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Original Communications.

Cardiac Weakness in Elderly People.

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In this short paper I shall limit myself to a discussion of the cardiac weakness and dilatation which result from senile changes or rather from those conditions and influences which affect patients in the latter half of life. Balfour has referred to the fact that the heart is one of the organs which under normal conditions is least affected by old age. The liver and kidneys may undergo senile atrophy when the heart may present little change other than a slight increase in the thickness of the wall of the left ventricle.

It must be remembered that the condition of the normal old man, if I may be permitted to use that term, is one of health and not disease. An old man of ninety-two whom I frequently see often, exclaims: "I am astonished that I feel so well, never better in my life."

There are, however, many circumstances in the life of the busy man which, acting upon the heart, produce greater or less dilatation. Among the most frequent of these are depressing mental emotions, which may produce their effects gradually or suddenly.

The man, for instance, who by industry and hard work has built up a large business may, when he reaches the age of fifty or sixty, find