

treat it? Let us consider the same condition occurring in the left ventricle and you will do one of two things: you will open the blood-vessels and so overcome the resistance, or else you will increase the propelling power of the heart, improving the cardiac contraction. The same therapeutic methods are applied to the right heart as to the left. Some good authorities say that the application of medicines, administered for the purpose of increasing the heart's power, have a better effect upon the right than upon the left heart. Whatever agent that affects the left ventricle will affect the right ventricle. When we have conditions in the right similar to those occurring in the left heart, even in case of valvular lesions, I claim they should be treated in the same manner. How shall we open up the blood-vessels? There is a class of remedies called the vaso dilators which will do this, and they should be used continuously. Of all the agents, one of the best is mercury in some form. Mercury has several indications in pneumonic inflammations; it acts upon the portal circulation and relieves the engorgement; also, it is an intestinal antiseptic. The best physiological action of mercury, though, is its dilating effect upon the vascular system; it relaxes the arterioles and so relieves the burden of the right ventricle. Another class of remedies having the same effect as vaso-dilators may be mentioned, such as the nitrites—the nitrite of glycerine, the nitrite of sodium, belladonna, atropin, etc. For increasing the propelling power of the heart, digitalis is indicated. Many are opposed to the use of digitalis in pneumonia, but when it is indicated nothing is better. To give when it is *not* indicated is a pernicious habit, and should be most heartily condemned; this statement applies to its use in all cardiac affections. It is useless to increase the propelling power of the heart with digitalis, forcibly emptying its cavities, without at the same time relaxing the arterial system; for that reason digitalis should never be given alone, but in combination with some of the vaso-dilators; otherwise, the drug is dangerous. The indications for alcohol are similar to those for digitalis. They may be used too early and in too large doses, having a depressing effect or exhausting the stored-up energy of the heart when it should be held in reserve until later in the case. Some present may say that I have placed this subject upon a mechanical basis. I have not. It makes no difference what form of pneumonia you have to deal with, or what changes are brought about by the infectious agent, or the amount of intoxication, the changes taking