

ardent spirits, of which whisky is a type, contains from 45 to 60 per cent. of alcohol. Among the wines it is only old Port that contains more than 17 per cent. of alcohol. It is therefore apparent that these "nerve stimulants" and "blood purifiers" out-rank wines in the amount of alcohol, while Ayer's Sarsaparilla reaches almost the proportion that should classify it as "ardent." No wonder great benefit is claimed for these universally used "remedies." The man or woman who is benefited by a draught of "Schnapps" cannot fail of rejuvenation by a dose of these medical "Schnapps." Better take your whisky straight.—*Medical Arena.*

### THE ABUSE OF DIGITALIS.

W. T. English says (*Med. and Surg. Rep.; Medicine*) that digitalis is one of the most abused drugs of the materia medica. It appears that in the minds of a large number of the medical profession the pathological range of its application has no limitations. There is a very general want of agreement as to the conditions in which it is applicable, as well as the amount that should be considered a proper dose. Notwithstanding accepted theories and well established facts which should control its exhibition, digitalis has been exhibited in every malady in the catalogue of diseases, and is consequently made the subject of unwarrantable criticism and ever-increasing abuse.

Because it is claimed that in digitalis we have a drug which increases the force of the heart and contracts the vessels of the periphery—except those of the kidneys—it is employed indiscriminately as an ideal diuretic in Bright's disease, notwithstanding the contra-indications observable in capillary tension and cordy pulse. Such irrational therapeutics can result in naught but harm. It seems almost foolhardy to use it in chronic nephritis accompanied with high peripheral blood-pressure, as it usually is, unless preceded by a short course of nitro-glycerin to relieve the peripheral tension.

A fact that is not only forgotten but frequently ignored is, that in normal conditions the heart muscle adjusts itself to the demands made upon it. In those whose vocations force them into the extremes of bodily exertion, the heart becomes muscular in proportion to the demands. In response to temporary or protracted influences that perturb the heart and induce over-exercise without diminution of tonicity of the myocardium, as in functional or reflex disorders, the same result follows. Digitalis is often administered under these circumstances to steady or quiet the cardiac tumult. In the author's opinion, this is a flagrant abuse of a good medicine and an