

the use of wine, than in doing all we can to advance a Fire-Insurance office, with all its machinery for extinguishing a conflagration, and each of us at the same time making these very efforts by the comfortable warmth of his "ain fire side." Temperance is the law of life; the torrid and the frigid zones are equally inimical to man, nor less so probably would be found the universal abstinence from wine and all its kindred. Nay, we do not take up a merely negative position in reference to temperance, while thus claiming a fair hearing for what its *soi-disant* advocates condemn, we go further and maintain, that if it be shown that the use of wine, spirits, and beer, be conducive to health in certain circumstances, by recommending their use, we are really doing more for the ultimate triumph of temperance, than by passing no end of Maine-liquor laws; for it is a fact beyond all denial, that one of the most fertile causes of intemperate indulgence is traceable to some bodily infirmity or depravity, and that intoxication is hardly possible for those whose bodily and mental conditions are in the highest state of vigour and refinement.

I have been thus free in the expression of my opinion, because I find myself opposed to the views of many, whose opinions deserve the highest attention and consideration at our hands, and with none more than Dr. H. Madden, who in an article published in 1846, in the British Journal of Homeopathy, makes the following observation. "Alcohol when acting not as a stimulus, but substantially, is not and cannot be a pabulum to any organ, and for the following reasons:—*first*, its chemical composition disqualifies it from taking any share in the formation of muscular fibre, or other azotized compound, since it possesses no azote; and it has now been proved that the higher orders of animals have no power to compound their proximate principles, but must obtain them ready formed:—*second*, although its chemical constitution has some approximative relationship to nervous matter, we have no proof that it is or can be transformed into that substance, while numerous ar-

guments may be drawn from transcendental chemistry, to show its extreme improbability."

In opposition to this statement, we think we shall be able to shew that alcohol may supply a pabulum to every organ by affording it the materials whence to derive its fat which is essential to its healthy action, and also that there is every probability of its nourishing as well as cherishing the nervous system. Human fat, according to Chevreul, contains 79 per cent. of carbon, while alcohol contains 53 per cent. of the same element, and the conversion of alcohol into fat, rendered thus probable by their similarity of atomic constitution, is put beyond a doubt by the examination of the blood of persons who have imbibed alcohol in large quantities, in whom this fluid has been observed to be of a whitish, milky appearance, from the quantity of fat globules that float there.\* So great indeed may be the transformation of alcohol into fat, that there is a case on record in which all the organs of the chest and abdomen, and even the muscles in the body of a drunkard, were found converted in a great measure into a fatty substance.†

So much for the first proposition, that alcohol go to make fat in the body. As to the second, that alcohol by loading the blood with fat, probably affords special nourishment to the nervous system, which consists in a great measure of this substance, it seems highly probable, not only from the fact of the chemical composition of the two, but from its physiological action as a narcotic. We know indeed, as a positive fact, that the brain is nourished during sleep, and we also know that, as a general rule, the tendency to sleep is in direct proportion to the quantity of fat in the body. Fatness and somnolence are mutual cause and effect, as we see in the example before referred to, of hibernating animals who do not go to sleep till they have laid in a great store of fat, and who then pass their whole time in this condition, and the converse we see in the effects of sleep-

\* Wilson on the Pathology of Drunkenness.

† Rosch, Der Misbrauch geistiger Getränke, p. 93.