

believes, is subjected, knowingly or unknowingly by his doctor, to treatment by suggestion. The limits of hypnotism as an adjunct to therapeutics largely depend, he says, upon an individual operator and a particular patient. In his experience, he has found it particularly useful in functional diseases—tics, tremors, and nervous spasms and cramps, some neuralgic pains and headaches, hysterical paralysis, convulsions and aphonia, many phobias, and so on, while sleeplessness and sleep-walking can be cured by its use.

He has also been successful in nocturnal enuresis, chronic constipation, dyspeptic discomfort, and the vomiting of pregnancy, but he failed to control the pains in a case of labour.

He was able to benefit a case of melancholia for a few months, but in a case of epilepsy it had no good results.

He refers to the case of a dentist cured by Sir Francis Cruise of a coarse tremor of the hand and arm which came on whenever he took up an instrument to operate, and which at last made his work impossible. A patient of his own, a miner, became obsessed by a fear of returning to his work after an injury to his hand, received eleven weeks previously. He was twice hypnotised and the suggestion made that he should return to his work on a certain day. He did so, and has remained at work ever since. In alcoholism and the drug habit, the myalgia of tonsillitis and the restlessness and headache of influenza, as well as in slight operations to abolish pain, the author has proved the value of hypnotism.

Of the complications following hypnosis, headache seems to be the most common, coming on after the first sitting, but he has never known it to persist after he has re-hypnotised the patient and made suitable suggestions. He believes the popular idea as to how hypnotism may be used for criminal purposes to be exaggerated and distorted.

In conclusion, he refers to post-hypnotic suggestion and subconscious memory, and instances the case of a patient who saw and described minutely the picture of a large room which he had not seen for five years, and could not remember ever to have seen before until he was re-hypnotised, when he described when and where he had seen it. He could give no reason at all when awakened why he should have recalled this picture, but when again under the influence of hypnotism explained that it was recalled to his memory by some little glass knobs on the chandeliers in a church which he had visited earlier in the day.

The subconscious memory may be an important factor in disease, the author thinks, for by its repeated stimulus acting, for example, on imagination, it may be the obscure origin of some of those still more obscure conditions which occur in so many functional and mental diseases, if not the cause of some of those diseases themselves.

A. W. WILCOX.

*A Criticism of Freud's Psycho-analytic Method [Die Psychoanalytische Methode Freud]. (Zt. f. die gesamte Neurol. u. Psychiat., Bd. i, Heft 1, 1910.) Isserlin, Max.*

This new journal is a successor to the *Zentralblatt für Nervenheilkunde und Psychiatrie*, founded by Dr. Kurella in 1890, and is edited by Prof. Alzheimer and Dr. Lewandowsky.

The first number opens well with several lengthy and valuable papers, as by Alzheimer on diagnostic difficulties in psychiatry, by Hasche-Klünder on the transformation of obsessions into insane delusions, and an elaborate attempt by Weiler to give greater precision to the measurement of the knee-jerk. Especially interesting, perhaps, is this very able and searing criticism of Freud's methods.

The discussion of Freud's views is not, Isserlin begins by stating, a mere fashion; it really concerns one of the weightiest problems which psycho-pathology has to-day to solve. The cardinal principles of our science are at stake, and the establishment of Freud's doctrines would mean an entire change in our conceptions. For ten years Freud's books found few readers; since 1905 they have become better known, and attracted many followers, while the experiments and observations on his lines at the Zürich Klinik, have especially aroused general attention. Isserlin carefully traces the growth of Freud's views and the considerable changes they have undergone.

Freud's psychology is specially marked by its peculiar conception of the unconscious; it is for him something incapable of consciousness, something that has been repressed, and it is of sexual character as to its content. The conscious is, for Freud, only a small and fragmentary part of psychic life, unintelligible and absurd until interpreted by what is going on in the unconscious sphere. When so interpreted its absurdities disappear, and life becomes rational. Neuroses, dreams, and delusions are masks that cover its real aims. They are, indeed, more than that. Neurosis, dream, insanity, are aids in the conflict of life, and so become intelligible. They are essential links in a chain which reaches through the entire psychic life. They are thus allied to philosophy and religion, and the psycho-analytic method leads to a comprehensive vision of the entire human soul and its final aims.

We cannot fail to admire this conception, Isserlin proceeds, and we might be content with that admiration if Freud had not applied his conception to definite empirical problems. Then we have to challenge his proofs. Proof is needed both as regards his facts and his method. The main alleged facts are the infantile sexual constitution and the mechanism of symptoms through suppression, conversion, and symbolisation. The method is the process by which this mechanism is uncovered and interpreted; it chiefly consists in encouraging free, uncompelled associations. The patient takes the leading part and says whatever comes into his head, however absurd; the physician is passive and supplies no clues, but he notes everything, and detects those significant points at which the patient experiences repulsion in expressing what comes into his head. That there are therapeutic advantages in this method Isserlin does not deny, but they are easily explained, and he points out that while the method has undergone radical changes in Freud's hands the same beneficial effects are still claimed, though if, as Freud now holds, psycho-neurotic conditions are constitutional, organically and chemically based, it is difficult to see how psychic methods can influence them. Isserlin argues, however, that Freud's method is not capable of proving that suppression, in the sense and to the extent claimed, actually takes place, and that there is no way of proving its validity. Even if suppression occurs it has not been established by Freud that his analytic

method necessarily leads to the suppressed material. There is no proof. The connection between the symptoms and the suppressed causal facts is pure hypothesis. The psycho-analytic method is not justified and its claims are untenable. Jung's assertion that by Freud's method it is possible to reconstruct the whole psychic complex out of every psychic particle is a dismal error.

Isserlin admits that Freud has, in the conception of "suppression," struck on a great problem, and that in a number of cases, both normal and pathological, it is a fact. The idea of "conversion," to a less extent, has its value, especially in the explanation of hysteria. The doctrine of the significance of sexuality in psycho-neurotic conditions is, however, unproved. Freud's declaration, "With a normal *vita sexualis* neurosis is impossible," should be changed to "In neurosis a normal *vita sexualis* is impossible"; *i.e.*, it is not the *vita sexualis* which is fundamental.

Isserlin believes that Freud's method of investigation and treatment by free association is useful. He recognises a real and positive kernel in Freud's doctrines. But he holds that while we must not grudge our tribute of admiration to Freud and his school for the energy they have displayed and for their self-sacrificing devotion to an unpopular cause, it is premature to discuss Freud's claims to our gratitude so long as his method involves a confusing perversion of scientific maxims.

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

*The Present Position of Psycho-therapeutics [Zum gegenwärtigen Stande der Psychotherapie]. (Münch. med. Woch., Nos. 3 and 4, 1910.) Löwenfeld, L.*

After a long period of neglect, psycho-therapeutic methods have during the past ten years become very prominent. In the present paper Löwenfeld attempts, in his usual judicial and discriminative manner, to estimate their value. He deals both with hypnotism and with the psycho-analytic method. He also touches on Bonnier's method of nasal galvanisation, which he regards as acting by suggestion.

The cause of therapeutical hypnotism Löwenfeld regards as now won, though it still has opponents. No one who has had any serious clinical experience of the method regards it as worthless, so far as he knows, while none of those who regard it as worthless have any real clinical experience in its use. Only a small proportion of German neurologists now reject hypnotism, though a large proportion seldom use it or use it only as a last resort. Many of them consider the method has dangers. In twenty years' experience, however, Löwenfeld has never seen any evil results, psychic or physical. He mentions that hypno-therapeutic methods are zealously cultivated in Russia, both by alienists and neurologists, and are found very successful in combating the alcoholism which abounds in that country.

Löwenfeld is thus entirely favourable to hypno-therapeutics, properly carried out in suitable cases. Towards Freud's psycho-analytic method his attitude is more complex. That method, though it is supported by an increasing band of ardent followers, has not conquered general favour, and is by many severely anathematised. Löwenfeld points out,