FALSE PRETENCES.

Since the issue of our Prospectus we are in receipt of numerous letters covering high approval of our undertaking, and especially of our promised defence of "PURE HOMŒOPATHY." The writers of these letters are, many of them, very urgent upon this point, and upon the widespread necessity which exists that such correct views upon the point in question be as generally spread before the profession as possible. A single example of these is all we have room to insert; and we cite this as a sample of many. The writer is a practitioner in one of the largest western cities; and he says:

"The fact of the matter is, that Homœopathy, especially here in the west, is sadly degenerating. It is not uncommon for our physicians to combine three or four medicines, and all these in the crude form. The result has been a great mortality among patients thus treated, and the consequent loss of families who were firm adherents of our school."

That there are physicians in various parts of the country whose practice conforms to that which is above described, we are well aware; and that such have often called themselves Homœopathists is equally well known to us. Of course, none such have any claim to the name Homœopathist, as *their* practice belongs not to it, even in the most remote sense. The assumption of the name, therefore, by each and every of these practitioners, is either a designed fraud upon the public, or the result of ignorance as to what Homœopathy is, and of all the essential laws upon which it is founded.

THE PHYSICAL EVILS OF ALCOHOL.

There can be no doubt that one of the greatest evils inflicted upon mankind, by the Allopathic branch of the medical profession, is the prevailing custom, established and fostered by all the influence of that school, of prescribing alcoholic stimulants, so almost universally, as remedial agents in disease. A few have seen something of the magnitude of this evil, and raised their voices against it; and *why should they not*, even though they have, as yet, been so powerless to accomplish any good? To say nothing of the almost certain prescription of ardent spirits for sick adults, whatever may be their disease, and the alarming evils that grow out of this, they see physicians commence this practice upon infants almost at birth, frequently giving these little creatures, what is, to them, enormous quantities of whisky, brandy, wine, etc., and follow this treatment through childhood and youth, whenever they are sick, until, when the victims arrive at that age that they can be reached by moral means, appetites have been formed, and all the moral barriers to the common use of spirituous liquors have been broken down; and this, too, at the worst of all possible places it could be done to leave life-long impressions, namely, at the very family altar itself.

If all this were necessary for the better control of disease, it might be tolerated as the least of two evils; but that it is not, that it is, indeed, *far worse*

than useless, we trust we shall be able to clearly demonstrate in the course of this paper. And here we wish to say that PURE HOMŒOPATHY has never had any hand or lot in the promotion or spread of this great evil. In Hahnemann's efforts to reform the practice of medicine, he early took decided grounds against the use of alcohol in any form, as a remedial agent in disease.

But, say our opponents, there are physicians who practice, or claim to practice, under the Homœopathic law, who do prescribe alcoholic stimulants extensively for the sick, and join with the Allopathist in the claim that alcohol subserves the purposes of food as well as medicine for the human system. This assertion, we regret to have to say, is too true, and it is on this account, no less than because of the curse itself, that we feel it our duty as a medical practitioner of some experience in the treatment of diseases *without* stimulants, to speak, and to speak plainly upon this most important subject.

With due deference, then, to all concerned, we must say frankly, that we deny as a whole and in detail, that alcohol is a remedial agent in any disease, or that it can properly be prescribed for any conditions arising therefrom, and we deny that it is a proper article for food. On the contrary, we assert that it is a poison as well in disease as in health, which the system of man is the less able to bear, the more diseased or the weaker he is; that it has no place, under any circumstances, in the economy of man's nature, at least the exceptions, if any, are

exceedingly rare; that its proper place is in the Arts, and here alone should it be used. And not only this, we have no hesitation in saying that our profession is guilty of a great *physical*, no less than moral, wrong to our race by occupying the position it does upon this question, and a wrong, too, from which there is not the slightest advantage gained in any respect, to compensate in the least for the immense evil done. But setting aside all the moral aspects of the question, we will treat it here only upon the ground of the *physical* injuries which alcohol inflicts upon the human system.

To maintain the assertions and denials above made, we will confine ourselves to *scientific facts* about which there is no dispute, and cite only those authorities who occupy the front rank in their profession. Professor Youmans furnishes us with the greatest number of reliable chemical facts bearing upon this subject in the least space, and in the clearest language, of any author with whose writings we are familiar; therefore, we quote him the most fully. In his Class Book of Chemistry, page 326, in speaking of the "PHYSIOLOGICAL ACTION OF ALCOHOL" and "*its substitution for water*," he says:

> "The action of alcohol within the system is in no respect analagous to that of water; it is a disturber of the healthy functions, a disorganizer of the structure, and must therefore be ranked among *medicines* and *poisons*."
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> "*Effect of Alcohol upon the Tissues.*—The chemical composition of alcohol is such as to forbid the idea of its ever being transformed into the animal tissues. There is no evidence whatever that, under any circumstances, it is capable of serv-

ing for animal nutrition. Nevertheless, it has a specific and peculiar action upon the tissues which is due to its powerful affinity for water. 'If animal membranes, a mass of flesh or coagulated fibrine, be placed in alcohol, in a fresh state (in which they are thoroughly charged with water), there are formed at all points where water and alcohol meet, mixtures of the two; and as the animal texture absorbs much less of an *alcoholic mixture* than of pure water, a larger amount of water is, of course, expelled than of alcohol taken up, and the first result is a shrinking of the animal substance.' (Carpenter). Experiments made by Leibig show that for one volume of alcohol taken up by a membrane, rather more than three volumes of water have been expelled from it. That the tissues are acted upon within the body the same as without it, is proved by the experiments of Dr. Percy, who found that when animals are poisoned by alcohol introduced into the stomach, the coats of that organ become so thoroughly imbued with it, throughout their whole thickness, that no washing can remove it. He also found that the tissues remote from the stomach are impregnated in the same way when alcohol is introduced into the current of the circulation. The shrinking of the tissues and alteration of their chemical relations which thus takes place, must obviously disturb the natural series of operations upon which nutrition depends."

"*How Alcohol affects the Blood.*—The effects of alcohol upon the blood are of a very marked and important character. It possesses the power of preventing the coagulation of fibrine. When an animal has been killed by the injection of alcohol into its blood-vessels, the blood often remains fluid after death, or coagulates but very imperfectly. The presence of alcohol in the blood is, therefore, an obstacle to nutriton, or to that vital process by which the solid substances of the fabric are organized or elaborated from the blood. Accordingly, we have the testimony of physicians and surgeons that the nutritive and reparative powers of those who drink largely of spiritous liquors, in cases of wounds, ulcers, etc., are low. The healing process in such is, as a general rule, less certain and active than in others."

"*It disturbs the Natural Process of Oxidation.*—Again, when alcohol is mingled with fresh arterial blood, the red corpuscles, as may be seen with the microscope, shrink, and a portion of their contents is mingled with the liquor sanguinis, while at the same time the fluid darkens in color, so as to give it more or less of the venous aspect; and Bouchardat found that when alcohol is introduced into the system in excess, precisely the same change takes place in the arteries—their contents become of a venous appearance. The cause of this change is the fact that the alcohol is more combustible than the ordinary constituents of the blood, and consequently, rapidly attracts its oxygen and is burned to carbonic acid and water. By combustion, therefore, alcohol may become a source of heat in the body, but it is by *arresting the natural processes of oxidation* upon which the vigor of the animal powers depends. Leibig observes, that 'by the use of alcohol a limit must rapidly be put to the change of matter in certain parts of the body. The oxygen of the arterial blood, which, in the absence of alcohol would have combined with the matter of the tissues, or with that formed by the metamorphosis of the tissues, now combines with the elements of alcohol. The arterial blood becomes venous without the substance of the muscles having taken any share in the transformation.'"

"*It disturbs the Excretion of Carbonic Acid.*—Dr. Prout discovered that alcoholic liquors possess, in a remarkable degree, the power of *diminishing* the amount of carbonic acid in the expired air, and that no sooner have their effects passed off than the proportion of carbonic acid exhaled *rises much above* the natural standard. The accumulation of carbonic acid which thus takes place in the blood, and from which the system cannot get relief, is probably a partial cause of that prostration, both of physical and mental power, which attends the advanced stages of intoxication."

"*Effects of Alcohol upon the Nervous System.*—But that part of the body which is attacked most powerfully by alcohol is the *nervous system.* It has a stronger affinity for the nervous substance than for any other tissue, seeking it out, as it were, and combining with it in preference to any other substances. In this case, to the skrinking or corrugating influence of alcohol upon the tissues must be added a *hardening* effect, due to its power of coagulating albumen, of which nervous matter is largely composed. This selective power of alcohol,

by which it fastens upon nervous matter, is at once proved by the fact that it has been found diluted in considerable quantity in the substance of the brain of habitual inebriates. That so total a change as is thus produced in the nervous texture by this fiery compound, should cause great derangement in its functions, is what we might naturally expect, and what is abundantly shown by experience."

Sustained as these quotations are, in all their various parts, by five most prominent authors, each among the very best upon the point with which his name stands therein connected, and Leibig himself —whose opinions are always quoted by the advocates of stimulants—among the number, supporting two of the most important points, it would seem to be all that need be said of the frightful effects of alcohol upon the human system, and is better said than anything we can offer. Still, there are a few among the many evils pointed out therein, to which we wish to call more especial attention, as bearing more clearly upon the injurious effects of alcoholic stimulants in *disease.*

As will be seen in one of the quotations, "Dr. Prout discovered that alcoholic liquors possess, in a remarkable degree, the power of *diminishing* the amount of carbonic acid in the expired air." This result is *inevitable* and the reasons for it are most obvious, as we shall now see. And to carry conviction home more forcibly to the minds of all, we will first call attention to a few simple physiological facts with which all physicians are familiar. One of the most important functions of the blood-corpuscles, as we know, is to bring carbonic acid

gas from all parts of the system to the lungs, that it may there be expelled in the expirations, and the person dies at once if this work is suspended. These corpuscles are very minute shut sacs or cells, flattened upon opposite sides into more or less of the disc shape, are entirely confined within, and kept in continual motion through the blood-vessels, but are wholly disconnected from, and independent of each other as they circulate; and, of course, like all cells of which the body is composed, their walls are a regularly organized animal texture. They exist in vast numbers, and are so small that it requires a high magnifying power to see them. In their natural state, as they float in the serum, they constitute fully one-half the entire mass of blood in the human system, which, in a healthy man, is estimated at from eighteen to twenty pounds; so it will be seen there are many, many millions of these minute bodies, each in constant and rapid motion on its ceaseless rounds through the system, bringing back each time to the lungs its little load of carbonic acid gas, and thus assisting in this most necessary work. When loaded, they are distended at the sides into a bi-convex form, but as they pass through the lungs, they give up the gas they have brought there and collapse as it were, becoming bi-concave, and then depart for another load. From this it must be clear to all, that anything which causes a *shrinking*, or *shriveling* of the blood-corpuscles as they circulate, curtails their capacity for carrying carbonic acid gas, just to the extent they are shriv-

eled, therefore *necessarily* lessens, to such extent, the powers of the system to rid itself of what is a most deadly poison if retained in the blood. Well, alcohol *always* shrivels the blood-corpuscles to a marked extent whenever brought into contact with them in their natural or moist state, whether they be within or without the body. Why? Because, as stated in one of the quotations, upon the authority of both Leibig and Carpenter, it shrivels *any* and *all* soft animal tissues, and the blood-corpuscles being of, or similar to, such tissues, must be among those most affected by that article when it is taken into the system. In fact this is unavoidable if it acts at all upon them as it does upon other animal tissues, for alcohol penetrates the coats of the stomach more rapidly than almost anything else that can be taken into it, and passes at once into the blood-vessels, where it mingles directly with the corpuscles and *moves along with them*, thus enabling it to act upon them continuously, as long as it is retained in the blood-vessels. Then, in accordance with the results of Leibig's experiments, as cited by Youmans, showing the effect of alcohol upon all soft tissues, it will withdraw or expel from the corpuscles, "*rather more than three volumes of water*," for "*one volume* of alcohol taken up by" them. Therefore, it requires no argument to prove that this shrinks the corpuscles in a marked degree. Accordingly we have the testimony, not only of Youmans but all other observers, that by the aid of the miscroscope they are distinctly seen to shrink,

and their surface become corrugated whenever alcohol is mingled with them. And that the effect is the same within the body, as out of it, we have no less an authority than Dr. Percy to prove. Here, then, we see a force that is entirely beyond our control, whenever the agent of it is introduced into, and so long as it remains in the blood, which shrivels all the blood-corpuscles it comes in contact with, so that they *cannot*, by any possibility, distend to receive their apportioned load of carbonic acid gas, to convey to the lungs; and as there is no other way or means provided by which this work can be done, we have fully exhibited to us the reasons why alcohol possesses, in such a "remarkable degree, the power of *diminishing* the amount of carbonic acid in the expired air." We also learn by such scientific facts, that if ardent spirits are taken into the stomach, the results we have pointed out are absolutely unavoidable, and are in degree proportioned to the quantity taken. And it makes no difference in this respect, as it makes no difference in respect to other evils we shall speak of, what liquors are taken, whether whisky, gin, rum, brandy, malt liquors, or any of the numerous wines, except in the quantity of alcohol these severally contain.

It must be that all realize more or less fully the terrible consequences of interfering, as above shown, or in any other way, with the expulsion of the surplus carbonic acid of the system; but to bring this subject more clearly to mind, in this connection, we will cite a few familiar illustrations. No person,

no matter how strong and vigorous he may be, can endure an entire stoppage of respiration beyond a few moments and live. Why? Because an excess of carbonic acid gas in the blood is so poisonous, that what accumulates therein, in consequence of the few moments' suspension of respiration, immediately kills. Essentially, the same thing happens when a person goes into an atmosphere highly charged with this gas, as occasionally occurs to workmen upon entering old wells, mines, etc., which are said to have the "damps." Although, in such cases respiration is not suspended, yet, the person inhales this gas instead of natural air, and if not rescued he is soon so charged with it that he dies in consequence, and from the same immediate cause as the other person whose respiration is stopped by violence.

Let us now compare the effect which we have shown alcohol to have, in preventing the excretion of carbon, to the above facts. This article, we repeat, contracts or shrivels all the blood-corpuscles it comes in contact with, to such a degree, that they cannot, while under its influence, dilate, or be dilated, to receive and carry their apportioned load of carbonic acid gas to the lungs to be expelled; consequently, if sufficient numbers of the corpuscles are affected by it to carry this result beyond a certain point, the person is poisoned to death. Absolutely pure alcohol, because of this action, would kill at once, even in a moderate quantity. Again, the man who takes enough of it in the diluted form of whisky, etc., to make him "dead drunk," is in a

similar condition to the one who has been rescued after becoming insensible, but before life is extinct, from an atmosphere overcharged with carbonic acid gas. This gas, in either case, blackens the blood and distends the blood-vessels; therefore it is that the two are bloated and discolored, and when the result has been carried to an extreme, they are so disfigured that they cannot be recognized, but both may be brought back to consciousness and to health, if the effect has not gone too far; if it has, both must die, and each from the one cause, namely: accumulation of too much carbon in their blood.

Would any intelligent man, not a physician, hazard his reputation for common sense by recommending the vitiated atmosphere of old wells, mines, etc., or any other air charged with too large a proportion of carbonic acid gas, as the most wholesome for man to breathe, or as beneficial under any circumstances? Yet they might just as well do this absurd thing, as for physicians to recommend alcoholic stimulants as wholesome under any circumstances, and for the reasons we have pointed out. But they may say they do not carry this matter to an injurious extreme. To which we reply they do, as we shall see, further on.

It seems proper to remark, in this connection, that alcohol is not a *natural* product, that is, it does *not* exist, naturally formed and stored up in the grains, fruits, etc., from which it is derived, as we have frequently heard people assert was the case, and argue from this that it was intended as a bev-