

rich in aqueous and mucilaginous matter, are by virtue of these elements particularly prone to the production of corpulence. All kinds of drink, when taken in excess, act rather as depressants than stimulants of the nervous centres, and a want of physical and mental activity, alike predisposes to obesity.

Alcoholic drinks of every kind tend to the development of fat, owing to the large amount of the carbonaceous element they contain. Men who use brandy in excess are frequently so puffy and soft that you can scarcely discover the presence of muscular tissue beneath the skin. When blood is abstracted from such persons, it is found to be thin, and to contain a less amount of the most important of the sanguineous elements. We must not deceive ourselves; fat is not to be taken always as an evidence of strength, but, on the contrary, should be regarded as indicative of want of tone and of vital power, as in the case of the aged, who are frequently corpulent though infirm; young chlorotic females; persons deprived of a due supply of fresh air; and such as make use of an excessive amount of alcoholic drink. With respect to the last, it may be said, perhaps, that some are to be met with who, far from being corpulent, are excessively thin, in consequence of drinking