

jury to the soft parts, should be preferred. It should be preferred also to reduction where the disturbance to the bone is great. It is remarkable how good a limb may be made after the loss of so large and important a bone as the astragalus. Turner gives eighteen cases of complete excision of this bone. In fourteen cases, these recoveries were good, and anchylosis followed in but one of the fourteen. I saw a case during the past summer of compound fracture and dislocation of the ankle joint in connection with Dr. McMeahan, of this city. The astragalus was thrust from its bed through the skin, and removed by Dr. McMeahan with a few touches of the knife. The ends of the tibia and fibula were injured; these were removed. The patient recovered with a useful limb, but stiff joint.

I have thus sketched some of the simplest and some of the gravest accidents to which the ankle is subject. There are no injuries in which the surgeon hazards so much as in some of those alluded to; they are a prolific source of litigation. Percival Pott, in speaking of one of these injuries—one in which the tibia has lost its inferior connections, says: "But in its most simple state, unaccompanied with any wound, it is extremely troublesome to put to rights, still more so to keep it in order, and unless managed with *address and skill*, is frequently productive of both *lameness and deformity* ever after." We may well ask who has sufficient "address and skill" to prevent "deformity and lameness" in many of these cases—in the large majority, I may, say, of just such cases as he was then describing? Such remarks as these—and unfortunately too many of them are to be found in our literature—lay the foundation of suits for malpractice, the lawyer quotes such assertions to show that his client would have had a good, a perfect leg, if the attending surgeon had had the requisite "address and skill."—*Med. and Surg. Report.*

Doctors and Teetotalers.

BY A PHYSICIAN.

The subject of alcohol is one of the most stirring of the present time in the domain of hygiene. Is there anything like orthodoxy to appeal to in this, as there is in some other medical questions? Are the members of the medical profession by any means so unanimous in their condemnation or in their approval of the habits of modern society in partaking of alcoholic drinks as they are on the question of vaccination as a preventive of small pox? The answer, we maintain, must be in the

negative. There is nothing like unanimity on this point amongst us. Such being the case, it behoves each of us to argue the question by the lights that are in us, without in any way appealing to authority. Well, as far as we ourselves can see, there can be no doubt that the teetotal party can make out an admirable case when they assert that a very large proportion of the disease and crime among us is traceable directly to the use of spiritous liquors in some form or other. Specialists, who devote their attention to diseases of the kidney, the eye, or the brain, will at once probably corroborate our assertion, that hosts of cases of disease in these organs are traceable to alcohol. The pallid and dull skin of the habitual drinker is well known to the hospital physician; the bronchitis and emphysema of old drinkers is one of his most common experiences. Gout, and dropsy, and disease of the heart are the usual terminations of the lives of the swillers in our large cities. What is there to be said on the other side? The doctors who advise us to use beer and wine daily at our chief meals say that we are living in "an artificial state of society," and hence require stimulation to get through the wear and tear of existence without breaking down. This looks well in theory but does not hold true in nature; at any rate in all cases. Those persons—and they are not a few—who have witnessed the practice of hydropathic institutions, know well that many persons who are accustomed to habitually partaking of a certain number of glasses of wine or pints of beer daily find the simple fare and unexciting beverage there obligatory more conducive, in most cases, to health than their ordinary more exciting regime. And persons who train for prize fights or for boat-racing are obliged, if they would quickly get rid of the softness of their tissues and attain to good wind, almost entirely to abandon all their beer and wine for a time. If such persons often become ill and die young, it is that they are often very idle and intemperate when not in training. Boerhaave said truly that water-drinkers live longer, have a better appetite, and preserve their sight longer than those who drink beer,—he might have added, or smoked tobacco, as he was, we think, a Dutchman. Our conviction is that alcohol is a medicine, just like opium, and should only be used for some temporary purpose, and steadfastly avoided by all persons as a daily part of diet. It is true that many persons can use opium daily, and seem to live pretty healthily notwithstanding; but the vast majority who do it are deeply injured and depraved by opium-eating or smoking; and, in the same way, the ingestion of alcoholic beverages cannot be defended, in our humble opinion, by any physician who has the facts in his recollection which we have alluded to above. There could not be many changes in civilized society to promise a greater improvement in human affairs than the abandonment of drinking of alcoholic liquors; and for more reasons than one.