

rest ; no raising the head, no excitement ; he must have the most perfect physiological repose you can devise. And why ? In order to give the heart all the rest possible, to make the intervals between the systoles as long as you can, to keep down blood pressure as far as is practicable. The endocardium when inflamed has dilated vessels and effused lymph and leucocytes in its deep layer. The valve cusps, being thickened and softened, become unable to withstand the pressure waves produced by a powerful systole ; it is possible, in fact, that the regurgitation which occurs, and which alarms us so much, is in itself a beneficial and a protective arrangement of nature lessening the pressure on the cusp of the valve. You know that there are no vessels in the valve cusp itself, but there are many connective tissue canals ; these are affected by the inflammatory process, and from them are effused those vegetations which project from the inner border of the free margin of the valve. Well, in order to protect the damaged valve during its period of infirmity and to give a chance to the restorative processes of nature to repair the damage done, we must give the heart a long and complete rest of several weeks, say five or six at least. (*b*) Next, is it possible to give any help to the natural powers in their strife with the rheumatic dyscrasia in the endocardium ? Can we give Nature local help against rheumatic ailments anywhere, in the joints, for example ? Yes we can unquestionably ; by the application of small blisters close to or just above a joint we can almost with certainty remove rheumatic swelling and pain. No one who has witnessed the results of the late Dr. Herbert Davies' method of treating acute rheumatism by blisters can doubt this for a moment. How is this relief afforded by these very small blisters ? I believe it is solely through their action on the cutaneous nerves and by the resulting stimulation of the trophic nerves of the affected part ; that, I believe, is the explanation of the efficacy of every form of so-called "counter-irritation." We get a stimulation of trophic and vasomotor nerves, and in consequence extra nutritive and reparative activity, and restoration takes place which without such aid might not have been accomplished. We see the same principle exemplified in a most simple and rudimentary form in the healing of an ulcer ; if nature is making no progress towards a cure, we stimulate the indolent tissues by applying such an agent as silver nitrate or some other excitant, and then healing and cicatrization begin.

Can we in any way stimulate the trophic and vasomotor nerves of the heart ? Is there any channel by which we can reach an organ which seems so peculiarly inaccessible ? Yes, I think there is one way, and only one. Every viscus has