

milk, which the mother did. The child did not flourish, but remained delicate, emaciated, and suffered greatly from irritability of the stomach and bowels. On being consulted I advised a discontinuance of the brandy, and to give the child plenty of hot milk, with barley broth and simple broken cracker. In a few days the irritation had passed away, and the child was beginning to improve. Another case occurs to my mind, while writing. I saw a child a few weeks since, aged sixteen months, that had been suffering from summer diarrhoea; another medical gentleman had been consulted who recommended *plenty of port wine or brandy* with Martin's Cardinal Food. The mother did as directed; the child continued bad, in fact grew worse. She consulted another, who recommended ale with milk diet, and gave mist creta co. This treatment also failed, and the parents, expecting to loose the child, who was now much emaciated, with violent dysenteric symptoms present, asked me to see it when passing. I recommended *total abstinence from alcoholics*, and to give it plenty of hot milk only as diet, with a three grain powder of hyd. c. creta every twelve hours for first day or two. This child recovered in five days from the dysenteric symptoms, and is since doing well; to my mind in these cases the *alcohol* prescribed proved a cause of irritation, and interfered to a most serious extent with alimentation.

Thus, as it appears to me, alcoholics are not only unnecessary as remedies in the treatment of general diseases, but the advantages claimed from their use are at best questionable, and in the great majority of cases their administration can be proven to be positively pernicious. Even many of the former advocates of alcoholic medication are of themselves abandoning their use in all cases except those, of extreme prostration and in nursing mothers (upon which latter subject I may have some thing to say in a future article.) Its therapeutic influence has been amply proven, on the most indubitable authority, to be the opposite of valuable in affections of the nervous system (except, according to Ainstie in neuralgic pains, where chloric ether is preferable), alimentary canal, lungs, blood, liver and kidneys, and in fact a true bill has been found against it as an agent calculated not only to aggravate most diseases but also to create in many cases serious complications, and largely increase the rate of mortality.\*

\* The effect of alcohol when taken into the system has been proven by the experiments and microscopic observations of Schultz, Virchow, Boecker, Ed. Smith, F.R.S., T. K.

The London *Lancet*, looking upon the subject from both a scientific and humanitarian point of view, says: "There is no doubt as to the erroneous influence which as a profession we have had in creating the public opinion that exists as to the use of beer, wine and spirits." "A very great amount of good would be done if medical practitioners never prescribed alcoholic stimulants without indicating a certain quantity, and erring on the side of moderation."

"Not only should there be precision of language in prescribing stimulants, but we should seriously ask ourselves, in every case, whether it is necessary to give the sanction of our special prescription to them. Unquestionably there are many diseases in which they need form no part of our treatment.

"Then there is need of courage in medical men to be *candid* and *firm* in *positively discouraging* the use of alcohol, or of the popular forms of it in many cases. It is lamentable to see young men loosing their appetites, and getting short-winded, and prematurely corpulent under the notion that bitter beer is a real tonic, or to behold a lady relieve her various pains with sips of hot gin or brandy.

Chambers, Lallemand, and others, to vitiate the secretions, to impoverish the blood by altering the character of the red corpuscles arresting their development, and increasing the ratio of leucocytes, or white corpuscles, (bioplasts of Beale,) from the normal proportion of 1—50 of red corpuscles to 1—4—which may be regarded as defunct bodies no longer capable of conveying oxygen to the system; less oxygen is absorbed, less carbon exhaled. The fatty matters are increased, the vital plasma itself looses a portion of its vitality, and becomes capable only of developing a low order of tissue, and may even become so altered in character as to become an irritant to the circulating and secreting organs, and utterly unfit to promote the healing of wounds and injured parts.

Or, if we take the *hypothesis* of Dr. Beale, and consider the elementary form of all tissue, one or another form of Bioplasm, then it is against the vitality of this elementary structure that alcohol directs its influence, and by lowering its vitality in just proportion with the degree of its concentration produces in some cases a vital Plasma or Bioplasm incapable of developing a normal structure, and in other cases an abnormal action or a positive retrogression, or death, so that the very substructure necessary to the development and repair of healthy tissue is impaired or destroyed, and becomes in itself the germ of disease.

M. Kraus of Vienna, gives as his experience that sparkling wines are very injurious. Champagne not only increases the secretions, but in an extraordinary manner the phosphates. And the conduct of the medical men who advise its use in calculous cases, is *irrational and unjustifiable*. He considers that lately-brewed malt liquors are injurious, because the fermenting particles penetrate the mucous membrane and give rise to a greater or less degree of chronic catarrh. And English ale is open to the same objection in consequence of its richness in alcohol, and the great quantity of carbonic acid it contains.