

cinal agent. If there are some practitioners who have a dread of this drug, there are on the other hand others who have not a sufficient fear of it. Any one who has witnessed the reckless way in which it is sometimes given to advanced cardiac cases, must be convinced that not all cases of cardiac diseases die from the effects of their disease, but that some deaths are indirectly, if not directly, due to the too lavish or too long continued use of this agent. The mistakes of the unscientific physician are hidden even from himself in these cases.

So long as digitalis increases the quantity of urine it is quite safe to proceed with its administration, but when the amount commences rapidly to diminish then it is a sign that the increased blood pressure is giving place to a diminished pressure and that the saturation point has been reached. If in spite of this warning the drug be continued, the quantity of urine will still continue to decrease, until finally it becomes almost completely arrested. The pulse from being slow becomes weak, frequent and irregular, and the heart sounds are reduced to a "toneless tic-tac." When the condition of things just described has been reached, you can readily understand that a few more doses are all that is necessary to bring the heart to a standstill.

Digitalis should never be pushed to the extent of quickening the pulse after it has considerably slowed it. A preternatural slowing of the pulse should be as much a warning of saturation as the diminished quantity of urine. The occurrence of nausea or vomiting after the physiological effects are induced should also be taken as a symptom denoting that the safe saturation dose has been reached.

A diminution in the quantity of urine excreted, an unusual slowing of the pulse and the occurrence of nausea or vomiting, are then the symptoms that indicate that the point has been reached, past which it is not safe to go. Up to the production of these symptoms, nothing but good is obtainable. The first symptom usually of saturation is the slowing of the pulse, and it may be even twenty-four or forty-eight hours after the drug is stopped before its diuretic effects are manifested. It may