

conscious mind. All the paraphernalia of brass band, forcible movement, the pile of discarded crutches, the insistent assurance of relief, are but means of exciting the expectant attention necessary for cure. Cures of similar cases are effected in a less theatrical manner by medical practitioners every day, notably at the spas. There the balneo-therapeutic measures carried out create the mental atmosphere required to produce the necessary change in the sub-conscious mind. The frequency with which various neuralgias, headaches, ties, and other pains are removed by psycho-therapeutic means alone, proves that they were existing after the cause had gone.

Another principle should be mentioned—viz., that in organic diseases of the nervous system the functional disturbance generally extends further than the direct influence of the organic lesion justifies. For instance, "in cases of apoplexy, the lesion acts on adjacent parts like shock, setting up functional disturbance." (Bernheim.) It is well known how a hemiplegic's powers may be improved months after the attack by exercises, and by methods of encouragement which in essence act on the principle of suggestion. We cannot make destroyed nerve elements anew, but we can call up activity in those which were only functionally out of gear. In fact we can remove the habit remaining after the cause has disappeared. Charcot was alluding to the same condition when he said that hysteria and disseminated sclerosis often existed together, because he found that he could remove by suggestion many of the symptoms of this disease. The removable symptoms he considered as due to hysteria, though it is obvious that a "habit" acquired in a progressive period of the disease, reinforced as time goes on by auto-suggestion, constitutes the right explanation. Nicoll, in urging the use of hypnotism and suggestion in the treatment of organic nervous complaints, draws attention to the same point, using paralysis agitans as an example. He points out that patients suffering from this disease are unable to walk properly, or fall when they attempt to get about. One fall suffices to make the patient even more insecure and causes a want of confidence which soon becomes a habit, still further diminishing his powers of locomotion. The writer has observed the same thing in cases of locomotor ataxy. In one case a patient, well able to walk about, gave up after a fall all attempts to use his legs for ambulatory purposes. There are, then, sound reasons for using suggestion in organic nervous complaints. But there is more to be gained by this method of treatment than simple removal of the unnecessary mental concomitants of the disease. In many organic diseases the path of impulses from the centre to the periphery may be interrupted, but there are often alternative routes which are capable of adoption if only the necessary means