

possess, who would consider that the man who withheld alcoholic stimulants from a patient with typhoid fever or typhoid pneumonia ought to be indicted for malpractice; while there are many other physicians, perhaps equally learned and thoughtful, headed by such men as Benjamin Richardson and William Gull, who rarely if ever use alcohol in any form in their practice, and who consider it of scarcely any or of no therapeutic value. It is highly undesirable that doubt should continue to exist upon such questions as these. For the sake of both the well man and the sick man, these questions should be answered as soon as possible, once for all, and set at rest for ever. For even if alcohol is not as harmful as the advocates of total abstinence say it is, still we know that the injury which it inflicts upon our race is far from contemptible. And on the other hand, if alcohol has half the value that its friends claim for it, then it is an agent the loss of which through hasty judgment and prejudice, should this happen, would be most calamitous, both to practitioners of medicine like myself and to the world. And it does seem not a little remarkable that upon points where experience is almost infinite in amount and freely accessible to every one, that these doubts should have so long existed, and the fact that they still do exist proves, I think, conclusively that whether alcohol be harmful or helpful in health or disease, it must be (taken in reasonable amount for a limited time) far less harmful or far less helpful than either its opponents or its advocates say it is. For if alcohol, used in moderate quantities, possessed the power to injure that our total abstinence friends say it possesses—or if it had one half the thera-