

FEVER'S NEW SPECIFIC.

Alcohol as a Remedial Agent in Cases of Sickness—Eminent Physicians Agree With

Dr. Austin Flint in His Advanced Opinions on the Subject—Its Use Absolutely Necessary.

New York Star.

Whisky as an exhilarating agent has long been known, and no one has ever thought of denying the fact, but theory of the use of whisky as a medicinal agent in cases of sickness seems to provoke an unlimited amount of discussion.

At the late medical convention held in the city of Washington, Dr. Austin Flint of this city, an able and skillful physician, read a paper on fever, in which he upheld the theory that alcohol was a useful medicine in that form of disease. Dr. Flint did not speak from a theoretical standpoint; he has made the effects of alcohol in illness a study for years, and his deductions, as stated in his paper, were the result of careful study and analysis.

"The purest of all things are pure," and to the prohibitionists all things pertaining to whisky are impure. So this paper on the remedial use of the product from the blue grass region dreadfully excited the gentlemen who take no stick in their. It was like shaking the socialistic flag in the face of the traditional bull, and there went up a howl from the cold water advocates.

Doctors proverbially disagree, but in this instance Dr. Flint is supported by the very best and most learned men in the profession, as a Star reporter found when he visited many professional gentlemen. They were almost unanimous in the opinion that liquor was of the greatest benefit in many cases of sickness, particularly where the patient was weak and feeble and needed something to build up his system in a hurry, so to speak.

The first person visited was Dr. Flint himself. When told of the storm of opposition from the temperance people he smiled grimly, knowing by his own satisfaction that the subject was capable of proof. But when asked to speak on the subject the learned practitioner became reticent. It is well known that the gentleman seeks to avoid notoriety, preferring to let his deeds of healing speak for themselves.

"My opinion on the use of alcohol in fever is embodied in the paper I read at Washington," he said. "It has been printed in various periodicals devoted exclusively to the profession, and nothing that I can say would make the subject clearer than it is in cold type."

The full text of Dr. Flint's paper on fevers is printed in the Medical News of Philadelphia, under date of September 10. The paper is pronounced on all sides to be a very able one.

After speaking of fevers, Dr. Flint goes on to speak of remedies, and devotes considerable space to alcohol in that connection. Here is what the Doctor says:

The Use of Alcohol in Fever.—Alcohol is a substance the toxic effects of which, taken in excess, are quickly and distinctly manifested, and there are few agents more prompt and decided in their influence in cases of disease. Clinically, the effects of alcohol in diseases in which there is a tendency to death by asthenia are so marked that it is often used indiscriminately and injudiciously. In the treatment of fever the immense benefit which follows the use of alcohol has led at one time to its use under all circumstances; and its indiscriminate administration on the other hand, has produced, from time to time, a reaction of opinion, leading to its suppression in cases in which it would be of great service. Many of the moral arguments against the use of alcohol in diseases are entirely illogical, and could, with equal weight of propriety, be applied to a number of important articles of the materia medica.

Alcohol is a potent agent in the treatment of fever, and the clinical guides which should direct its administration are easily recognizable.

In no case of disease, except, perhaps, in certain instances of poisoning by animal venom, should alcohol be administered to a point where the slightest degree of alcoholic intoxication is apparent.

Alcoholic intoxication is due to certain peculiar effects of alcohol upon the nerve centers, and in order to produce these effects the alcohol must circulate in the blood. As these effects pass off the alcohol is either oxidized or is eliminated by the skin, lungs and kidneys. Under normal conditions of nutrition the effects of alcohol are so rapid and transitory, and are followed by such decided reaction that it contributes little or nothing toward a prolonged resistance to cold.

Experience has shown that it can not take the place of a highly abundant and fatty aliment in excessive cold, as in the Arctic region, and under these conditions its constant use has been found to be positively injurious. The same remark is in a measure applicable to all conditions of healthy nutrition. In a continued fever, however, the conditions are radically changed. In accordance with the views I have presented the excessive production of heat in fever is a fixed condition, continuing for a certain duration, which is limited by the phenomena referable to the pulse, to the nervous system, etc., are secondary to the pyrexia. The parenchymatous degenerations are the more remote changes of tissue which follow and result from transformations involved in the long continued excessive production of heat. If these views be accepted as correct any readily available substance artificial, introduced will, if it be oxidized, mitigate the secondary effects of the fever upon the pulse and nervous system, and retard degenerations, provided always that it does not increase the density of the pyrexia. Experience is not wanted to show that these results follow the judicious administration of alcohol in fever.

It is well known that saccharine and starchy articles of food, as well as the liver sugar, rapidly disappear, and that starch is rapidly converted into sugar in digestion. In a remarkable paper by Dr. William Hutson Ford, a number of interesting experiments are published, showing the presence of alcohol in small quantity in the normal blood, resulting, according to Dr. Ford, from the decomposition of sugar. In this paper Dr. Ford makes the following statement:

"The destination of alcohol, whose presence in the economy I have thus demonstrated, must be to a haemal oxidation or combustion, as a main source of animal heat. This combustion is maintained not only by glucose derived from amyaceous food, but likewise from the proximate products of change in the nitrogenous tissues."

In the administration of alcohol in the treatment of fever, we are really using the hydrocarbons in a form in which they may be immediately oxidized and do not require preparation by digestion. Thus we easily supply material to meet the excessive waste involved in the pyrexia, in much the same way as we administer septinized albuminoids to meet the excessive waste of nitrogenized parts of the tissues when the digestive powers are impaired.

It is a matter of universal clinical observation that there is a great tolerance of alcohol in fevers and in pulmonary phthisis. This tolerance of an agent which is probably never useful in perfect health is strong evidence of a demand on the part of the system for the class of alimentary principles, the hydrocarbons which alcohol represents, and it affords an absolute guide as regards the quantity which should be employed. The quantity which will be useful in individual cases may be small or it may be great. In certain exceptional cases one or two ounces of spirits may be administered hourly for a day or two with the best results, and this quantity may be taken without the slightest manifestation of alcoholic intoxication. With an abnormally high temperature, a rapid and feeble pulse and grave ataxic symptoms indicating impending death, alcohol may be given freely, but never to the extent of producing its characteristic toxic effects. In a fever only such quantity of alcohol as is readily oxidized is useful, and any excess which will certainly produce some degree of alcoholic intoxication and which must be eliminated as alcohol will be productive of harm. In ordinary cases of continued fever it is seldom necessary or desirable to give more than eight or ten ounces of spirits daily.

I do not wish to be understood as advocating an indiscriminate use of alcohol in all cases of fever. Alcohol is indicated by an excessively high temperature, with the ataxic and other symptoms to which I have referred. In ordinary cases of typhoid fever, particularly in the early stages, it should be administered sparingly, cautiously and tentatively. Its quantity should be reduced or should be omitted at the first indication of alcoholic intoxication. Nevertheless alcohol, judiciously administered, so that all that is introduced is promptly and completely oxidized, as it contributes material for consumption in the production of excessive heat, exactly in that degree does it retard destruction and degeneration of tissue, and it should be employed to supplement the use of matters that are regarded as nutritive.

Armed with this document, the reporter sailed forth, and the first man he encountered was Professor Doremus, one of the best known chemists in this country. Indeed, Professor Doremus has a world-wide reputation. The reporter gave the article to the chemist, who read it over carefully.

"Well," queried the reporter, "what do you think of the use of alcohol in the practice of medicine?"

"I am in perfect harmony with Dr. Flint on this subject," was the reply. "I agree with him as regards alcohol as a food in fever."

"Where does the benefit come in?"

"Why, it presents a form of hydrocarbon which is readily absorbed and promptly oxidized. It prevents destruction and degeneration. The main thing is that it keeps up combustion, a very necessary matter."

"And not some other remedy do as well?"

"I think not. In very many cases people would die unless a quick stimulus was administered."

Then the learned gentleman went into the subject thoroughly, using medical terms that fairly staggered the reporter, but Professor Doremus' argument was thoroughly in accord with the paper of Dr. Flint.

A well known physician of Fifth avenue who sends in large bills to millionaires after attending to their ills, when asked for his opinion, said:

"My opinion is—but mind you, I don't want you to use my name, for I have practice enough without any free advertising—my opinion is that alcohol is the remedy in a large class of fevers. Without its use the patient would often die."

"I believe in it in any other way, but I don't believe more harm than good to healthy persons. I speak of its use in sickness."

"Liquor should be used with extreme caution in health, much more so in sickness. In secondary fever the excessive use of liquor causes a loss of vitality and diminishes the ability to resist disease."

"Liquor hardens. The athlete uses it to harden his flesh. But it hardens the stomach and destroys it, as well as the kidneys and other portions of the body. This is where it is used in excessive quantities. As a remedial agent in sickness, however, and used with moderation it is of the first importance."

"It is not always best to use it, though. There are certain systems to which liquor is a rank poison, so it should not be used indiscriminately. It may build up one man's system and destroy that of another man. A physician has got to study the idiosyncrasies of his patient's system and prescribe accordingly."

"In cases of injury would you advocate the use of liquor?" asked the reporter.

"Most assuredly. The proper remedies for shock, which always follow an injury, are brandy and opium. After the shock comes the reaction, and it is a delicate point just how much to give and when to stop. Too much brandy may in some cases help to produce a reaction and cause death."

As the physician who gave these opinions has had a long and varied experience in the Charity Hospital at Blackwell's Island his views may be regarded as authoritative.

Said another prominent physician: "I have had patients who would have died if they would take whisky as a medicine. Of course such people must be set down as bigots."

"Whisky," he added, "has the same tendency as saccharine matter. It tends to increase flesh. There is, however, a decided mistake in regard to the quantity to be taken. A tablespoonful is sufficient for those who take it for the stomach's sake. Another common mistake is in the time to take whisky. It should never be put in the stomach when that organ is empty, as in the morning."

"The proper time is at night, just previous to retiring. The weary literary man can find great refreshment in a tablespoonful of whisky at night. It will cause him to sleep well and it will build up his system and aid in making up for the waste. I can say in conclusion that alcohol is a specific for many diseases, especially fevers."

Many other physicians were interviewed, and they all expressed the same opinion of alcohol as a remedy in certain cases of sickness.

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FROM AFFLUENCE TO JAIL.

An Ex-Governor's Daughter Arrested for Theft.

On complaint of Foster Goff of No. 1911 Farnham street, a music teacher, named Mrs. Mary Jackman, boarding at the same place, was arrested yesterday on the charge of stealing a gold ring and several articles of silk underwear from Mrs. Goff, says the Omaha Bee. There are some outside facts, however, that make this case of more than passing interest. Mrs. Jackman is the widow of the late Hon. William T. Jackman, formerly one of the most brilliant lawyers at the New York bar, but who unfortunately ruined and finally killed himself by strong drink. She is also the daughter of Ex-Governor English of Connecticut, and her career has been a most unfortunate decline from wealth and social distinction to poverty and crime.

After her marriage to Jackman he dissolutely spent the fortune she brought him. She was then prevailed upon by her father to leave Jackman, and the ex-Governor rewarded her by a check for \$10,000. In a few months, however, she went back to her husband, and he again squandered her fortune. Her father then disowned her. About eight years ago she lost her husband and since then she has supported herself by teaching music. About five months ago she came to Omaha, but had the misfortune to lose all her money, some \$500, while on her way, and since then she has been very much distressed to make ends meet. About two months ago she came to her present boarding place, but had had some trouble about taking a gold pin from her former landlady.

The articles stolen from Mrs. Goff were taken from that lady's trunk. After the theft was discovered, Mrs. Goff most kindly offered to let the matter drop if Mrs. Jackman would return the stolen property. This, however, she refused to do, but after the warrant was issued she endeavored to secretly leave the ring on Mrs. Goff's dresser, but was detected in so doing by the other lady boarders. Since the issuance of the warrant the stolen clothes have disappeared.

Mrs. Jackman is a woman of culture and intelligence, and has enjoyed unusual educational and musical advantages, and she seems entirely out of place in a police station. She has employed Attorney Christofferson, however, and intends to fight the case through.

AFTER THE FUNERAL.

The Dying Request of a Real Estate Agent Regarding the Sale of His Lots.

Dakota Bell.

"It was the last request of the deceased," said a Kansas City minister in the course of the funeral sermon of one of that city's most active real estate boomers, "that immediately after the services at the grave an auction sale of lots in that Prospect Park addition be held, and for that purpose Colonel Inator, the well known real estate auctioneer, will be present and conduct the sale. A strange request, you will say, my friends, and a queer place for such a sale—in a cemetery. My own idea," continued the minister as he propped up the back-cover of the Bible with the hymn-book,

"was to have the procession go around by Prospect Park with a brass band, and hold the auction right on the lots before going to the cemetery at all; then the buyers could see just what they were getting; but, then, no two men ever conduct a real estate boom exactly alike, and the dying wish of the brother should be complied with. Sing the two hundred and seventy-fifth hymn, the two hundred and seventy-fifth, 'Away, Vain Earthly Things.'"

What the Wild Waves Were Saying. Hotel Mail.

"What are the wild waves saying, darling?" murmured a dude at Narragansett Pier, as he sat on the sand, and only in a hating suit.

But before the girl could reply an irreverent small boy behind the pair shrieked: "They're saying that if they was you they'd wear pants to hide their tooth-pick legs."

GOING.

Correspondence of the Gazette.

GOLIAD, TEX., October 2.—Sheep are dying from the murrain. Cattle are fat and thriving. The mast crop is sufficient to fatten the hogs.

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