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ADDRESS IN MEDICINE.

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THE CIRCULATION VIEWED FROM THE PERIPHERY.

There are numerous treatises on diseases of the heart and aorta, but until recent years a careful study of the peripheral circulation has been largely left to physiologists and pathologists.

I have previously asserted that diseases of the heart most frequently arise from causes acting on the periphery, and hence there is here no room for specialism. The man who only studies the circulation with the aid of a stethoscope is a positive danger to society.

The capillaries through which the interchange of nutritive pabulum and gases takes place between the blood and tissues, play a most important rôle in the animal economy. Yet they have received very inadequate attention from clinicians. They constitute a vast filter bed for conveying nutritive material and oxygen to the tissues and for removing waste products therefrom. These little vessels are of extreme tenuity and delicacy, consisting of a single layer of endothelium, yet they are much stronger than most people imagine, and are capable of standing considerable internal pressure.

The capillary bed is a vast territory which pervades every tissue and organ of the body, and so numerous are these little vessels that it would be difficult to stick the point of a needle in any vascular area without wounding one or more, but in neurotic individuals you may wound many such vessels without drawing blood. In very plethoric individuals and in cases of polycythaemia