

CARDIAC HYPERTROPHY—TREATMENT.

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I confess that when I undertook to speak on the treatment of hypertrophy without or apart from valvular disease, I thought my work would be a comparatively easy one. When, however, I began to look into the subject I found comparatively little on this special form of heart disease, and what I did meet with was so mixed with the treatment of valvular hypertrophy that it was a somewhat tedious task to separate it. When accomplished it was not satisfactory, for after all the treatment of cardiac hypertrophy is much the same, no matter what is the cause. At the outset the inquirer is met with the question, "With what hope may the treatment of an hypertrophied heart be undertaken?" Can we control the nourishment of the heart by any means possessed by our art? Some have maintained that this can be done, but the majority hold a contrary opinion. The signs which were considered as indicating the former have been proved to be misleading and fallacious. Thus the impulse may be reduced in force and extent, the first sound changed in its character and the area of cardiac dulness lessened. Notwithstanding all these signs the hypertrophy remains the same, and the apparent diminution has been brought about by disengagement of the right cavities.

Walsh says that the theoretical indication is to tranquilize the heart by diminishing the quantity without deteriorating the quality of the blood. For this purpose he recommends an occasional venesection from the arm, taking at each time from four to eight ounces, at intervals of from two to six weeks, according to the robustness of the patient. Care, however, must be taken not to induce