

an attendance can be much increased if effort is made to do so, and the gatherings are made attractive and pleasant, and further, that no matter how hopeless the condition of the branch may seem to be, it can be forced to grow if these simple things are done.

Suggest identification meetings, or cake, or cream or smoking concerts or any of the methods by which the social orders succeed in creating a greater attendance than is usual in the protective fraternities.—Adapted from A. L. H. Journal.

FRATERNAL VISITS.

Too great value cannot be placed upon hearty, whole-souled, fraternal visits as a means of infusing renewed interest and good fellowship into our branches, says an exchange, and very truthfully too. A branch may be able to get just enough members together to make up the necessary quorum: its meetings may be dull, dry and spiritless as an assemblage of so many wooden images; but let a few visitors from a wide-awake sister branch burst in upon them and see how everything is changed in an instant. All is life and activity where there was nothing but the dull routine of humdrum existence. We all know that it does a branch good to have many visitors, and therefore, members of all branches should strive to see the members in other branch rooms once in a while. It will do them good in many ways. It will give them a chance to compare the work of others with their own and possibly to profit thereby. It will increase your acquaintance among the order generally and tend to make the fraternity what it should be. We advise not only individual visits to other branches, but the making up of parties to take the meetings by storm. Especially desirable is it to go some distance from home and visit those branches which do not receive many visits during the year. We know that much of this kind of work is left to the officers of our Grand Council, but it should not be so; the branch officer should visit as well, and stirring abroad as much as possible, show the outsiders that the Association is alive, and that they are sociable and friendly in the C. M. B. A. and in each other's society.—Adapted from an Ex.

THE VALUE OF INSURANCE.

It is the usual thing nowadays when a man dies to ask: "How did he leave his family provided for? How much insurance did he have upon his life?" A life insurance policy in an established company or a well managed mutual association has come to be fully recognized by the public as a better asset for the family than real estate or cash in bank, for while houses and lots are personal property, must go into the estate of the deceased, and are subject to the claims of creditors, the proceeds of a life policy is the sole property of the family, and no creditor can reach a dollar of it. Every family thus provided for occupies a position of comparative independence, and does not become a charge upon either relatives or the community at large. So many instances of the helpfulness of life insurance occur that every little neighborhood becomes familiar with them, and such practical illustrations of its beneficence not only counteract attacks made upon the system, but encourage others to avail themselves of it. Instances of benefits conferred upon

bereaved families by life insurance multiply so rapidly that everyone soon comes to have a personal knowledge of them and cannot fail to have confidence in any system that is not only designed for this very purpose, but has the ability to carry it into effect. As an illustration of the practical results, we are reminded of an incident where a young man from the East drifted to a mining town in the West to seek a fortune. He was stricken with pneumonia, and a total stranger, lay sick for days and became delirious. Among his effects was found a life policy. The beneficiary was informed by telegraph and in reply instructions were given to do everything possible for him. This was done, but to no avail; he finally died, and was buried properly and decently. The policy secured for the unfortunate young man a friend in the hour of his direst need, but for whom he might have filled an unknown grave and his friends never known of his fate.—National Underwriter.

THE MYSTERY OF SLEEP.

One of the Most Wonderful Things in the World—Yet as Commonplace as Breakfast—How it Changes the Body.

The most wonderful events in the world are the most common. If the sun appeared, says Carlyle, only once in a long term of years, how excited everybody would be. But the miracle takes place every day unregarded. The most wonderful thing that happens to man from the cradle to the grave is also a daily event, and it excites hardly any wonder or curiosity. The phenomenon of sleep. We go to bed at night and expect sleep, as a matter of course. It approaches us with no sense of surprise or apprehension on our part; we pass within the ivory gate with as little concern as we walk down the street, and yet sleep is as wonderful as death, to which not a few poets have likened it. Only the confirmed victim of insomnia realizes its beneficent influence, to the rest it is as commonplace as breakfast. And yet sleep is not only the profoundest mystery we know, but it is the result that the accompaniment of the most remarkable changes in our bodies, themselves also subjects of deepest wonder. These changes are described in a very interesting paper in the April number of Harper's Magazine by Dr. Andrew Wilson.

The first fact relating to sleep is that the sum total of our energy is reduced; or, as Dr. Wilson puts it, "the living engine slows down, as it were, and banks up its fires, so that its pulsations are sufficient, not for actual labor, but for merely maintaining the passive flow of force within the organism." Whether this reduction of the play of bodily force causes or merely accompanies sleep it might be hard to say. It is a beautiful thought in "The Ancient Mariner" that sleep is a blessed influence descending from above, but we suppose science will not listen to that, though it is not incompatible with the idea of the preparation for sleep by the bodily forces. The scientific statement would be that there is a general displacement and rearrangement of molecules, but that does not help us much, for the movements of molecules are unintelligible as an ultimate expression of why things are so and so. Then the work of the glands is slackened, they are not called on to secrete so many products from the blood.

The most striking fact is the change in temperature. The temperature of the human body rises at a quick rate from 6 a. m. to 10 or 11 a. m., increases at a slower rate from that time to 6 p. m., and then falls, reaching the minimum point at about 4 a. m. It is probable, by the way, that colds are often caught in bed at this last hour, especially by restless sleepers, who partially divest themselves of their bed-clothes, and so are exposed at the very time when the body demands the greatest protection. At this hour, too, the tissue changes are reduced to a minimum. The pulsations of the engine are, in a word, at their feeblest. The brain becomes paler, the appearance of even the ruddiest people grows more pallid, the resemblance to death is more apparent, so that it seems natural to speak of the dead as asleep, and to say with Shelley in "Queen Mab":

How wonderful is Death,
Death and his brother Sleep!

A learned author quoted by Dr. Wilson attributes the real cause of sleep to "the changes which the nerve elements of the brain undergo as the result of fatigue." But Dr. Wilson himself holds that it is in the brain cells that we shall probably find such explanation of sleep as science can give us. It is known to day that the brain is composed of hundreds of millions of cells, each an independent unit, though all united in a greater and more complex unity. He suggests that this unity of action is accomplished by the transmission of impulses from one cell to another, by temporary contract of the fibres, and this would be the normal condition of things in what we may call "business hours," when the telephonic exchanges between the cells are in full operation. But, "when the business of the day is over, and the central telegraphic or telephonic exchange is no longer occupied with its busy work, we can conversely imagine the withdrawal of the processes of the cells, and of their breaking their connections for a brief season, which is devoted to their recuperation." This season of recuperation is what we know as sleep.

This is an ingenious and interesting theory, and is, we suppose, quite in accord with the latest scientific investigation. It may be said, in passing, that there seems no reason why physiology should not devote more energy than it has done to the investigation of the problem of sleep, so much in regard to human health depends upon accurate knowledge of its conditions. If we could induce sleep without the use of drugs what a brighter world it would be for many who now suffer those prolonged and dreary tortures which only the sleepless know. We are, of course, aware that hypnotism and mesmerism are powerful agencies for putting patients to sleep; but even they sometimes fail, and they are as objectionable as drugs. If the problem lies in securing the quiescence of the brain cells, or, in the metaphor of Dr. Wilson, in the shutting off of the telephonic exchange, it ought not to be impossible for science to get at that part of the human organism, witness its condition and devise means for the breaking of the contacts which maintain brain activity.

But all this science, interesting and useful as it is, leaves the mystery where it was. We see clearly what physiological phenomena accompany sleep, but what of sleep itself, what of the human soul, lately so active, now buried in a repose as still as death? Does the soul itself, as it were, sleep?

Does it, like the body, need repose? What happens to the mental and moral powers of man when overcome by slumber? Is the mind liberated from the bonds of time and place, and can it visit then "worlds not realized?" What of the strange phenomena of our dreams, wherein ordinary and familiar secular events connected palpably with some of our daily experiences are either blended with others not so connected or are turned upside down, and are presented in an unmeaning fantasy which, nevertheless, seems natural? Is our full normal consciousness there? Hardly, or the dream could not be so incongruous and impossible. Yet a partial consciousness there must be, or we could not recall the dream in the morning. And what of those strangest, but well attested of all dreams, in which the dreamer sees with vivid intensity an event in the future. If the sleeping form held the complete and normal consciousness with the brain functions in the usual way, one would suppose the activity of the connected brain cells to be more than usually vigorous in the light of such an astounding experience; yet the very sleep in which the dream occurs depends, we are told, in the quiescence of these cells. Can it be possible, then, that in sleep, whatever the physical accompaniments, the soul does become at least partly liberated, finding the cells for the time useless as functioning organs? In a trance is this liberation still more completely effected? And in death, is the liberation final and complete? We know nothing, perhaps we never shall know, but to us the problem of sleep can never be solved on any mere material ground. All the scientific problems lead up to the mysterious problems of spirit.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

The spread of the delusion best known as Christian Science leads the editor of the Medical Record to declare that "people who will not protect themselves against 'faith cure,' 'Christian Science,' and the like, by the exercise of some rudiments of intelligence, should be taken in hand and protected *volens volens*." A woman who had been ill for three months with "dropsy" died lately in Mount Vernon, N. Y., without medical treatment, and apparently without accurate diagnosis. The attendant who claimed Heaven sent ability to cure the patient failed. According to the husband, the load of original sin in his wife, manifested by dropsy, was too much for the female healer; and the sufferer, therefore, had to die. Could folly go further than this?—Ave Maria.

SUPERSTITIONS.

Ave Maria.

Referring to some of the popular superstitions that have taken the place of real religion in many minds, a writer in the Bookman expresses a thought which we are glad to find in a secular publication, though the thought is not new to our readers:

"It has been noted with wisdom that epochs marked by the decay of the Christian spirit have been signalized by a corresponding increase of superstition. When the torch of religion has burned clearly, the soul, enamored of its highest good, has been concerned with evil only in the fear lest it should offend; while, on the contrary, superstition is primarily a morbid concern for evil. With this in mind it can not appear surprising that with the decline of religious belief, following in the wake of materialism, we should come upon a revival of the phase of characteristics some of the darkest pages of history."