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On the use of Digitalis as a Cardiac Tonic, with an illustrative case.—

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The following case tends to confirm the opinion entertained by many late writers as to the use of digitalis. Dr Fuller, the ablest supporter of the recent view, asserts "that when the pulse is feeble and irregular, digitalis is of all remedies the most useful," and that the drug stimulates the muscular tissue of the heart while at the same time moderating its action.

On the 18th of July I was requested to see Mrs. M. of Trenton in consultation with Dr. Lister. The history of the case made mention of repeated attacks of rheumatism several of which were attended by cardiac complication. This summer, when far advanced in pregnancy, anasarca came on, and though relieved for a time by means of diuretics and purgatives, proved extremely troublesome. It continued after the birth of her child. Shortly after her confinement a few days ago, a frightful attack of cardiac asthma with extreme faintness and coldness of the extremities was only relieved by free stimulation and counter irritation over the heart; a second attack had been partially relieved, but the following is a picture of her condition when first seen by me.

A thin, pale, delicate looking woman was propped up by pillows in a rocking chair. She was sitting with the shoulders elevated, stooping forwards. The face had a most anxious weary expression, the eyes slightly prominent. There was a slight lividity of the lips and a change of colour in the finger-nails. Respiration was laboured and uneasy, all the accessory muscles appearing in action. She could only speak in a whispered broken manner, with a gasp between each word. From the long continued distress in breathing, the fatigue was so great that her head would occasionally fall forward on her chest in an uneasy sleep, from which some increase in the dyspnoea would waken her.