

that the course of trade has changed and that his business is gradually slipping away from him. He may for years struggle against fate, during which time depressing mental emotion may first produce an irregularity of the heart which ends in dilatation. The lowered nutrition resulting from imperfect digestion and assimilation at the same time favors the process of weakening the heart muscle.

Instead of this gradual change, or perhaps in addition to it, a sudden and violent emotion of grief or joy may produce a rapid dilatation in one whom myocardium is already in a state of degeneration. I have observed cases in which a business failure has had a most decided effect on the heart, producing irregular action, a weak first sound and some enlargement.

When such patients as I have described over-exert themselves as in running for a street car or in lifting heavy weights, sudden failure may take place, and in some cases death results. Over-exertion may produce the same effect when the myocardium is diseased in other ways, as in fatty degeneration.

The habits of a patient in the latter half of life are the frequent cause of cardiac dilatation. Over-eating and drinking by distending the blood vessels give the heart an extra amount of work which may lead to dilatation and hypertrophy. Over-indulgence in alcoholic beverages by producing arterial disease and thus obstructing the circulation tends to changes in the myocardium. Disease of the coronary arteries and the direct effect of alcohol on the heart muscle fibre favors degeneration.

The amount of alcohol required to produce such changes varies much in different individuals. The quantity per day, which would have no effect whatever on the majority, will have a decidedly bad effect on some individuals. Hereditary predisposition has a very important bearing in this connection. I am of opinion that those whose ancestry have shown a tendency to arterio-sclerosis, and other conditions of general fibrosis should either be total abstainers or very moderate drinkers.

The coronary vessels are sometimes found in an advanced state of sclerosis when the other arteries of the body are fairly healthy. This may occur in patients who do not indulge too freely and is probably the result of hereditary predisposition.

The effect of tobacco in producing heart disease in the latter half of life has been forcibly impressed upon me by cases which I have lately observed. In my opinion very few who have used tobacco freely can continue the habit with impunity long after the age of fifty. I have known many who have given up the indulgence on account of