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## *Original Contributions.*

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### HIGH VASCULAR TENSION.\*

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ONE who endeavors to keep up with the medical literature of the day can scarcely fail to be impressed with the attention being given to the subject of abnormally high vascular tension. Two decades ago the text-books hardly mentioned it, or did so casually, as a curious phenomenon; now it seems to engage the attention of the leading clinicians, the men whose articles are always too important to be neglected. As a type of the publications the writer has in mind may be mentioned the fine address given by Osborne at the Section on Pharmacology two years ago.

Abnormal vascular tension is a danger signal, directing attention to the presence of some condition that is irritating the heart, exciting it to undue action, or increasing its labors to an abnormal extent. The cause is some agent that directly irritates the walls of the arterioles and capillaries, increasing their contractile force, or else produces such increased contractility through irritations of the nervous centres, or the nerve trunks. The differentiation is yet to be made, and probably will wait till a new Virchow arises to redirect attention to the study of cell function, and the painfully slow progress of physiology, pathology and toxicology enables us to recognize the disordering effects of each toxic principle.

Wherever the action may be exerted, we know that the symptom is due to the circulation of certain toxic matters in the blood, toxins introduced from without, generated in the body, in

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