

The following night he had sulphonal, gr. xxx., at 8.30 p.m. He kept awake as long as possible to notice the effects of the drug. He first experienced a general pricking sensation, soon his eyelids became heavy, and, in spite of all efforts to keep awake, he fell into profound slumber an hour after he had taken his dose. He volunteers the statement that he feels no disagreeable after effects from sulphonal, as with morphine, cocaine and caffeine, all of which he has used largely.

On the following night he complained severely of headache, for which antipyrine was prescribed with little benefit, 30 gr. of sulphonal apparently having more effect than 15 of antipyrine.

This patient was an unusually intelligent man for an hospital patient. He thoroughly entered into the spirit of the investigations, and being an old morphine, chloral, cocaine and caffeine eater, his observations were of considerable value and interest.

In the cases where sulphonal acted in inducing from seven to ten hours sleep, are included a great variety of both acute and chronic diseases. The essential disturbing element in the majority was a condition of restlessness, due usually to pyrexia, cardiac insufficiency or that general condition of erethism of the nervous system included under the term neurasthenia. It is in the latter class of cases that sulphonal acts with the greatest certainty. I question very much whether we have any drug to compare with it in these troublesome conditions. It is not the purpose in this paper to discuss to what extent hypnotics are useful or advisable in neurasthenic conditions.

*Untoward Effects.*—In estimating the value of any drug, the first and most important question to consider is, What are its untoward effects? Unfortunately many of our most highly prized hypnotics act at times so that any good effect that may be produced is more than counterbalanced by the subsequent evils.

How much more valuable opium would be were it not for the disagreeable symptoms that follow its use?

As regards the use of hypnotics in certain diseases we require to be especially guarded. Many a beginning neurasthenic has been converted into a hopeless incurable by the injudicious administration of hypnotics, especially opium.