

paper clearly shows that in strychnia we have a drug which will destroy the appetite for alcohol; and even if only for a few weeks it is hence a great boon. There are many cases where men have been incapacitated for days and months at a time by this habit, and if we know that the nitrate of strychnia will remove or destroy the taste for whiskey and break up an attack of this kind, it is a very valuable piece of knowledge, and something that it would be very well for every doctor to become practically acquainted with.

Dr. ANGLIN said that inebriates were not received in the asylum unless they can be proved insane; he thought this a pity, as in his opinion the best treatment of all for the inebriate is to put him in some home where he is removed from the contact or possibility of drink.

Dr. STEWART has had no experience in the treatment of alcoholism by strychnia. Of course if the latter has such a power it might be readily proven; half a dozen medical men could, in the course of their practice, confirm or refute these claims in a week. He questioned very much whether any drug has that power. Two or three years ago there was a great deal of talk made in connection with hypnotism, but so far as he can read on the subject, hypnotism is practically useless in this respect. In fact, until general moral measures are more advanced there is very little to hope for from any kind of treatment.

Dr. REED thought it is bad that the idea should become popular that the craving for liquor was a disease instead of a vice.

Dr. MCCONNELL said in answer to Dr. Guerin's remarks as to getting equally good results by the administration of tonics by the stomach, the quantities administered could only simply exercise a local tonic action on the stomach. Again, we have to distinguish between a sort of mania for alcohol and the effects of alcohol on the system. Most of the vaunted cures we hear of claim to cure alcoholism out and out; now, we can never expect such an effect from any drug. To transform the desires of an individual so completely as to cure him for all time from a distinct neurosis is something that it is hardly reasonable to expect from the administration of a dose of medicine. By using the drug hypodermically you get the action more purely. It is a well known fact that the liver is the great disinfecting organ of the body, and were it not for its destructive powers on the ptomaines we could not live. Just as it does this, all agents administered by the stomach are diminished in their physiological powers, so that by giving them hypodermically we get nearly double the action and very much better results.

From the results of his cases we may conclude that the strychnine simply restores the

original conditions; when the desire relapses a few more doses will cause it to disappear in the course of a few days. Take a man who is practically useless to his family, if you can destroy the appetite for even three weeks, is it not a decided advantage?

In regard to what Dr. Stewart said about hypnotism it is much on the same line as the other remedies. We can find no single remedy to eradicate the alcoholic habit, but every means that helps towards that end should certainly be adopted. Dr. Stewart's paper on epilepsy, read some time ago, simply looked for cure in educating the brain in every way possible; and the same line of treatment must be adopted in alcoholism. The inebriate must be surrounded by a higher moral tone, and every means we know of to elevate the human being adopted before we can expect any permanent results.

The decomposition of alcohol, which takes place in the economy is not yet known. It has been generally accepted that from 1 to 2 oz. can be oxidized in the system, giving heat and force to the extent of the oxygen used, but the tissue changes are lessened as evidenced by the diminished excretion of urea, and CO_2 , and to the degree that they have been robbed of O by the systemic digestion of the alcohol; from this fact has sprung the idea that it conserves the energies and lessens waste, and on this assumption it is frequently prescribed as a sustaining remedy; but a view which would appear to be nearer the truth of the matter, is that which denies that alcohol is a food in any sense, but being a ptomaine, a result of decomposition, it is like them generally, a poison in all its actions. That it is not oxidized in the system, but that it combines with the hæmoglobin and destroys its functions of absorbing O, the diminished urea and CO_2 , being in this way accounted for. Other observers have demonstrated that the leucocytes have their vitality lessened by the continued use of alcohol, and in harmony with our recent views on phagocytosis this fact would explain the greater susceptibility of drunkards to the action of pathogenic bacteria, and their lessened resisting power in throwing off disease, although Mortimer Granville maintains an opposite view on this point, and claims for alcohol drinkers a greater immunity than abstainers. That the red corpuscles are profoundly altered was observed in the last case I reported, the only one in which the blood was examined. We have here the evidence of a veritable poikilocytosis in a subject where neither aglobulism nor achromatosis existed. Most of the effects of alcohol are apparently explained by its paralyzing effect on the vaso-motor system from the first contact; we have also the slight stimulating effects on the heart of small doses, and its local and reflex irritant action on the alimentary tract,