

## ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS

## HEART MURMURS.\*

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ATTENTION should be directed to the fact the war and the enlistment of so many men had compelled the medical profession to give much attention to the heart. The lecturer emphasized the changes of opinion on heart disease that had taken place since he was a student in 1886-90. Further marked advances had been made in the methods of examining the cardio-vascular system. Angiophysiology and angipathology had been extensively studied and our knowledge on these subjects vastly enlarged.

To illustrate how rapidly progress has been making in clinical angiology in the last thirty years, I need only remind you (1) the transfer of emphasis (as far as the prognosis of the cardiopathies is concerned) from the consideration of the heart-valves to the consideration of the heart-muscle; (2) the insight into the nature and the significance of the cardiac arrhythmias that has followed upon studies of the initiation and conduction of impulses to cardiac contraction in man and in animals made possible by sphygmography and electrocardiography; (3) the greater precision outlining the exact position, form and size of the several chambers of the heart and of the different portions of the aorta afforded by better methods of percussion and especially by orthodiagraphy and teleroentgenography; (4) the ease by which the blood-pressure, both systolic and diastolic, may now be clinically determined, and (5) the recognition of the fact that profound disturbances of circulatory function may have an extracardiac or an extravascular origin, resulting from influences arriving in the heart or the walls of the vessels from distant organs either by a neural pathway (vagal or sympathetic) or by a hæmal pathway (bacteria; toxines; hormones and other metabolic products). Surely, the examiner of the heart of the recruit to-day faces his problem with an attitude and a preparation that differ markedly from those of the examiner in previous wars! Moreover, the problem with which the examiner of candidates for military service is confronted is very different to-day from what it was formerly. The vast organization of war in our time involves not only a large number of men, but also a greater division of labour among the men within the army than was ever before necessary. Whereas, formerly none but men capable of undergoing the most severe bodily exertion dare be admitted to the army, to-day army organizations include an enormous number of positions that do not entail severe bodily exertion, and it is real economy to utilize for

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