

excretion, impairs its power in this respect, the prevalent ideas regarding the harmlessness of moderate drinking need revision.

Alcohol is a food in the sense that when used in small quantities the energy from its oxidation may be used for some of the body needs; but since, at the same time, it interferes with the normal activities of a most important organ, its food value may be overbalanced by its toxic effect. Salt water may be used in the steamboiler, and the steam from its evaporation may transmit the energy of the fuel to the revolving wheels, but its corrosive action on the steel forbids its use, like alcohol, except in emergencies.—*Therapeutic Gazette*.

### The Use of Oxygen in Association with the Administration of Chloroform and Ether.

The proposition that oxygen should be administered with chloroform and ether for the purpose of preventing accidents during the maintenance of their effects, and for the purpose of preventing untoward sequelæ, was received by the profession, about fifteen years ago, with considerable enthusiasm. For a time surgical instrument makers busied themselves with the manufacture of special inhalers whereby the patient would receive the vapor of ether or chloroform mixed with oxygen gas, and in not a few instances these inhalers were so devised that the patient was for the time being forced to exist under the mixture of ether vapor and oxygen gas, having been deprived by a tight-fitting inhaler of all atmospheric air. In most of these necessarily complicated forms of apparatus the oxygen gas was supplied through a tube, which first passed through the anesthetic. It was therefore impossible for the anesthetizer to increase or decrease the anesthetic vapor without at the same time increasing or decreasing the oxygen gas. This was a serious disadvantage, and as we have pointed out on several occasions, the proper way to employ oxygen gas, with either of these anesthetics, is to have the gas delivered through a tube which can be passed under the ether cone and chloroform inhaler, and through which oxygen gas may be supplied in varying quantities without changing the amount of anesthetic which the patient is taking into the lungs.

The object of this editorial note is to reiterate our belief in the value of oxygen in conjunction with surgical anesthesia, to impress upon our readers the disadvantage of employing a complicated inhaler when the simplest form of inhaler can be used to better advantage, and to call attention to an interesting experimental research which is published in the *Medical Record* of November 19th, 1904, by Dr. James Gwathmey, in which he proved by experiments upon animals that chloroform with