

dency upon the bowels. Indian corn on the other hand, is very rich in fat, and might probably be more extensively used in this country, with great advantage.—All travellers in America dwell with much gusto on the delicious cakes of Indian corn that are there served up at breakfast.

Although we derive the elements of the fat, which enters into the composition of every tissue of the body except the enamel of the teeth, and constitutes the bulk of the brain and nerves from various forms of fat that present themselves both in the animal and the vegetable kingdom, yet the modifications these endure before they take their new place in our frame, is much greater than any which the other primary constituents undergo. In the brain it is found in the form of two acids, the one called cerebrie, the other oleophosphoric; the latter possesses the interesting property of being resolved by heat and water into Elaine and Phosphoric acid. This fact may throw a light upon the important observations recently made by Dr. Bence Jones, upon the amount of phosphates in the urine being the measure of the waste of the nervous system.

It does seem strange that with such facts as this one and many others staring us in the face, to shew the immense value of fat as a source of nourishment to all parts of the body, and chiefly to the most noble part of all the brain, it should be the fashion of chemical physiologists to speak of fat as if it served no other purpose than to be burned at the lungs to warm the rest of the body. Surely the curious fact of hibernation alone might teach us that fat went far to sustain life, for from the store accumulated in themselves during summer and autumn, must the beasts and other animals which pass the winter in sleep, without food, draw the whole nourishment during the months of their retirement from active life. To deny the name of nourishment to that which sustains the life of an animal, involves a paradox; and in this instance the paradox results from an exclusive application of the term nourishment to substances which supply the ma-

terials for constructing the fleshy parts of our tabernacle, and ignoring the existence of the earth and fat, which are essential to the formation of the organs of sensation and locomotion.

The sophism implied in this paradox lies at the root of the entire misrepresentation of the effects of alcohol, by those who deny to them any nutritive qualities; and as the subject is one of unsurpassed importance and interest to us as physicians, it will be right to enquire fully into the properties of alcoholic drinks, regarded, not as medicinal stimulants, but as articles of strictly dietetic or nutritious use.

The ground we are now entering on, demands from us a most dispassionate investigation, for it is beset with difficulties on all sides, and requires that we should at the outset clearly define what are our special duties in this matter, as contradistinguished from those who are most prominent in leading public opinion upon it.

To those who devote themselves to the arrest or mitigation of the frightful evils produced by intoxication, whether by popular lectures, or by addresses from the pulpit, or by the organization of societies, we wish to express the deep sense of our obligations, for their noble and patriotic efforts, and in so far as it is in our power to advance the great cause of temperance, in our capacity of citizens, it is surely our bounden duty to do so. But the restraint of excess is a wholly different question from the proper use of any article of food; and if out of dread of offering an obstruction to the promoters of a great philanthropic movement, we shirk a candid investigation of the alleged benefits to be derived from a temperate indulgence in all the drinks they find it expedient to condemn, we should be abdiquating our position as advisers to those who consult us as to what is best for them, and be betraying their interest and our duty for the promotion of a remote and hypothetical good. We have no right to sacrifice our patients upon the altar of temperance. There is no more inconsistency in promoting the cause of temperance, and recommending