

finds that among others the mucus of the gastro-intestinal tract and of the vagina, the secretions from nasal polypi, synovia, and cartilage undergoing mucoid metamorphosis, turn yellow with safranin, while blood serum, fibrin, albumin, and peptone invariably give the red color.

The test, as a means of differentiating sputum as an aid to diagnosis, it seems to us, is well worthy of further trial, and it may be, too, that subsequently wider application of the principle may be found in the differentiation by color-reactions of different substances now grouped together under the generic name of the "nucleo-albumins." *Medical News.*

Cardiac Asthenia or Heart-exhaustion.

Death sometimes occurs without more obvious cause than heart failure. Such an event may be brought about as the result of inflammatory or degenerative changes in the myocardium, or possibly through involvement of the cardiac nervous apparatus. Further, a heart may be intrinsically weak, the myocardium participating in the lack of tone that affects the muscular system generally.

In an address recently delivered before the Medical Classes of the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. J. M. Da Costa* made an important contribution to this hitherto rather unelaborated subject. In this paper Dr. Da Costa deals with the feeble heart resulting from enervation or asthenia, on the one hand, and with that due to atonicity or intrinsic muscular weakness, on the other hand. In the first of these states, which usually develops in the sequence of nervous strain, the action of the heart is feeble and accelerated; the pulse is small and compressible; there is a sense of uneasiness in the precordium, but rarely actual pain; the extremities are often cold; the temperature is likely to be subnormal. The capillary circulation is poor and the skin pale, though occasionally injected or flushed. The cardiac impulse is feeble. The area of percussion dulness is unaltered. The rhythm of the heart is rarely disturbed. The first sound is short, feeble, indistinct, lacking in volume, obscure; the second unchanged. The breathing is

* "Cardiac Asthenia or Heart-exhaustion," *American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, April, 1894, p. 361.

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