

**ON DIABETES AND  
ITS CONNECTION  
WITH HEART DISEASE**

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On Diabetes and Its Connection with Heart Disease by Jacques Mayer

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**JACQUES MAYER**

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*Families R.S.S.*

ON  
DIABETES AND ITS CONNECTION  
WITH HEART DISEASE.

BY  
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CARLSBAD.

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## PREFACE.

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THIS paper is partly reprinted from the *British Medical Journal* for May 5th, 1888. Want of space prevented me from giving a full account of my researches into the subject of heart disease in connection with diabetes, in the columns of that periodical; and I now beg to submit it to the Profession in a separate form, in the hope that it will tend to amplify our knowledge of the various forms which diabetes is apt to assume in practice, and which have engaged my special attention during my twenty years' practice at Carlsbad.

ITALIENISCHES HAUS,  
ALTI WIESE, CARLSBAD,  
May, 1888.

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ON  
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A GLANCE at the literature of diabetes, which more especially since the memorable discoveries of Claude Bernard has attained very large proportions, shows us that singularly little is as yet known on certain affections of the heart and blood-vessels, which are apt to occur in the course of that disease. This may, perhaps, be accounted for by the circumstance that those who have occupied themselves with investigating the pathology of diabetes, seem to have given their chief attention to the examination of those organs which experimental physiology had shown to be more particularly involved in its production.

Thus we find that Seegen\* in his book on diabetes, containing a record of 140 cases, says but little on the condition of the heart and blood-vessels in his patients. In one of his cases, that of

\* Seegen, "Der Diabetes Mellitus." Leipzig, 1870.

a man aged 58, the right side of the heart was found hypertrophied; in another there was a feeling of congestion in the cardiac region; a third was subject to angina pectoris, although the heart was believed to be normal; in a fourth he found slight insufficiency of the mitral valve, and finally, in a fifth case, a systolic murmur was heard over the left ventricle. In other six cases the heart is simply stated to have been normal. This author does not say a word about any anatomical lesions of the organs of circulation in diabetes, in his chapter on morbid anatomy, where reference is made to thirty cases examined by Rokitanaky and a few other anatomists.

In Cantani's clinical lectures on diabetes\* there is also a great dearth of information about affections of the heart and blood-vessels. In 220 cases referred to by him, there was only one with valvular disease, which latter, however, had already existed before symptoms of diabetes had set in. In 150 cases no mention whatever is made of the physical condition of the heart. Out of five instances in which an autopsy was obtained, the heart was found small and atrophied in four, while in one its size was normal, but the right ventricle was found somewhat dilated.

\* Cantani, "Der Diabetes Mellitus." Translated from the Italian by Dr. S. Hahn, Berlin, 1877.

Again, Senator\* states that no prominent or frequent symptoms are to be observed in the sphere of the heart and blood-vessels in diabetes. In very obese subjects affected with diabetes, the heart has been found surrounded by fat, as is also seen in others who are not diabetic,† after protracted ill-health; while, where nutrition in general had suffered, it has been found atrophied. The arteries have sometimes shown atheromatous degeneration, but not very frequently, and Dickinson thinks this process to be rare in diabetics. X

Donkin,‡ following some other English authors, has drawn attention to atrophy and fatty degeneration of the cardiac muscle found in diabetes. He observed that, in consequence of insufficient propelling power of the heart, hydrops occasionally supervened, or that there was sudden death by syncope. There was frequently great wasting of muscular tissue, and the pulse was very small and quick.

R. Schmitz§ describes a group of symptoms in advanced cases of severe diabetes, consisting of shortness of breath, sudden anorexia, vertigo, som-

\* Senator, "Diabetes Mellitus," in Ziemssen's "Handbook," vol. xiii., p. 450. 1879.

† Ibid., p. 415.

‡ "On the Relation between Diabetes and Food." London, 1875, p. 136.

§ R. Schmitz, "Berl. Klin. Wochenschrift," 1876, 13, 5.