

conducted through it. I do not know of any method whereby we can determine whether the bruit results from actual disease of the mitral valve, or simply from dilatation.

Treatment : This may be taken up under three heads : Diet, regime and medicine. Elderly people with weak hearts should, if possible, take daily exercise. The character and the amount of the exercise should depend on the nature of the case. If the case is a severe one the patient should remain in bed when massage may be first adopted followed by the Schott movements. Those who can walk about should be advised not to take violent exercise and always to rest when any uncomfortable sensations are experienced in the chest. They should always avoid exercise after a meal. A moderate amount of business sufficient to keep the mind occupied is to be advised and worry should be as far as possible avoided.

The rules for diet advised by Balfour are excellent. The patient should take three meals a day. Dinner should always be taken in the middle of the day. The food should be of a simple nourishing character. We must always remember that the heart muscle is affected by the general nutrition of the body. The gastric intestinal system should be kept in a healthy condition. A distended stomach may directly influence the action of the heart. Fluids should be taken from a half to an hour before meals, and very little at meal times. Hot water, sipped slowly, by the patient, before rising in the morning, is an excellent habit. Old people with weak hearts should not spring out of bed quickly on awakening. They should wait until the machinery throughout the body is well in motion.

The bowels should be kept regular. I generally prescribe cascara as a laxative.

The remedies which I have found of the most use are potas, iodid, strychnine, digitalis, strophanthus and nitro-glycerine. DaCosta's tablets are often of service.

I often prescribe a mixture of nitro mur. dil. with tr. nux vomica, and give the nitro-glycerine in tablets separately. Digitalis and strophanthus should be given in moderate doses, and nitro-glycerine to unlock the arteries should be given at the same time.

General tonics and medicines to remedy diseased conditions of other parts should not be neglected.

In some cases of irregular action and pain, sedatives are necessary ; of these morphia is the most reliable. Chloral and chloroform require to be given with care. Paraldehyde is a reliable hypnotic when there is no pain, but the taste is an objection.

Very much can be done in these various ways to prolong life and to give the patient a certain degree of comfort.