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Original Communications.

THE USE OF ALCOHOL IN HEALTH.

BY

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Unless it be within the domain of strictly theological matters no question of the day has caused greater warmth of discussion, or has given rise to more diversified opinion, than the proposition to dispense with alcoholic mixtures as beverages in health. From the fanaticism of the "temperance" advocate at one extremity of the line of opinion we proceed by easy stages of varied belief to him who sings in consistent strains :

"Wine cheers the sad, revives the old, inspires
The young, makes weariness forget his toil
And fear her danger; opens a new world
When this, the present, fails."

However, in this instance, as in most others of the kind, the truth is to be looked for most successfully not in the extremes but in the mean of opinion; and as year after year the temperance question

receives full and free consideration on all hands this tendency towards stable equilibrium plainly manifests itself. Hence, chiefly, has arisen the moderate drinker. It is no longer the fashion in respectable society either to induce alcoholic narcosis or to abstain altogether, but to stop as soon as moderate stimulation is produced. This form of belief respecting the employment of alcoholic beverages obtains among a large, perhaps among the largest, class of those whose opinions we have a right to consider, and it behooves him who entertains a different belief to weigh carefully the evidence that has been brought forward in favor of moderate stimulation. As an example of lay opinion advocating this practice witness the following, copied from a recent number of the *New York Graphic*:

"Occasionally—but only occasionally—one reads in the reports of debates in ecclesiastical councils and synods words of real wisdom. There was an instance of this yesterday in the General Council of that new and struggling sect known as the Reformed Episcopal Church. One of the lay brethren of the council denounced in vigorous words the absurdity of calling 'total abstinence' 'temperance.' This is a distinction that should have been insisted upon long ago. Most people