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SOME
ACCOUNT
OF THE
RISE, PROGRESS,
AND
PRESENT STATE
OF THE
BREWERY.

In a LETTER to a FRIEND.



L O N D O N :
Printed for J. ROBINSON, at the *Golden Lion*
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SOME
ACCOUNT

OF THE

RISE AND PROGRESS

OF THE

ART OF BREWERY

BY

J. W. D. W. O. J.

LONDON



W. O. D. W. O. J.

Printed and Sold by J. W. D. W. O. J.



SOME

ACCOUNT

OF THE

Rise, Progress, &c.

S I R,

FROM the extraordinary Summons to all Brewers, inserted in the *Daily Advertiser* of the 11th of *January* last, you desired me, that I would, at my Leisure, give you some Account of the Brewery. However unequal I am to this Task, yet, to comply with your Request, I will undertake it, as far as comes within the Reach of my Knowledge and my weak Talents will admit.

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Brew-

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Brewing is that Art which teaches us, with the Help of Water and Heat, to resolve those Parts of malted Grain that possess fermentable Principles, so that the whole may become a vinous Liquor, resembling, in its Taste and Effects, that which is produced from the Grapes. That it has been long known and practised History informs us, even so far back as the antient *Egyptians*; nor is this surprising, as they, being a People fond of improving themselves in every useful Art, could not neglect Chemistry, of which Fermentation is a considerable Part.

For many Ages Chemistry hardly deserved the Name of Science; its Principles were unknown, and most of its Preparations owing to fortuitous Events and ill directed Labour. Although People of different Nations applied themselves strenuously to this Study, yet were they in Want of proper Means to measure the Degrees of the Element they used most, and knew less,

Italy,

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Italy, in the sixteenth Century, produced the Thermometer, at first a rude and incorrect Instrument, which, wanting settled Points and a sufficient Regularity in its Scale, could only indicate an Increase or Diminution of Heat. In this State it was far from answering any useful Purpose, and served only to shew a Want of something better. After several Amendments, the Honour of bringing this Instrument to the Perfection we now have it, was reserved to *Farenheit*, and the proper Application thereof to the great *Dr. Boerhaave*, both *Dutchmen*; who, on that Account, as well as many others, deserve the Thanks of those who wish well to the Progress of Science and Good of Mankind.

Brewery has still been more neglected than its Mother Science; its Practice fell generally to the Lot of Persons deprived of an experimental Head, and unacquainted with the Laws of Nature. No Wonder that such Men should dully beat

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the Track pursued by ignorant Ancestors, and that wanting Emulation and Generosity themselves, they should have strove to extinguish them in others.

You who are unconcerned smile, and what I here advance attribute, perhaps, to Spleen, perhaps, to something worse; this Censure, however severe, I must submit to bear, if the following Facts should not oblige you to reverse it.

A Company of Brewers we find incorporated in London, as far back as the Year 1247, by Henry the Sixth. This seems to shew an Intention of bringing the Art to a State of Stability, if not of Improvement. Proper Regulations might have secured its Practice to such, who, being properly qualified, should not content themselves with either following implicitly the Directions of blind Guides, or groping in the Dark after an unknown Way.

But,

But, whatever was the Intention, the Effects were then, and, give me Leave to add, are still far from being answerable to it. In these early Times, what we now call Beer, or a Liquor kept to an Age, seems scarce to have been known; the Liquors brewed consisted in little more than Ale speedily to be drank, and small Beer made after. This Defect in the Liquor (from whence the antiquated Term *Alcagee* has taken its Rise) it is apprehended set People on endeavouring to find Means to procure to it a Quality more durable. Hence came the Use of brown Malt, and Ales from thence so famed in Queen Elizabeth's Time. But, as Malt, dried to Excess, neither suited the Modes then practised in Brewing, nor every Palate, and but little the Intent of long Keeping, about 1580, Hops were introduced; they were indeed then used but in small Quantities, as an happy Expedient to preserve the Extracts from Malt either pale or brown. Thus, without Principles, each Town carried on the Process with such

such Malts and Heat in the Water, as they guessed best would answer their several Purposes; Tradition and Experience were their only Guide; and Places became noted for peculiar Beers and Ales, as they were different from others in Taste, and sometimes in Colour; and as the Brewers had more Success either from Chance or from repeated Trials.

Prejudice has never a firmer Hold than when it rests on Mystery. The Opinion was readily embraced, and speedily propagated, that each Sort of Drink was to be brewed but in particular Places. What was owing alone to a skilful, or, if you please, a happy Combination, was often ascribed to unknown Properties residing in the Materials used; and, though those very Materials, in the same Places, frequently produced dissimilar Effects, the Interest each Place had to secure an exclusive Trade, were Reasons. The most successful Way to fix this local Reputation, was to cry up the Qualities of the Water, as this could not be readily conveyed from Place to Place;

Place; and, for that Reason, all Attempts, to prove, by Fact, the Falseness of the Claim, were looked upon as impossible.

But how great soever the Number of those in the Brewery, who hold for topical Divinities; the few that reason will, I trust, never increase it. This undoubtedly is true, that the best Waters to brew with are such as are clear, soft, tasteless, and light; that the Power of such Waters on Bodies is alike in every Place; and that Insects, Vegetables, or Filth of turbid Rivers, are never to be coveted; the Heat, which the Extraction requires, destroys the Essence of these heterogeneous Bodies, and surely their Flavour can never be thought an Advantage. Wherever then a like Heat, an equal Purity either in Air or Water, and lastly, the same Perfection both of Malt and of Hops, can be obtained, there, under the same Circumstances, and with the same Practice, may Beers and Ales be brewed of equal Goodness, Taste, and Value.

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An Art, which to this Day could boast of few or no fixed Principles, and, in the Improvements of which, Experience, derived from Man to Man, has had the greatest Share, must naturally have flourished most, where the greatest Practice was found. Success was owing to repeated Trials, and not to the Materials alone. This Success must become universal, whenever the Rules of the Art shall be discovered by Study, found agreeable to Reason and Experience, and uniformly followed, by Means of more proper and more general Use of the Thermometer. Then will Mankind more generally enjoy the Benefits which Providence has almost equally dispersed, and a constant happy Practice be both the Effect and the Proof of a solid and experimental Theory.

Another Reason of many Miscarriages in this Art, was a received Opinion, that the Merit of Beers and Ales consisted more in their Strength, than in the Delicacy

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licacy of their Flavour or their Pellucidity; from hence numberless Errors arose; Nostrums were introduced, and Secrets to make Beers or Ales appear either stronger or fine. Such were Moloffus, Chalk, Tobacco, Ginger, *Indian* Berries, Salts; the Weakness even extended to lighted Firebrands to be plunged in the Grifts; and I wish, to this Day, I could not mention many other and more filthy Ingredients used by others, whose Skill is hardly superior to their Honour. The Truth is, what has saved Mankind, in a great Measure from them in publick Brewhouses has been the Laws of Excise; and the Duty being done by Officers, whose diligent Inspection has been in that Respect greatly serviceable to their Country. It could be wished a like Attention could be given to a Number of little Publick-Houses who brew for their own Trade. The short Attendance and little Frequency of the Officers give them great Room for illicit Practices, to the Danger of the Consumer's Constitution, and often that of the wearied Traveller.

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admit that no Part of this Fraud takes Place in the Strong Beer Way, but is entirely confined to Small; suppose that the Number of Inhabitants of *London, Westminster, Southwark*, and the adjacent Parts, be nearly 1,045,075 Persons, and that 522538, half this Number, be Consumers of Small Beer served by Brewers; and these, one with another, consume three Pints each Day; then the Quantity of the consumed Liquor is 5442 Barrels each Day.

If the Number of fair Traders in the Brewery be equal to that of the fraudulent Ones, their Trades equal, and the Fraud practised be but of four Gallons in the Barrel; the which it is apprehended is stating the Case in the most favourable Light; then the Quantity of Barrels this Body of People is defrauded of, being one Eighteenth of the Whole, is 302 Barrels each Day; and, if the Qualities principally sold be from 8 s. to 12 s. *per* Barrel, the Medium Price being 10 s. the Amount of this Fraud is 1511 *per* Day, and 55115 *per Ann.* in Small Beer only.

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The Reasons alledged, in Favour of this unfair Practice, are the Poundages and Presents made to Gentlemen's Servants; also that Casks, by growing old, wear, and, by being mended, may after that perhaps not be of true Contents.

In some Degree, both these Facts are true at present; but, had not the Servant been first bribed by the fraudulent Trader, these exorbitant Gifts and Poundages had never subsisted; and, when the Master is properly acquainted, that the Gain made by his Servant is more than doubly repaid by himself, I believe he would join in removing this Complaint. Casks wear; they are a heavy Burthen on the Trade, and therefore must be mended, after which, perhaps, by their being new staved, or by the Hoops being drove in, they may contain somewhat more or somewhat less than the true Gauge. This is unavoidable; but I am certain, and believe the whole Trade will say, this can never be in a Proportion of 4 in 36. The Weights and Measures of other Trades lessen

lessen and wear, and therefore can never be geometrically true; but surely no where in a Proportion of one Ninth, nor is the Trader guilty, as no Fraud is intended.

It will be said, for what is not said, that Brewers are restrained from making their own Casks, and therefore that the Fault is in the Cooper; but who directs the Cooper, if not the Brewer who employs him, and who would withdraw his Custom, did he not find him complying with his Desire?

There was indeed a Time, when the Coopers Company inspected all Casks, stamped them, and destroyed those which were fraudulent: Why, since 20 or 30 Years, this has been discontinued, is what would be too long here to relate, besides which I am not perfectly acquainted with the Fact.

Nothing is more certain than that there are, in the Brewery, Men not only eminent for the great Trade they carry on, but

but also for their Probity. Why these Gentlemen, do not take Cognizance of these Things is surprizing! but, to say the Truth, the Brewery is more a divided Body, than any other Profession whatever. The only Reason I can give for this is, that, their Expences and Charges being very large, they must be always grasping at more Trade, in order to be better enabled to bear them; else would it appear natural, that many of them should attend to the Improvement of their Manufacture and real Qualities of their Drink, and not almost entirely depend on the Strength of their Fortunes, the Extent of the Interest that can be made, and the Number of Publick-houses they can get into their Hands? Could these Gentlemen be once brought to think, that there is no Want of Politeness in Studying of their Profession, and that the Task, far from being above their Reach, is much better adapted to their Capacity, than to that of those who manage for them, they would reap the greatest Advantages, from what ought to be the Object

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than the Trouble and Charge of a Law-suit. Nay, though the Law should in some Cases punish Offenders, it could not stop the Vice. Pity it is the fair Part of the Trade cannot unite in doing Justice to themselves, and that those who interest themselves more particularly for the Necessitous, the Consumers of this Commodity, should be disabled to ask Redress.

Great as the Evil appears to me, the Remedy is no less obvious; Justice would be done, both to the People, and the honest Part of the Trade, if the Authority, which the Coopers Company enjoyed, of stamping the Casks, and destroying such as were defective, should be revived, or if the same Power was put in the Hands of the Officers of Excise; the fair Trader would rejoice in such a Regulation, as he should then find himself upon an equal Footing with his Brethren, and be juridically justified in the Delivering of his Commodity. If any Expence attended either of these Methods, it could
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be but trivial, and might easily be borne with, from what would be saved to the Publick, or from the Benefit the fair Brewer would receive thereby.

If after all you would suppose, that, as there is now no Fraud, there can be now no Need of a Redress in our Trade, give me Leave to ask you, May hereafter none be? Why then should this Trade be freed from the Laws of Justice, exclusive of any other, who have all their Weights and Measures examined and stamped?

My Letter, Sir, has already exceeded its due Bounds, and I am afraid I have before now made you repent of exacting from me a Promise of this Sort: Else I should tell you the Quantity of Spirits made is another Difficulty under which the Brewery labours. It is but a vulgar Error, to think these Gentlemen, in carrying on their Business, use but the worst of Barleys and Wheats; they well know the best Corn yields the most Spirits; for this Reason do they buy the best *Bur-*

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lington Malts, and in general the best Sort of Grain whatever. As their Extracts require no long Keeping, but are, almost as soon as fermented, committed to the Still, so do they employ but little malted Corn; and, were they at this Time deprived of Wheats, as they would use mostly Barley, a Scarcity of which there already is, the Burthen would be too much for the Brewery to bear, and could not but greatly affect the Duty. It seems likely, that, by obliging these Gentlemen to use only such Corn as is malted, whether Wheats, Barley, or any other Grain (and every Seed that will grow will malt, and few there are, however, of an inferior Quality but will) of which the Increase in Malting should be limited; the Poor in the Country would be employed, especially during the Winter Season, and every End most likely be answered.

How Exportation or Importation of Corn affects the Brewery, is another Question you made. But this, as it doth not affect Brewing more than any other Business

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Business dealing in the Corn Way, more properly is a general than a private Question. The Voice of the whole, or, at least, the Sentiments of Men of more Abilities than myself, can best determine, whether the Bounty granted thereon, has usefully to every Purpose answered its Intent. It becomes me best to have done, and to assure you how much I am,

S I R,

Your most humble Servant,

A. B.

Feb. 8, 1757.

F I N I S.

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assure you how much I am,

S. R.

Your most humble Servant,

A. B.

F. I. M. S.