

use, that if a stimulant is not needed it is much better to leave alcohol alone. Let me say also that I am not in sympathy with those who use stimulants with the view of obtaining a transient pleasure therefrom. In my own opinion it smacks too much of the animal within us, and as tending to gluttony and to place us on a par with brute creatures devoid of reason.

Let us glance at the effect of alcohol in its purity on the system, and afterwards at some of the liquors in which it forms a part.

It has been proved by experiment that when introduced into the body, alcohol, like opium, tea, &c., diminishes the wear and tear of the system, thus rendering less food sufficient. Dr. Hammond says that "alcohol increases the weight of the body by retarding the metamorphosis of the old, and promoting the formation of new tissues, and limiting the consumption of fat." Dr. Hammond, during extensive and careful experiments, found that when the amount of food taken was below that necessary to maintain the body, the excretions were invariably diminished during the moderate use of this spirit; that no deleterious result of the system was produced: but when we were supplied with plenty of good nourishing food, pure air, and living under generally good conditions, that it was not beneficial, and was to many even injurious. "Hence the labouring man, who can hardly find bread and meat enough to preserve the balance between the formation and decay of his tissues, finds in alcohol an agent which, if used in moderation, enables him to dispense with a certain quantity of food and yet keep up the strength and weight of the body." This evidence is, in my opinion, corroborated by the fact that the English people of to-day are the descendants of several generations of moderate drinkers, and as a people they enjoy as general good health as almost any nation, and are no more liable to fevers and plagues, and have shown that in mental or physical abilities they have lost not one jot of that energy and ability which made them commercially and as a nation what they now are. I think that there are sufficient grounds, according to Dr. Hammond's conclusions, for the present general use of alcoholic liquors, as bodily fatigue shows that the nourishment of food previously eaten is exhausted, and if the person who cannot obtain sufficient nourishment is under those circumstances benefitted by moderately using alcohol, should not any one temporarily fatigued be benefitted in like manner?

The action of alcohol is that of a rapid stimulant, it is not a food, but takes the place of food by preventing the waste of tissue, which under ordinary circumstances is continually going on and must needs be continually renewed by fresh supplies of food. An after-effect of alcohol is a feeling of depression, which is by many considered a greater exhaustion than that to relieve which we made use of a stimulant. I do not think that this can be proved; it seems to me that this depression appears greater partly from the contrast with the immediately preceding stimulation, and partly from a natural appetite for food or more of the stimulant. I look upon the appetite developed after using stimulants much as I do upon that occasioned by the absorption of the nourishment derived from bread or beef or any kind of food. It is a natural appetite for a fresh supply which we constantly need to keep our system unimpaired. In physical exhaustion or fatigue I would use a stimulant only as a temporary aid, until I could obtain lasting nourishment from food. Those who find that this appetite becomes an irresistible craving for more and a greater quantity of the stimulant, should give up altogether every thing of the kind, as such ones will certainly become drunkards.

Brandy is the form in which alcohol is generally administered by medical men. It is composed, speaking roughly, of half water and half alcohol. It also contains an essential oil, the source of its flavour, derived from the grape, and a small quantity of acid. Dr. Richardson, the greatest exponent of total abstinence, affirms that the only scientific way of using alcohol is to prescribe it, pure and simple, in set form and dose. The *Times*, referring to this says: "No doubt he is right: but in saying this he none the less evades the whole practical issue. Medical men in general do not wish to use alcohol as a medicine, but to use wine, or beer, or brandy, or whiskey, liquids which contain alcohol, and which are indebted to it for some of their properties, but which also contain other and very various ingredients, some of which are perhaps fully as important as the alcohol itself. The fallacy of arguing from the effects of pure alcohol to the effects of all its compounds is so transparent, that such a course would scarcely ever suggest itself to the mind of a controversialist who was seeking for truth rather than for a temporary victory."

(To be continued.)

LOW-NECK AND SHORT DRESSES.

A notice in your paper of the 10th inst., revived an old thought which, if you will allow it a place in your columns, I should like to put before thinking women, asking their candid opinion upon the subject.

The announcement that Mrs. Osgoode had been graciously permitted to appear at Her Majesty's concert in a high dress, brought bye-gone feelings into force upon that, strange to me, long-continued fashion of low-necked dresses, and I have often wished some one would put it to the vote and let us have a fair idea of woman's—yes, and man's thoughts about it—(for the latter have to pay

their share in this to the physician, though so ably argued by that faculty for what is against their monetary interests on this topic) by counting the ayes for it, the noes against it.

It must surely be the custom of fashion, not the effect of sober judgment, which allows a really barbarous style of dress, in spite of the laces and all like paraphernalia, and exposes what is often a defect, instead of a supposed charm. Young girls may pass with their smooth, white skin, but when married ladies of a certain age essay the same thing, they, by right, should retire to back seats; but, not so, fashion and custom demand that broad fat shoulders should challenge admiration equally with the bony, scraggy ones; young, middle-aged, all alike come to the front, and in fashion's name imply that modesty is old-fashioned, while the less shoulders and bust we have, the more we show. Let but woman think calmly apart from fashion upon this, and from our good Queen down common sense would soon replace exposure by a tasteful arrangement, adding to the beauty and dignity of the wearer, not following in what may be a snare of the courtesan. But women are hard to be turned from the curse of every age—"Going with the multitude." Future generations with growing wisdom will have heeded the warnings so often repeated by the good and great men of this, and put into practice "their" rules for the guidance of those who value health too much to trifle with it; and, just as the young of the present day hear or read with half incredulous amazement of the singular taste displayed by the Virgin Queen in her amusements of tickling her ambassadors, so possibly, will the youthful far-off age listen to the startling revelation, that the most beloved monarch of old England, with all her greatness, yet only permitted what for them to see otherwise, would be with a feeling akin to what some in our day experience when in their travels to distant climes, they find women in nature's garb as unconcerned as if all creation followed their example; so unless our good Queen abolishes the custom, I suppose ladies high, ladies middle, ladies low, will still be of those who act without thinking; but, the absurdity of where modesty begins and where it ends was once brought so forcibly before me, that it speaks for itself.

"A certain lady, who had lived just as most of the well-to-do live, by one of those sudden strokes of fortune unexpectedly found herself raised upon a higher platform of society, through an obliging relative of her husband dropping off, leaving wealth that upset all the more homely ways of the past; but old fashions must give place to new; parties, balls, routs, to the dismay of the husband, now replaced quiet dinner parties, family meetings, and the like; and the adoption of the low-dress custom brought a train of disasters no mortal ever could have imagined. Following the lead of her new set, Mrs. C— had been revelling in the pretty nothings of an adroit admirer of the opposite sex. Individually, besides rejoicing in a handsome person, he had a title to boot, but one unlucky day he in all innocence upset the peace of a harmless family, and never recovered from the shock of surprise himself ever to be able to give a clear account of how it all came about. There was no friendly unknown to whisper. The affable lady of the mansion that particular morning had given strict orders she was "not at home" to any; for some bygone ways were yet in force, and the humble dressmaker of former days still had the honour of doing an occasional inexpensive garment, and was in the act of that mysterious operation, "trying on," when the fashionable Count so gayly mounted the steps and gave the orthodox rap-a-tap. Everything seemed in a conspiracy against the poor fellow. Buttons had been set to the periodical duty he most detested—cleaning windows—and the housemaid supplied his place at the door. Like all women, she could not resist the admiration of the other sex, and in listening to the gallant speeches of a neighbouring admirer unheeded the knock, until recalled to her duties by the anxious cook. But the mischief was done. The heir apparent of the family, a bright lad of some seven summers, who had been amusing himself surreptitiously shooting peas at Buttons and driving him to the verge of distraction in his endeavours to keep his equilibrium and at the same time make a return of the missiles to his tormentor, had just given the more than usual plentiful shower, but missing his mark hit the faultlessly attired gentlemen, who so good naturedly assured the penitent, "It does not matter," that the lad, in eager anxiety not to be outdone, officiously volunteered to conduct him to his maternal parent, and with all the boy's noisy clatter flung open the door of his mother's morning room with "Here's mama," but as the gentleman's face with its smiling greeting came in view, there arose such a shriek, such a scuffle, no imagination could suppose to be created by two persons, for the lady being tall and rather inclined to *embonpoint*, and the dressmaker short and painfully thin, the attempt of the former to make a hiding place of the latter was about as tantalizing as a street urchin dodging a policeman behind a lamp-post. The astonishing feats displayed by the dressmaker would have made her fortune on the stage. With arms outstretched, she sidled, curvetted, did her utmost to accomplish the hiding of her patron especially, considering the imminent danger the sudden action had placed her in. Her calling obliged the use of many pins, and nature having supplied her bountifully with a capacious mouth, she used it in place of a pin-cushion. With a gulp that frightened the intruder, she piteously said something that sounded like "Got a hum." At this stage the astounded Count received such a pull of his coat from behind that in his hurried twist