

VALVULAR DISEASE.

A VALUABLE article has recently been published upon the varieties of disease of the heart which are met with in ordinary hospital work. The fact has been emphasized, which previous investigations had elicited, that about one in every ten of hospital medical patients suffer from some heart affection; and the equally important fact is again pointed out, which previous observers had noticed, that less than half the patients who complain of heart symptoms have any heart disease—more than half having only some functional disorder. So far as the separate valves of the heart are concerned, the figures once more prove that the mitral valves are the most frequently affected, and next to these the aortic valves most often suffer; also, that the left side of the heart is almost invariably, and the right side most rarely, injured when disease is present. The reason for this is obvious—the right half of the organ has only to pump the blood through the lungs, whereas upon the left side of the heart falls the entire stress of the general circulation; and, therefore, injuries to the left side are infinitely more likely to occur. With regard to the difference between functional disturbance and organic disease of the heart, the figures, to which we refer, once more illustrate the well-known fact that men are more subject to the latter than the former; but that amongst women it is much more usual to find that heart symptoms are due to some temporary disturbance than to the presence of actual disease. For example, out of five women suffering from palpitation, pain, or other heart symptoms, statistics show that three will have some disorder of the nervous or digestive system, and only two will possess actual disease of the organ. The treatment of these cases of valvular disease has greatly altered during the last quarter of a century, since it became recognized that they are not immediately or necessarily fatal, and that, in fact, the disease of the valve itself may be safely neglected, if the strength of the heart's action can be maintained.

Most doctors know of patients who, twenty years ago, were supposed to be in imminent danger; but who, by efficient safeguards against illness, and proper care of the general health, are even stronger now than when their disease was first discovered. The old proverb, that "threatened men live long," is rarely so true as in many heart cases.

The Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada.

IT is not generally known that the scheme for commemorating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in Canada—by the formation of a Victorian Order of Nurses to nurse the poor—first originated in the Women's National Council of the Dominion, and is therefore in Canada, as it was at home, the women's tribute of honour to the First Lady of the land. It is satisfactory, therefore, to note that many members of the National Council of Women have been placed on the Provisional Committee, of which Her Excellency the Countess of Aberdeen is President. A most interesting meeting took place recently in Toronto, when two hundred matrons and nurses were invited by Lady Aberdeen to talk the matter over with her, and hear from Dr. Worcester, of Waltham, Mass., something of the proposed organization. Lady Aberdeen announced that Miss McLeod, formerly of St. John, N.B., and at present Lady Superintendent at the District Nursing Home at Waltham, would undertake the duties of General Lady Superintendent for the first three months, so that the new scheme would be started under the direction of a lady with wide experience in the special branch of district nursing. The nurses present were deeply interested in the new organization, and expressed warm sympathy with its aims. The objects of the Order are:—

(a) To supply nurses thoroughly trained in hospital and district nursing, and, subject to one central authority, for the nursing of the sick, who are otherwise unable to obtain trained nursing in their own homes, both in town and country districts:

(b) To bring local associations for supplying district nurses into association, by affiliation, with the Order which bears Her Majesty's name, and to afford pecuniary or other assistance to such local associations:

(c) To maintain, as a first necessity, a high standard of efficiency for all district nursing:

(d) To assist in providing small cottage hospitals or homes.

DUTIES OF CHIEF LADY SUPERINTENDENT.

1. To carry out the directions of the board of governors for the efficient working of the Order, under the direction of the Central Executive Council.

2. To recommend to the Central Executive Council candidates for admission to the Order.

3. To test the efficiency of candidates for the work of the Order.

4. To inspect the work of all nurses and homes belonging to the Order, and to make reports to the board of management of local associations on the work and homes of the nurses.

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