

after the potion begins to fail in its effect and the patient begins to feel that a drug habit is becoming fastened upon him that the physician is consulted.

In the treatment of such cases the first and probably chiefest point is reform in the mode of life. There must be a due amount of time set apart for exercise, recreation and the ordinary bodily requirements. Regularity in the matter of meals, of retiring to bed, of bathing, of defecation, etc. etc., should be insisted upon. If the patient has already been taking hypnotics, it becomes a question as to whether or not such agents should be continued. The solution of this problem rests of course, with the circumstances of the case. Frequently the health is much impaired, and it is often the case that a great deal of the ill-health is the result of the drugs used to overcome the sleeplessness. In such an instance either all hypnotics should be dropped, or the one which is in use should be substituted by another. If an hypnotic is prescribed, it should only be for a few days, because the most important consideration in the treatment of these cases is to restore the general health, and with it the normal tendency to sleep.

This class of patients generally present a more or less evident lack of vaso-motor tone. They are likely to be anaemic to a greater or less degree. A common condition in these cases is ability, even desire, to sleep while in a sitting posture, but when the prone position is assumed the sleepiness vanishes. The reason for this is well known. When the patient is in an upright position, the lack of vascular tone allows a gravitation of blood from the brain and brings about the anaemic condition of the cortex which normally favors sleep. Once the patient lies down, however, the influence of gravitation is in the other direction, the cerebrum now become flushed with blood, and wakefulness is the result. Of course this loss of tonicity in the vessels implies insufficient or abnormal nervous control, and is frequently if not ordinarily only one of many evidences of "nervous exhaustion." And the "nervous exhaustion" may in most cases be attributed to ill-nutrition or mal-nutrition dependent upon an anaemic or a toxæmic condition. A local (cerebral) anaemia, the result of lessened blood supply, is normally a condition necessary to sleep, but a general, systemic anaemia is a frequent cause of most obstinate insomnia—which is more likely to be due to the presence of some abnormal element in the blood rather than to the mere absence of a normal constituent from that fluid. This opens up such a large field, however, that we must not enter upon it at this time.