means prove sufficient, the inference is generally warranted that the case, although serious, is not desperate. The condition is very different when the excitomotor function is suspended; when neither by peripheral excitation, nor by centric stimulus, the nerve-force can be drawn or sent from the spinal cord to the uterus in sufficient intensity to cause contraction. At this point, unless the bleeding is arrested by syncope, or by temporary enfeeblement of the circulation, the patient is in most imminent danger of death. The slightest shock or disturbance will extinguish the flickering spark of life. Under such circumstances I have known death to follow, to all appearance immediately caused, by the injection of cold water or passing the hand into the uterus. If instead of cold water we inject a solution of perchloride of iron, the same catastrophe may ensue. Is it more likely to ensue? Very careful observations are required before this question can be answered in the affirmative. People are apt to think that cold water is so simple a thing

*field Jones has remarked, is a powerful inducer of sleep; but it is to be observed that the air must be pure, and, if possible, of bracing character. Long continued exposure to the air and ochlotic miasms of large towns is by no means so effectual an hypnotic.

It is highly probable that ozone is generated by such a procedure as I recommend. Dr. Cornelius Fox's observation on the "Purification of Air by the Vaporisation of Water", in his book on *Ozone and Antiozone*, and his paper on "Coke as a Fuel in relation to Hygiene", should be read by all interested in sanitary matters.