

others the symptoms give evidence of some disorder elsewhere in the body, or of a constitutional change in which there is no apparent alteration in the heart structure.

Organic diseases, again, may be divided into two groups: those that are caused by an inflammation of the membrane that lines and envelops the heart and those that are owing to the slow degeneration of the cardiac muscle. The inflammatory affections of the heart occur usually as complications or accompaniments of rheumatism, scarlet fever and other acute infectious diseases, whereas the degenerative diseases may follow typhoid fever, diphtheria, influenza and other depressing diseases, but especially occur in consequence of overwork, worry, overeating, especially of flesh foods, athletic pursuits carried to an extreme—the same things that are often responsible for high blood pressure and arteriosclerosis.

The functional disorders are usually marked by a disturbed heart rhythm—a pulse that is too rapid or too slow, intermittent or irregular. They are the least serious of all the diseases of the heart, yet they alarm the sufferer most because the symptoms are so conspicuous. They are often caused by an overloaded stomach, by acute indigestion, by excessive smoking, especially of cigarettes, and by various nervous affections. They are often useful danger signals, calling the attention of the patient to a disease that is beginning elsewhere in the body, or to some hygienic fault that may lead to serious diseases of the heart or other organs.

There is another form of functional cardiac trouble in which the heart is simply "weak." Such a heart has strength only for the everyday needs of the body, and has no reserve force to meet any emergencies that may arise, such as acute illness or unwonted muscular or mental strain. It is usually associated with general muscular weakness and lack of physical tone, and always with abnormally low blood pressure. The low pressure is partly owing to the fact that the heart is too weak to propel the blood with sufficient force to fill the arteries, and partly owing to the want of muscular tone in the arteries themselves.

#### Growing Old Too Early

We have learned something about the meaning of high blood pressure and arteriosclerosis; next we are to consider what the perils are. They take the form of so-called "degenerative disorders," especially the degeneration of the organs that must bear the brunt of the wear and tear to which the system is subjected. Those organs are especially the heart, the liver, and the kidneys.

The willing heart has to work twice as hard as it should in order to force the blood through the vessels that have become, or are becoming, like contracted and brittle pipstems, instead of the supple and elastic tubes that healthy arteries are. But in spite of the heart's best efforts, the stream of blood is sluggish and reluctant, so that the poisons that are formed in the system are not flushed out and carried away as they should be. Then the liver and kidneys must redouble their exertions in order to get rid of the waste matter. Sooner or later they all grow tired, they do their work more and more imperfectly, the poisons accumulate in the blood, and a condition of conscious ill health begins.

The heart is at the pumps all the time, and is the chief sufferer; in many cases it is attacked by valvular disease, or angina pectoris, or it becomes ruptured. Other grave results may be Bright's disease, cirrhosis of the liver, hemorrhage, which may take place into the brain with fatal results, and innumerable other disorders, nervous and physical, from which no portion of the body is exempt.

You must not think that the first stages of this unhappy condition are necessary disagreeable. A person with the first signs of high blood pressure often feels stimulated; he actually feels better than he does when the first efforts at reduction are successful. But that stage is soon followed by one in which the patient feels generally out of sorts; there is "nothing much" the matter, and

yet he never feels quite well. At the same time he often resents every suggestion that he change his mode of life. He tries to hide from himself the fact that he loses breath after slight exertion, or that he is constantly troubled with a worrying headache, or that he is beginning to lie awake for hours before it is time to get up. But that is the time—and the only time—when treatment will help him.

#### Had One After All

Jimmie had always lamented the fact that he had no grandmother. He was quite satisfied with the quality of his parents, and he was not especially anxious on the whole to have any more people about the house than already lived there,

but somehow or other it irked him very much to think that other boys had something that he had not. There were Billie Robinson and Sidney Grant, both chums of his—they both had grandmothers, and it didn't seem exactly fair that he was deprived of one.

One day, however, he had a happy thought.

"Ma," he said, "what does the word grand mean, anyhow?"

"Why, lofty, beautiful, noble, sublime," replied his mother.

A broad smile wreathed the boy's face as he jumped up and down on the floor in an ecstasy of glee.

"Hurrah!" he cried. "I have got one after all."

"One what, dear?" asked his mother.

"A grandmother," he replied. "Where is she, dear?" his mother inquired.

"Why, you're it, mother," said the boy. "You're my mother and you're lofty, beautiful, noble and sublime—especially the beautiful!"

Whatever the quality of the lad's logic, his course of reasoning made one "grandmother" very happy.

#### Soliloquy of an Heiress

By W. B. Kerr

Howe'er it be, it seems to me,  
The foreign noble is a fluke;  
A coronet might not be bad,  
But heav'n preserve us from the duke!



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