

patient at the time of administration, as well as the time and mode of giving it, with all the proper tests should be reduced to a system or science as is the case with the administration of other drugs, else the prescription is mere empiricism; and, where it forms part of a plan of Hospital treatment, a careful and comprehensive set of observations should be made with regard to its administration in various classes and conditions of disease, to shew the beneficial results, if any, obtained from the practice in the way of more perfect recoveries and lessened mortality, or the opposite; else the whole system of alcoholic medication is a tissue of fallacy, and based upon suppositions and deceptive theories which have not their demonstration in fact, and are, therefore, mire and quicksands to those who put dependence in them.

Alcohol used externally to fresh wounds, cuts and amputations, affords a valuable dressing by its power of solidifying the albuminous tissues, thus forming a superficial covering better than collodion. It may be useful also in cases of temporary prostration, where there is no actual wasting disease, and in great and sudden prostration from severe mechanical injuries, and in *syncope from sudden loss of blood*, (as after some operations, in uterine hemorrhage, &c.,) fright, or from a sudden violent effort, but a continuance of the remedy would invariably produce increased weakness. If given during the chills of ague, they only increase the reaction or fever, and in diarrhoea or dysentery, if they do not at once relieve, they are sure to aggravate by increasing the irritation in the gastric or intestinal mucous membrane. Dr. Paris (author of *Dietetics*) says: "their habitual use induces more than half of all our chronic diseases." They are often taken for weakness to give strength, and many feeble persons, especially ladies,

liquid. Absolute alcohol being 100, and water 0. This is the most convenient plan; or by Beaumé's, or the Pharmaceutical Hydrometer, which indicate at the same time, the specific gravity and percentage of alcohol by weight at a temperature of 15° c., or 60° fh. Second, by the *Vaporimeter* of M. Gresler, Bonn, which indicates the amount of alcohol by the tension of vapour at a certain temperature (173°) from the fluid containing alcohol, forcing up a column of mercury. Third, Dr. Parkes' method by the process of evaporation and the use of a urinometer. Fourth, by the alcoholometer, as used by Ure.

The percentage being ascertained it is easy to calculate the dose of absolute alcohol administered by the rule of three as follows. A bottle of sherry, 3 half pints, containing 24 oz., of a strength of from 15 to 25 per cent. Say 20 per cent. Then as 100 : 20 :: 24 = 4.80 oz. of absolute alcohol in 24 oz. Now in each wineglass of 2 oz., this would give .40 of an oz. of absolute alcohol administered in each wineglass of such wine. And so with other beverages.

have been taking wine, beer (ale or porter) or spirits for years to strengthen them, and still they are as feeble as ever. The remedy in such cases is discontinuance of stimulants, and substitution of wholesome plain food, at proper times, and regular intervals. They have been given during convalescence to promote recovery, with what benefit multitudes who have watched the recovery of patients with and without them can testify. These recover only so rapidly as the food which they eat is assimilated or appropriated, and this is never improved by alcoholic stimulants. Besides, there is no class of remedies so much misused as are alcoholic stimulants, which have been made by many almost a *universal panacea*. In concluding I repeat, that in no disease has their use been more abused than in fever. It is true that there are conditions in typhus fever, and frequently in typhoid fever, where a stimulant becomes necessary, but in such cases, in my opinion, the preparations of ammonia are more safe and certain, and much easier controlled. Besides they do not interfere with the absorption of milk or other nutritious aliment. In short, there can be no doubt that alcohol is contra-indicated in all diseases dependent upon the presence of a *blood poison* for their cause, and which are invariably of a depressing character, as in typhus and typhoid, the exanthems, erysipelas, &c., &c. These diseases require an eliminative and supporting or restorative plan of treatment, of which alcohol cannot from its nature form a part.

In preparing the present article, I have kept a two-fold object in view, namely, while advocating my own opinions to reproduce the views and observations of others who view the subject in the same light.

I have thus inquired at some length into the most important conditions under which alcohol is administered, and I am unable to arrive at any other conclusions than that alcoholic stimulants, in most cases, are neither specially valuable nor indispensable but on the contrary, are most deceptive and illusory adjuncts to the ordinary treatment of disease.

The time is coming when the alcoholic medication theories of to-day, will be classed among the greatest and most indefensible medical errors of the past.

EDITOR MEDICAL RECORD.—Dear Sir, —Since writing the article now being published in your periodical, in which I quote the statistics of the last report of the Montreal General Hospital, giving the death rate in Typhoid Fever as 28 out of 69 cases, or 40.58 per cent, I have been informed by Dr. Howard, secretary to that Institution, that the report is not correct, and that 8 is the correct number out of 49, not 28 out of 69, as appears in the report. A