

basis of facts for it to rest upon. So long ago as we can remember,—and the space of time over which our memory extends is more than half a century,—the number of the nervous and the sleepless, compared with that of people then existing, was as great as now, and the increase is the result of increased population. The truth is the make-up of people who stood to us in the relationship of grandfathers and grandmothers, or great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers, was about the same as now, and the same idiosyncrasies of organization existed among them as exist among us. They dosed for nervous pains and restlessness as we do; but the nature of their remedies was very different. Instead of morphine, the bromides, chloral, etc., they took to onion syrup, lettuce juice, assafoetida and a decoction of valerian roots, and in the list we must not forget to place that famous "leathean head-support," the hop pillow. Instances of weak or disordered nerves were observed among the Indian tribes in the early settlement of the country; and among all nations, civilized and savage, there are physical organizations not favorable for quiet and repose under abnormal conditions, or change of circumstances.

Nature for the best of reasons, doubtless, has given to some good digestion, a sound muscular system, and an arrangement of nerves which is insensible to outward or inward influences. The men and women who can say in truth that they never have known they had a stomach or a nervous system from any physical pains, are looked upon with envy by the dyspeptic and nervous. This feeling is unavoidable, a natural result of contrast between persistent misery and a supposed exemption on the part of those whom they see around them. But we must remember that the law of compensation holds good in every movement in nature, in every phase of life. The unemotional do not, in many instances, rise much higher in the scale of being than the animals,—not, in fact, as high as in the case of some animals. The animals, both savage and domestic, eat, drink, and die; and what more can be said of men and women who all their lives eat, sleep, and lounge about, like pigs or oxen in the fattening stalls of the farmers? If rich, they enjoy a good dinner, a nap afterwards, a ride in an easy carriage, a few friends without culture like themselves; but the beautiful things in nature and art, like flowers, landscapes, mountains, cascades, paintings, statuary, music, oratory, books,—these are not according to their tastes, and are ignored. The sufferers from sensitive nerves, intense emotion, insomnia, etc., are usually of an organization susceptible to the influence of the beautiful, lovers of everything that is refined, and they enter into keen enjoyment of whatever is wonderful or elevating in nature and art. Shut out as they are from the animal pleasures of the world, the higher joys of a purer sense afford keen delights when pain and suffering are absent from the body. Is there not comfort in these

considerations? Everything that is good and holy in this world comes through suffering, and where there is much of this there are open to sufferers sources of bliss of which the healthful, stolid, animal human world can know nothing whatever. But let us turn to sources of comfort of another kind, namely, hygienic and remedial measures, adapted to remove in a degree the intensity of suffering, and thus confer seasons of happiness upon the sleepless. Insomnia arises from a variety of causes; largely, however, from inherited weakness of organization, from habit, from bad practices in both sexes, from too much worry or attention to study, from too much business and business care, from local physical troubles, and from many other less prominent causes.

Having been a sufferer from insomnia for more than thirty years, we have naturally had our attention turned to its study, and have given it much thought and observation. In our case it arises from inheritance in a large degree; or rather from the effects of incessant mental labor upon an inherited feeble constitution. We have sounded to the bottom all the depths of misery attendant upon sleeplessness, and our sympathy for this class of sufferers is very great. Notwithstanding the suffering life has not been devoid of comforts and pleasures; and to know how to extract good out of evil, or how to rise superior to physical pain, is knowledge of a desirable kind.

Insomnia is not troublesome alone to the weak and nervous. Some of the worst instances that have come under our notice have been the case of men of strong, wiry constitutions,—men who have done their full share of the world's work and reached to good old age. Habit has much to do in originating the evil in such instances. Any man who goes to bed with his business on his mind, or with some kind of worry, great or small as it may be, is in the way of acquiring habits of wakefulness. The habit once established, like the appetite for drink, or tobacco, or rich foods, clings tenaciously to one, and it is recognized with alarm that the evil has come to stay. Men and women not of excitable temperaments become sleepless from over labor, mental or physical, or from both combined. Such cases yield readily to proper diet and rest. Often, persons who all their lives have uniformly slept well are suddenly, and without known cause, attacked with insomnia. One night goes by without sleep, still another, and perhaps another, and then comes a state of mental fear and unrest which is deplorable. The patient is frightened; it is a new experience; there is fear that sleep will never come again; and, to the disordered imagination, insanity is imminent, the asylum looms in the distance, every sense is abnormal; wild fright usurps the place of reason. We have had such cases brought to us for advice, and satisfaction experienced in the being able to dispel fear and remove the abnormal conditions has been very great. In one instance a gentleman came from a long distance in a deplorable condition of mind.