

**ON THE USE AND ABUSE  
OF ALCOHOLIC LIQUORS,  
IN HEALTH AND DISEASE**

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On the use and abuse of alcoholic liquors, in health and disease by William B. Carpenter & D. F. Condie

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**WILLIAM B. CARPENTER & D. F. CONDIE**

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CARPENTER

ON

ALCOHOLIC LIQUORS.



PRIZE ESSAY.

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ON THE

USE AND ABUSE

OF

ALCOHOLIC LIQUORS,

IN HEALTH AND DISEASE.

By WILLIAM B. CARPENTER, M.D., F.R.S.,

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JURISPRUDENCE IN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, AND AUTHOR OF  
"THE PRINCIPLES OF PHYSIOLOGY," ETC. ETC.

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WITH A PREFACE,

By D. F. CONDIE, M.D.,

SECRETARY OF THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF PHILADELPHIA, AND AUTHOR OF A  
"PRACTICAL TREATISE ON THE DISEASES OF CHILDREN," ETC. ETC.

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PREFACE BY DR. CONDIE.

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THE opinion that Alcoholic Liquors afford to the human system a stimulus, which, if not absolutely necessary to its well-being, is, nevertheless, beneficial, by promoting in the several organs a vigorous and healthful exercise of their respective functions, and by enabling them, thus, to resist more effectually the various disturbing agencies to which they are daily subjected, is one that has been long entertained, and of the correctness of which a large portion of the public still entertains a firm conviction. To the influence of this opinion may be ascribed much of the intemperance that has prevailed in the world, and it even now presents a formidable barrier to the success of every effort at reform in respect to the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage.

All are agreed as to the baneful influence upon health and morals resulting from the excessive use of alcoholic drinks, and of the importance of guarding against this abuse of them by every means within our power. But so long as the opinion prevails, that in moderate quantities the use of these drinks is both proper and salutary, it will scarcely be possible to guard the masses against indulgence in them to excess — every effort to stay the progress of intemperance, with its attendant evils, disease, poverty, insanity and crime, will be unavailing.

To test the truth of the opinion referred to, by an examination of the effects produced upon the human frame by the use of alcoholic drinks, whether in moderate or excessive doses, is the object of the present Essay. And we know of nothing that has been written upon this important question better calculated to eradicate the prejudices which still exist in respect to intoxicating liquors, and to prevent the habitual abuse of them, by showing that their occasional moderate use, so far from promoting the health and vigour of the human frame, or increasing its capacity to sustain bodily or mental labour, or to resist the extremes of cold and heat, and other depressing agencies, is, on the contrary, under all circumstances, rather injurious than beneficial.

The author of the Essay is one in every respect well qualified to accomplish satisfactorily the task he has undertaken, by his acknowledged familiarity, as a physiologist, with the functions of the human system in a state of health, and by his acquaintance, as an able and skilful practitioner of medicine, with the different agencies by which those functions are disturbed or impeded, and the normal condition of the living organism replaced by one of disease. He brings to the investigation all the light which science can shed upon it, as well as the accumulation of facts derived from experience and observation.

Although we may differ from him as to the value of alcoholic drinks as a remedy for the cure of disease, still, in all his leading conclusions, as to the effects of these liquors upon the corporeal, mental and moral functions of the healthy human system, he is fully borne out by the results of our own observations and experience, acquired during a long series of years' practice as a physician, and as an active participator in the effort at temperance reform, which, originating with a few philanthropists in the United States, speedily enlisted the co-operation of "thousands of the best and most talented individuals" of our own and other lands.

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Believing that the promotion of Temperance may be effectually accomplished by enlightening men's understandings in regard to the actual effects of alcoholic drinks upon the body and the mind, and thus enlisting in its favour the strongest motives by which human actions are influenced—the promotion of happiness, the preservation of health and vigour of frame, and the prolongation of life—we recommend to all the present Essay of DR. CARPENTER, as one of the best text-books of Temperance extant. We are persuaded that its extensive circulation will do much towards bringing about the only result by which drunkenness can be banished from our midst—namely, entire abstinence from all alcoholic drinks.

By the publication of the present cheap edition, Messrs. Blanchard and Lea have placed the work within the reach of every one; and their effort thus to aid in the diffusion of sound temperance doctrines will, we trust, be seconded by the advocates of those doctrines throughout our country.

To popularize as far as possible this edition, the various technical phrases which occur in it have been explained, so as to render their meaning familiar to the unscientific reader.

D. F. C.

*Philadelphia, October, 1853.*