

are now recognized by leading physicians who have turned their attention to the subject; and the reader of medical periodical publications, cannot fail, to observe, a growing tendency, to subordinate the rules of medicine to the principles of chemistry. The perfect and systematic application of the latter to the former, must no doubt be a work of time; as organic chemistry is only yet in its primary and germinating state. Enough, however, has been accomplished to define the relation of chemistry to medicine; and to satisfy the most competent professional authorities, that it is only under the guidance of chemical tests, that anything can be known, of the nature of the secretions and the change of the fluids; or that the action of medicaments can be definitely ascertained.

So far, the importance of organic chemistry has been admitted; and, as a consequence, its principles are already applied, though partially in both private and hospital practice. The way, however, which has been taken to make chemistry serviceable to medicine, is by no means likely to be attended with success. On the contrary, it will appear, on examination, to be really objectionable; and, moreover, that it is not in accordance with those principles of science which ought, in all cases, to be our standard of authority. I make this admission with considerable reluctance; because I owe what knowledge I possess, on this subject, to the writings of some of the principal actors in the great work of chemico-medical reform; know the value of their discoveries; and can foresee the amount of good which society is about to derive, from their labors. The occasion, however, is one which concerns the future prospects of medicine, as a science; and the right or wrong principles acted on, now that a change is in progress, will assuredly decide the shape which the transitional system will assume, for a considerable time to come; during one epoch; at least, of its future history. I, therefore, feel less reserve, in stating my views, of what I consider the right application of the principles of organic chemistry; at the same time that I wish it to be understood, and as I shall endeavor to show, that my application of those principles, is in unison with the theory and doctrines of Liebig, as a whole; and is the only legitimate mode by which, consistently with those doctrines, they can be practically enforced.

In studying organic chemistry, much depends on the direction and scope which is conceived, at the outset, with regard to the comprehensiveness of the subject. It will not do to follow the restricted curriculum of the old regimen, for the detection, by analysis, of gases, acids and poisons, even with the addition of the organic

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