

the arm, and a reading takes only a minute or two minutes to do.

When a mercury stands about 120-130 mm. the healthy pulse is compressed. I am not prepared to explain the physics of the blood-pressure; this instrument does not measure blood-pressure by compressibility: the blood pressure inside the artery is not actually 130 or 160 or 200 mm. of mercury, but these figures give us a standard of comparison which seems to work just as if they did, and the artery that requires 160 or 190 mm. to compress it, has apparently a pressure relatively raised. The compressibility of a vessel seems to be a good indicator of what we mean when we say "blood-pressure."

It will be gathered from what has been said about "blood-pressure" that if we agree that blood-pressure is the degree of distension of a vessel wall relative to the amount of blood in the vessel, that this instrument does not really measure "blood-pressure"; yet it is scarcely the less useful on that account. The real physical blood-pressure of a normal man is 90 to 120 mm. of mercury, and the normal man's "compressibility" is about the same figure; but violent exercise raises a healthy man's blood-pressure (in the true sense) about 20 mm. beyond which the heart is in danger of extreme distension; yet in many cases of damaged vessels and heart the instrument records 280 mm. of Hg., and there is good authority for the statement that it is utterly impossible for the actual blood-pressure to rise to anything like this degree. In other words, an instrumental pressure of say 300 mm. would prove to be really say 140 or 150. One must then interpret a reading thus: "If the instrument says the patient's blood-pressure so called is 280, the true blood-pressure while not anything like this is probably dangerously raised; low but abnormal readings mean thickened artery walls, and with normal 130, a reading of 150 would probably mean the difference between disease and health: whereas in a chronic case, a difference of 20, say between 200 and 220, might not be appreciable to either patient or physician by any symptom or sign. The method by which the instrument can be used to indicate "diastolic" or minimum and