

FROM
VINEYARD
TO
DECANTER.

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FROM VINEYARD TO DECANTER - SHERRY.



FROM VINEYARD TO DECANTER.

A BOOK ABOUT
S H E R R Y.

WITH
A MAP OF THE JEREZ DISTRICT.

BY
DON PEDRO VERDAD.

~~~~~  
*THIRD EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED.*  
~~~~~

LONDON:
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TO
THE PRESIDENT

OF THE

LONDON CO-OPERATIVE WINE ASSOCIATION,

MY ZEALOUS CO-WORKER,

AND TO THE

GOVERNING COUNCIL, SHAREHOLDERS, TICKETHOLDERS, AND OTHER
MEMBERS,

This Book is Dedicated

IN TOKEN OF MY SINCERE GRATITUDE

FOR THEIR


CO-OPERATION

WITH ME

AT THE OUTSET OF THE UNDERTAKING.

W. M. G.

446, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.,
New-year's Day, 1876.



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FROM VINEYARD TO DECANTER.

“ *Falstaff*. . . . A good sherris-sack hath a twofold operation in it. It ascends me into the brain; dries me there all the foolish, and dull, and crudy vapours which environ it; makes it apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery, and delectable shapes; which delivered o’er to the voice (the tongue) which is the birth, becomes excellent wit. The second property of your excellent sherris is—the warming of the blood; which, before cold and settled, left the liver white and pale, which is the badge of pusillanimity and cowardice: but the sherris warms it and makes it course from the inwards to the parts extreme. It illumineth the face; which, as a beacon, gives warning to all the rest of this little kingdom, man, to arm: and then the vital commoners, and inland petty spirits, muster me all to their captain, the heart; who, great, and puffed up with his retinue, doth any deed of courage; and this valour comes of sherris. So that skill in the weapon is nothing without sack, for that sets it a-work; and learning a mere hoard of gold kept by a devil, till sack commences it, and sets it in act and use. Hereof comes it, that Prince Harry is valiant: for the

cold blood he did naturally inherit of his father, he hath, like lean, steril, and bare land, manured, husbanded, and tilled, with excellent endeavour of drinking good, and good store of fertile sherris; that he is become very hot and valiant. If I had a thousand sons, the first principle I would teach them should be,—to forswear thin potations, and to addict themselves to sack.”

K. Henry IV. Part II. act iv. sc. 3.

WHETHER or not “sherris-sack” was the favourite beverage of Harry Madcap and his followers, certain it is that it was highly prized in the reign of Elizabeth. Shakespeare in his later and more prosperous days knew its worth, and boldly sang its praises — the source alike of courage and of wit. Webster derives “sack” and “seck” from the Latin *siccus*, and makes it correspond with the French *sec* and the Spanish *seco*. It was applied to sherry in contradistinction to the sweet Malvoisies which we know to have been imported as early as the time of Edward IV. Popular superstition, it will be remembered, attributes the death

of the Duke of Clarence in 1478 to his being drowned in a butt of wine called Malmsey.

Now considering that for three centuries sherry has been the favourite drink of Englishmen, it is most remarkable what confused ideas exist amongst wine consumers. There ^{Confused ideas.} has been from time to time much correspondence in the daily press about the manufacture of sherry, but the letters are usually written by men already pledged to some crotchet or theory, and it has not served the interest of the writers to give a lucid and impartial explanation of the process through which the grape juice passes, on its way "from vineyard to decanter." My endeavour will be by a succinct account to place within the comprehension of every careful reader the expedients adopted by the Spanish wine rearers to suit the English taste.

The remarks one overhears show how little is known about sherry. Nor is this surprising, for the consuming public look for information from the wine merchant, who too often, more particularly in the provinces, knows nothing himself as to the actual growth and rearing of sherry. Sherry to him is the sherry he sees in England, and what its component parts are he knows not and cares not. Yet in this wine, of all others, a merchant should study the product of the grape *ab initio*; for the system of blending from soleras (which Spain alone of Continental nations pursues) makes it requisite that he should have not merely a general knowledge of the wine, but also an intimate acquaintance with the manufacture of the several ingredients which are blended together in the making of sherry.

The crass ignorance of so many wine merchants has given rise to the absurd

ideas current as to supposed "horrible mixings." If a person of inquiring mind asks some explanation of why a particular sherry has this or that character or colour, and gets an answer which does not explain the point at all, he goes away under the impression that there has been purposely kept in the background something which would not bear the light, and it rankles in his mind that sherry must be some monstrous compound. Yet perhaps nothing was purposely kept back, and an explanation was withheld just because the merchant hardly more than his customer understood the requisite proportions in which sherry is blended, and, unlike his customer, had never had the sense to inquire.

This ignorance of the retailer is easily to be accounted for. It exists as a unique characteristic of the wine trade that capital and connection are considered sufficient qualification without technical

education or training. Now a man cannot practise at the bar without being duly called, or act as solicitor without having served his articles; he cannot practise as a doctor without walking the hospitals and passing certain examinations; he cannot become a civil engineer without serving a regular apprenticeship; to become a tea-broker he must be trained in tea-tasting; and should he untrained undertake any of these positions his ignorance would very shortly be his ruin. But what proficiency is wanted to qualify a wine merchant? A gentleman of good connection with money and time at command, if wishing to augment his income, would seem naturally to cast about him for a berth in the wine trade, without thinking that absence of technical education is in any way a disqualification; and if an opportunity offers he fearlessly assumes the direction of a business. He thinks himself qualified to

cater for others, because, forsooth, he likes a glass of wine as well as any of them ! Possibly he may have gained the reputation of being *a first-rate judge* amongst his friends by roundly stating at dinner that the wine he is drinking is of this or that vintage, and is worth *exactly so many shillings per dozen* ; which priggish opinion was perchance arrived at, when he had just eaten mulligatawny soup, cayenne pepper, or preserved ginger. Under such circumstances a man who had spent his life in the trade would not hazard an opinion ; and till he had tested the wines in question by careful tasting and comparison, he would probably mistrust his judgment.

Knowledge in this does not differ from any other kind of knowledge, in that the more a man knows the more he feels he has to learn ; and a little reflection will show, that as much time and even more arduous application are necessary in the

education of a wine merchant than are wanted in many other trades. A knowledge of general business, office details, &c., must be acquired, added to which there is cellar management, only to be learnt by practice; so that if a cellarman does not thoroughly know his work his master can teach him. Lastly, the palate has to be educated in tasting, a work which, if done satisfactorily, must be commenced at the very rudiments; after these have been mastered, it is only by continued perseverance that the faculty is acquired of detecting the more subtle distinctions. In the case of those who become wine merchants *per saltum* this gradual education is never attempted. "Blood is thicker than water," they say; and pinning their faith upon the maxim, gentlemen go into the trade relying wholly upon their standing and connection.

I think, however, that the *reductio ad*

absurdum of trading is to be found in the wine departments of co-operative stores which deal in miscellaneous goods. I tried sherry from a store where sales in general goods reach a total of hundreds of thousands per annum, and whose business in wine alone is such as would rival and perhaps surpass that of any London wine merchant. In order to test their value by comparison, I obtained samples, through a friend, of sherries between 30s. and 48s. per dozen, from Messrs. Christopher and Co., Messrs. Gorman and Co., and Messrs. John and Charles White. I did not find any advantage in the wines from the General Stores; on the contrary, I thought that the private traders gave better value for the price. Mistrusting my own judgment, I classified all the wines according to their price under three heads, and sending samples, with marks of my own, to two reliable

Miscellaneous
co-operative
stores.

members of the trade, I asked their opinion upon each class after having tested the wines by blind tasting. The following is the result :

In Class I., Mr. A. placed the Society's sherry fourth on the list; Mr. B., third.

In Class II., both Mr. A. and Mr. B. placed the Society's wine third.

In Class III., Mr. A. placed the wine from the stores fourth, and Mr. B. third.

Besides these three Classes I had found quoted in the Company's list as an *Amon-tillado* a wine which seemed to me in no way to resemble what is known in the Spanish trade under that name, and this I marked "*Amontillado.*" In their report the two professionals stated that they could not find the least trace of *amon-tillado* in the blend!

Now consider the advantages at which the great co-operative societies trade. They derive an income of some thousands a year from ticket-money, *though at no*

expense for delivery. Bad debts are impossible; and prepayment produces cash so readily as to present the unheard-of marvel of trade safely conducted without capital. Nevertheless, at this particular Store it is evident that sherry is sold at higher rates than would be charged by a first-class wine merchant; obviously because the committees of management have had no more technical training than our *per saltum* friend when taking his fearless leap, and the departmental managers are not of calibre to supply the lack. There exists, indeed, another alternative. Can it be that wines are sold at a profit sufficient to cover losses made in the other departments?

Here are a few of the questions which are put from time to time, showing the confusion of ideas existing.

Is not the colouring of sherry given by brown sugar and treacle?

How is it that so pale a wine can have so much *brandy* in it? thinking the spirit used to be coloured, just like the Cognac commonly drunk.

What is the exact age of this sherry?

What vintage is it?

Can this wine be pure, as it has a sediment?

Of ordinary sherry—is this a natural wine?

A propos of this last question, I remember an old gentleman going into the office of a London wine merchant and asking for a natural wine: accordingly he was shown the natural kinds in stock, principally, of course, *manzanillas* and *montillas*. Oh! this was not at all what he wanted: he required a brown wine. He was at once told he could have as much brown wine as he liked, but it would not be natural; at which he took great offence, saying he had always bought a brown wine from his wine

merchant, who stated it to be “perfectly natural,” and thereupon he walked off in a huff. Yet I can believe that the wine merchant had in all good faith sold him brown sherry as a natural wine.

In this little treatise, with a view to clear up any doubts which may exist on these and many other points, I propose to give a simple account of what actually takes place in Spain, prior to shipment. It will be seen that there is nothing to hide, and that provided the various ingredients are wholesome, blending is an innocent expedient adopted to gratify the English taste.

The word sherry is a corruption of the Spanish name *Jerez*, the town from which this wine derives its name.

Glance at the accompanying map, and you will find *Puerto de Santa Maria* (Port St. Mary's) at the north corner of Cadiz Bay, on the mouth

District of
growth.

of the river Guadalete. About nine miles on the north-east you will find Jerez de la Frontera ; and about twelve miles from this, nearly due west, San Lucar de Barra-meda, at the mouth of the river Guadalquivir, which affords water communication with Seville. The triangular tract of country lying between these points, being that in which sherry is grown, I shall call the Jerez District.

The Madrid and Seville Railway passing through Jerez and Port St. Mary's, makes the circuit of the bay to Cadiz, having, at Puerto Real, about $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Port St. Mary's, a short branch running down to the "Trocadero," where all steamers ship their cargoes of wine.

A ludicrous error has its origin in the fact that the Trocadero mole is included in the Port of Cadiz. Some London firms, anxious to appear as sherry shippers, though with no house in Spain, put on

their cards “ Cadiz,” for address ; whereas in that town there is not to be found a single butt kept for exportation, nor have any shippers their head-quarters there. From the accompanying map it will be seen how very far Cadiz is from the wine-producing district ; and if traders make such egregious mistakes, it is no wonder that the general public have vague ideas on the subject.

The good people of Jerez, from the lucky accident that sherry takes its name from their town, used to foster the delusion that their wine was superior to that shipped by firms of Port St. Mary’s, whereas the produce of the vineyards near Port St. Mary’s is commonly purchased by Jerez merchants, and *vice versa*. The two towns are close together, and the wines shipped from Jerez and Port St. Mary’s differ no more than wine from St. James’ Street differs from wine bought in Pall Mall : thus for

instance, Duff Gordon's sherry is reared at Port St. Mary's, and Gonzalez' at Jerez.

I shall treat of the different stages of rearing and blending in the following order :

I. The vintage ; and divers characters assumed by the grape juice in fermentation, the characters being *Fino*, *Amontillado*, *Oloroso*, and *Basto*.

II. The composition of soleras.

III. The blending of the different soleras, which constitutes preparation for shipment.

I. The Vintage ; and Characters assumed by the Juice in Fermentation.

The sherry vintage commences about the end of the first week in September.

The grapes are trodden out, some 10 lb. weight of *yeso* (gypsum) having been

sprinkled over 1500 lb. of grapes; the juice is called *mosto*, and is stored in *bodegas* (wine barns), each vineyard in its separate lot. I have studied publications written with the object of proving that this yeso is used to effect a chemical change,* and I have even found suggestions that it is employed advisedly to produce an effect deleterious to a wholesome wine. It is surely sufficient that it has been in use beyond written records, and long before the science of chemistry was distinguished from mere alchemy; and unless plainer evidence can be brought forward of a chemical effect, it will, especially in dry years, continue to be used as an adhesive.

My reader must accompany me into a bodega, in order to understand what rearing and blending mean. In the middle of the town of Port St. Mary's, or Jerez, we come to a

Bodega.

* See pages 74 and 108.

high wall, which surrounds the premises, and stopping at a large, high double door, ring, and when admitted by the wicket, we walk through a yard. In a corner, or on one side, is the cooperage, where a number of *toneleros* (coopers) are busy coopering the casks. This is a most important branch, for a high-class wine may be worth 500*l.* per butt or more, and one faulty stave will spoil the whole of a cask of wine. Seasoned casks only are used for exportation. When new, the first purpose the casks are put to is to hold mosto, which runs no risk of being injured by fault in the wood, as acquired flavour is carried off by the gases of fermentation. In this way the casks become seasoned, and then they are recoopered and put into regular use. The bodega itself, unlike the English idea of a wine cellar, is a large building above ground and of considerable height, which by good ventilation is

Casks.

kept perfectly cool. We enter from the yard by a large double door, and see casks to the number of hundreds, and sometimes thousands, piled one above the other in rows, with a broad gangway between each row.

The casks contain the *soleras*. Now the word *solera* signifies foundation, and is well explained in Solera. the following, which I quote from an amusing little publication on Sherry :

“ Applied to wine it means an old wine, kept in casks which are never moved so long as it exists as a *solera*, on the foundation of which younger wines are reared. Supposing you have a *solera* of one hundred butts, and you require ten butts drawn from it for making up some particular quality of wine which you wish to ship; you draw off with a siphon your ten butts from the hundred in equal proportions from each without disturbing them.”

I have already mentioned that the grape is trodden out and put into separate lots. The mosto is left to ferment in casks till next spring, and then it is poured off from the butt in which it has stood, leaving all the sediment at the bottom of the cask. This last operation is technically called "racking from the lees," and what *was* mosto is afterwards called wine.

During the first one or two years very
Development of wine. extraordinary changes occur in
 the wine, which are unaccountable. Wines from the same vineyard, which have been subjected to the same treatment under exactly similar circumstances, develop in different butts totally different characters. If the research of chemists could be successfully directed to discover the reasons of this eccentric development the philosopher's stone would be discovered, and El Dorado realized. Without the exercise of any skill the

wine assumes such different characters as to be classed as *Fino*, *Oloroso*, and *Basto*.

The most valued character is called *fino*, being of a deliciously delicate, soft, mellow flavour, and very pale in colour; but not more than an average of 10 to 20 per cent. of the whole takes this highly satisfactory turn.

Again, there is a higher class of development which takes place in the *fino*, producing *amontillado*, and this is the most valued of all. It has the character of *fino*, and in addition a charming flavour all its own, from which it is supposed to take its name *amontillado*, i.e. "a la montilla," montilla being a wine grown in the province of Cordova, to which I shall later refer. It is invaluable in blending in order to give a better character to wine which has become too heavy.

Oloroso is a nutty-flavoured development, rather deeper in colour,
 Oloroso. and of a stouter character.
 When old this wine is of great body and perfectly dry.

Lastly, there is an inferior development which is called *basto* (coarse).
 Basto. In very good years, however, this unsatisfactory character is not developed in large quantities, nor does it ever take place to a great extent in wines from the best vineyards.

There are also butts which are kept from turning sour by being distilled, and this saves the rearer from total loss.

II. *Composition of Soleras.*

When the wines have assumed their distinctive characters, and this requires one, five, or even more years, they are used for replenishing the soleras. In the shipper's bodega many soleras are kept, each con-

tained in a given number of butts. A solera, whether classed as Fino, Oloroso, or otherwise, has its distinctive quality required in the preparation of wine for shipment. It has been reared and nursed for years with careful attention, and unmeasured care and thought have been bestowed upon it; each butt has been tasted from time to time, and any cask in which a material deterioration has been detected is rejected from the solera, and probably fortified with aguardiente.

The wine is dipped out of the casks for tasting by means of a *venencia*. Imagine a deep silver cup fastened lengthways to the end of a long whalebone stick, which at the upper end has a small silver cross-bar to prevent its passing through the bung-hole. The bung, which is always left loose, is removed, and the *venencia* plunged into the cask from which a sample is required. It is wonderful to see the skill

with which the wine is poured from the *venencia* to a glass held in the other hand; falling through the air in a stream, it is caught in the glass without a single drop being lost. If the uninitiated try this they probably spill it all, and end by pouring it over themselves, to the no small delight and amusement of the *capataz* (head-man of cellar) standing by.

The *capataz* is often very skilful in little feats of this kind. I have seen a man with a glass in each hand, the one being full of wine, send with a clever twist the contents in a perpendicular column into the air and catch every drop of it in the other glass as it falls, and so on backwards and forwards.

When any *solera* is diminished, by being used in blending for shipment as I shall explain hereafter, it is *rociado* (replenished) with a younger wine of similar description. This

Rociando.

young wine, after having been mixed with the solera for a certain time, assumes all the character of the older wine, to which it has been added. Of course this process requires the utmost skill, care, and judgment, for if carelessly done a whole solera, the result of years of tender watching and tasting, may be spoilt.

Two classes of soleras require explanation, for to them misunderstandings frequently attach, and it will only then remain to supply some information as to the spirit used in sherry blending, for my reader to have a knowledge of each of the requisite component parts.

Vino dulce (sweet wine) is commonly made from sweeter kinds of grape, notably from that called ^{*Vino dulce.*} Pedro Jimenez. The grapes are exposed to the sun when picked until they almost become raisins, and they then go through the ordinary process of pressing,

fermentation, &c. Soleras of the wine produced are of a sweet luscious flavour, and of an oily and slightly glutinous consistency. The finer kinds resemble a liqueur, and are of great value.

Vino de color (colour wine) is made of six butts of unfermented mosto
Vino de color. simmered down into one, over a slow heat, and blended in certain proportions with fully fermented white wine. With great age the solera of this wine is very valuable, being of a deep brown colour, and a perfect essence.

In the distillation of *aguardiente* (spirit) the utmost care is taken as to
Aguardiente. the quality of the wine from which it is produced. It is perfectly refined, and of course wholly the produce of the grape. Cheap sherries no doubt are fortified with spirit distilled from very inferior wine, and sometimes even with other spirit, but in the blending of high-priced sherries the *aguardiente* used

must be distilled from good wine ; seven butts of young wine being required to make one butt of spirit. As is the case with all French brandy, the aguardiente is quite colourless, and no chemical test yet discovered can distinguish between pure alcohol from the grape and pure alcohol distilled from other vegetable productions. To a practised taster, however, the flavour of the spirit unerringly betrays its origin.

The head of each cask is inscribed with the distinguishing mark of its solera, and the number of butts of which it consists. The casks are generally piled three tiers high, resting on each other.

Now from the former account it will be seen that a pale solera is a mixture of wines of different years, and has not had any foreign substance such as spirit or sweet wine added. It is called *natural*, because all its components are

obtained in the ordinary process of nature's fermentation. I confess that this is straining the use of the word *natural* to its utmost, but I think that for trade purposes pale soleras may fairly be so described.

Incidentally I may mention that there is one class of merchant who Almacenista. often intervenes between the grower and the shipper, and that is the wine rearer, called *almacenista*. His business is to buy the young wines from growers, and rear them; and then either to sell them in their natural state to shippers or to rear them on his own soleras before selling them. Here the business of the *almacenista* ends, as he does not blend for shipment.

In the shipper's bodega there are, of course, many soleras in course of rearing, which, like those of the *almacenista*, are kept for throwing on to the soleras used in blending for shipment.

III. Preparation for Shipment.

The next subject to be considered is that of preparation for the English market. An order comes out from England to ship a quantity of a certain wine. It may be similar to that formerly shipped by the house from which it is ordered, or the quality wished may be to match exactly a given sample.

The former order is of course the easier, as a reference to the blend book will show the proportions of each solera, which were used in the prior shipment, and besides a reserve sample is kept of each kind shipped, which is readily found. But as some years may have elapsed since the former shipment, even in this operation great skill is required; the soleras may have changed during the intervening period, although imperceptibly, in the *rociando*; and the reserve sample itself has now very likely got a strong

bottle flavour, which has to be allowed for.

The execution of the order is far more difficult if the sample be from wine of another house, as then there is nothing to guide but the nose and palate.

The sample is brought into the tasting office, and the blend glass called into
 Blending. requisition. It is a long and narrow glass tube, and on it are marked forty parts—the number of *jarras* (jars) which a butt contains, by which all the wines for shipment are measured.

The sample having been tasted, the capataz is sent with his venencia into the cellar. On learning the different number of jars of each solera that is required, he dips out of the butt the proportion ordered and pours it into the graduated glass.

In England, people do not ask for natural wines, such as the fino, amontil-

lado, and oloroso soleras, whether blended together or separate, consequently, in addition to these wines, recourse is had to the *vino dulce* for sweetness, and to the *vino de color* for colour.

The saccharine matter in the *vino dulce* and *vino de color*, when added to the natural wine, would occasion refermentation, and this can only be prevented by the addition of so much aguardiente as to leave no doubt of the wine keeping sound.

The right blend having been ascertained, it is left standing to be tasted once or twice afterwards in order to make sure that it is correct. If it matches the required sample well and good, if not, a little from this or that solera is added till it exactly corresponds. The blend is entered in the blend book, which then gives the number of butts required and the number of jarras to be taken from each solera.

This book is handed into the bodega for execution of the blend. Supposing it to be a ten-butt shipment, ten butts are brought into the cellar, having been most carefully examined and rinsed out with spirit to make sure that they contain no impurity. If then there be ten jarras required for each butt from a solera of say fifty butts, two jarras would be drawn from each of the fifty butts of the solera and put into the ten butts, and so on from each solera; so that whatever the number of butts belonging to such solera, the wine for each cask is drawn off in equal quantities.

Blending is the most important operation in the preparation of wine for shipment; and with a view to insure that my reader shall understand it, and further to convey some idea of the proportions in which sweet, colour, and spirit are added to the natural wines, in order to match

the sample of what is wanted for England, I give the following:

ORDINARY PALE SHERRY.

Pale Soleras	..	..	..	..	..	20	jarras.
Fino Soleras	..	..	..	..	..	16	„
Vino Dulce	..	..	..	..	..	3	„
Aguardiente	..	..	..	..	..	1	„
						—	
						40	„
						—	

ORDINARY GOLDEN SHERRY.

Pale Soleras	..	..	..	..	..	22	jarras.
Oloroso Soleras	..	..	..	..	..	8½	„
Vino de Color	..	..	..	..	..	2	„
Vino Dulce	..	..	..	..	..	6	„
Aguardiente	..	..	..	..	..	1½	„
						—	
						40	„
						—	

ORDINARY BROWN SHERRY.

Pale Soleras	..	..	..	..	..	23	jarras.
Oloroso	..	..	..	..	..	4	„
Vino de Color	..	..	..	..	..	5	„
Vino Dulce	..	..	..	..	..	6	„
Aguardiente	..	..	..	..	..	2	„
						—	
						40	„
						—	

The wine being now blended it undergoes a process of fining, Fining. in the first place with whites of eggs and then with earth, from the neighbourhood of Lebrija, such as we call fuller's earth. The contents are stirred up by a *palo* (stick), a long piece of iron with a loop for the hand at the upper end and a brush attached to the bottom; this latter is inserted through the bung-hole, and the contents stirred till they are thoroughly amalgamated. The wine when quite clear and bright is drawn off into casks for shipment, upon the head of which the brand of the firm is burnt, and close to the bungs a distinguishing mark is cut corresponding to the order.

Thus it will be seen that in the blending of sherry nothing which can be called a foreign substance is introduced.

It will serve to show how arbitrary are the names given to sherries prepared

to suit the English taste that *vino de pasto* (dinner wine—*wine for repast*) is well known in England as applied to a superior dry sherry; whereas in the Peninsula it may mean a very cheap wine, such as the French would call *vin ordinaire*, and is often used as we employ the expression—table-beer.

An instance of the survival of an old term is when lamp spirit is called *spirits of wine*, for wine is the one vegetable product from which it is never made.

NATURAL WINES.

I shall now touch on Manzanilla, Montilla, and Seville wines, which may be taken as the only natural wines known in England. There has been a division of opinion as to the origin of the name Manzanilla, some supposing it to be derived from a small village of that name in the vicinity of Seville, but there is no trace that this wine was ever grown there. I believe the true derivation of the name is from the Spanish word *manzanilla*—the English of which is camomile—for the wine has a bitter tonic flavour resembling camomile. It is grown chiefly in the neighbourhood of San Lucar de Barrameda, the vintage commencing rather earlier than that of ordinary sherry. The wine, which is of a pale straw colour, is kept in distinct soleras,

and shipped in its natural state. The true Manzanilla in no way resembles the wine so often met with in England under that name, which is simply a dry sherry. In it there cannot be detected the slightest taste of sweet, and where such taste is found *vino dulce* has been added, and consequently the wine has been fortified with spirit. A person who has once acquired a taste for real Manzanilla would never be deceived by imitations.

The bitter taste is at first unpalatable, but this prejudice overcome, no blended wine is liked after it; the sweet and colour are detected, as giving a coarse flavour in comparison to the natural wine. An amusing story is told of the late Earl of Derby. Being a great sufferer from gout, his physician advised that in the place of sherry he should drink Manzanilla; he obtained some from his wine merchant, and having tasted, re-

turned it, with his compliments, saying that of the two he preferred the gout to the wine.

Manzanilla is very frequently recommended for gout and acidity of the stomach: it acts strongly as a tonic, and probably no other wine is so entirely free from the saccharine which generates acid. I have known people affected by gout, or rheumatism, upon whom one glass of port or sherry would bring an attack, and yet who drink this wine regularly with perfect impunity. The ablest physicians recommend Manzanilla, but in the fear that it will not please a customer whose taste is biassed by habit, the wine merchant supplies a specially dry sherry, lest he should get no further orders. Manzanilla was prescribed for the very reason that sherry is unwholesome to the patient, and the stuff does not answer; why? just because Manzanilla was not tried, the wine merchant having preferred

to suit the taste rather than the health of his customer.

That I do not speak without evidence is proved by the following instance of what occurred at a club famous for its cellars. A member just recovering from an attack of gout, which had confined him to his house, and during which he had with impunity drunk Manzanilla regularly, ordered at the club a bottle of the wine supplied under that name. He found it a dry sherry, with no pretence of being a natural wine, and accordingly sent to the committee a sample of the real thing. In their reply they stated that undoubtedly the sample before them was a pure Manzanilla, but they did not keep it simply because members would not drink it, and that they were aware that that sold under the name was not really Manzanilla.

Large quantities, however, now come to England, and many people drink it.

If it only had a fair chance, I am convinced it would be drunk still more, as some of the finest Manzanillas grown are shipped to the English market. It is drunk by the people of the Jerez District, although of a class far inferior to that selected for export. Blended sherry such as is shipped to England is of course quite unknown among the natives.

Officers who have been quartered at Gibraltar are accustomed to Manzanilla. A town some five miles over the frontier, called San Roque, is a favourite ride for them, where, at a small *venta* (wine-shop) very fair Manzanilla can be got; and many an officer looks back with fond memory to the refreshing cup there tasted, and speaks of it as a thing only to be found in the Peninsula, in fact, *cosa de España*; whereas, as I have shown, there no longer exists just cause for this complaint.

Another natural wine known in Eng-

land is Montilla. It is grown in a district of that name in the province of Cordoba, and is of deeper ^{Montilla.} straw colour than Manzanilla, and much stouter in body. Formerly this wine used to be reared in *tinajas* (earthenware jars), and very little of it was shipped owing to the difficulty of transport, but the railway has now to a great extent remedied this deficiency, and much more is exported. It is, when fine, a most delicious wine, full of bouquet and body, and yet perfectly natural.

There are grown, in the neighbourhood of Seville, wines which, of late years, have been sold in England in their ^{Seville Wine.} natural state. They can be bought at a cheap rate as they pass the Customs, at the 1s. duty, and when good they do well for quick consumption, but resemble Chablis more than sherry.

An incident, amusing now, but at the time most unpleasant, occurred to me

when travelling with a friend who was purchasing wine. We took a carriage from Seville and drove to the nearest point on the high road to Villa Nueva. Having put up our carriage at a farmhouse, we proceeded on foot to the town, some two miles distant. The cross roads were completely under water, and we had to pick our way along the fences.

Arrived at the town, the work began of tasting through the different wines and marking the casks approved. Our broker, who accompanied us, appeared to be hail-fellow-well-met with everyone, and at about five o'clock he said he had settled where we were to dine. We were there-upon conducted to the house of one of the growers and settled at a small round table with our host, his wife, and daughter, and dinner commenced. The first course was lumps of pork and garlic, the second garlic and lumps of pork. Three more courses, the only difference being that the garlic

might be a little stronger. Each of the five courses we were *made* to partake of bountifully, no denial being taken. The wine was brought from the bodega in a jug, like cyder in Devonshire, or home-brewed ale at a farmhouse, but only one small tumbler was provided for the whole party, and handed round with the jug. Really, never had I been compelled to eat so much and to feel so uncomfortable; I begged and entreated to be excused, but all to no effect, eat I must. Then first one village notoriety and then another dropped in to see the foreigners feed, each being wrapped in his *capa* (cloak), and, of course, smoking. At eight o'clock, the church bell rang. Our host was in the act of telling us a story; he immediately stopped, and he and all, with crossed arms and bent head, gabbled at their *Ave Maria*; this done, in the same breath he continued his story, prefacing it with a tremendous

oath, and a thump on the table to give it point.

At last, to our intense delight, our broker told us he had got beds for us at another house, and the relief to get in the fresh air, and with the prospect of bed and rest, is easier imagined than described. We entered the house where we were to sleep, when to our horror we saw supper laid out. In vain we protested that we had only just dined, in vain we stated our inability to eat more. We found ourselves seated at a round table, as before, and had to undergo five more courses, exactly similar to the dinner from which we had just risen, that is, lumps of pork and garlic varied by garlic and lumps of pork. I thought I should never live through it; but at last we were liberated, and threw ourselves on our beds cigar in mouth. And now what horrible discord greets our ears? it is as if all the cow-horns, penny

whistles, and cracked drums of a whole county were being blown and beaten at our door, and in comes our host to say that the town band had turned out to serenade us, so out we had to go and stand looking as pleased as we could under the circumstances till they had done.

Eventually we got to bed, with the firm resolve that nothing would induce us to touch a thing in the morning, which we stuck to out of sheer desperation, against all the pressing of our host, and walked off to the high road and ordered the horses to be put to, positively asserting that we could not eat any breakfast while the horses were being harnessed. This seemed to take time, and to our dismay we found that our new host had stolen a march on us, and breakfast was prepared; so we had to sit down with the best grace we could to five more courses exactly the same as the banquets of the night before. At last we joyfully got into our carriage and

drove off to Seville, feeling as if we should not be able to look at anything edible for a week. Such is Spanish hospitality: hearty no doubt in intention, though in practice somewhat unpleasant to share.

CHEAP SHERRIES.

With many, cheapness is the rage ; and it may be interesting to analyse the cost of the different items of supposed sherry sold at 14s. per dozen.

Cheap
Sherry.

They would run somewhat thus:—

	s.	d.
Duty on 1 doz., at 2s. 6d. per gallon ..	5	0
Bottles and bottling, say	3	0
Proportion of freight from Cadiz Bay, and landing expenses 2l. per butt	0	9
	<hr/>	
	8	9
	<hr/>	

leaving for *original cost of the fluid*, allowing nothing for agents' (if any) commissions and retailer's profit, 5s. 3d. (or 2s. 7½d. per gallon), which would be at the rate of 14l. 8s. per butt in Cadiz Bay. Of Jerez District wine, I believe none so cheap is shipped, and if people will buy such stuff under the name of sherry, it is a moot point whether they are not as much to blame as the specu-

lators who pander to their taste. There are some cheap coarse sherries shipped at so low a price that, in the ordinary course of trade, they would cost the merchant, duty paid, in England, about 15s. per dozen. From this may be seen the lowest price at which sherry can be bought at retail; but I should strongly recommend inquirers to be satisfied with making experiments in the calculation, and to think twice before trying the fluid.

I may here remark that in this little work I treat solely of Spanish wines, which alone would be supplied under the name of sherry by any well-informed and honest trader. No doubt ^{Hamburgh.} large quantities of "Hamburgh" are sold in England, but as compared with sherry the quantity is very small. What "Hamburgh" is, I do not pretend to say; but I believe the Hamburghers can make up a production which will, without one

drop of the juice of the grape, so to speak, match any sample of wine, be it red or white.

If wine be used as an ingredient in the manufacture of "Hamburgh sherry," it must plainly be of too low a class to be sold in England as wine, and the following, translated from a German newspaper, will show what materials are ready to hand to those who make it their calling to deal in refuse and filth:—

"In the district of Neuwied things have come to a sorry pass indeed. The evil has been imported by wine dealers from abroad, who come in numbers every autumn, and, whether the vintage promises well or ill, buy up the growing grapes, and make from them five or six times the quantity of wine which the press of an honest vintner would produce. The reader will ask, How is that possible? Here is the explanation.

"During the vintage, at night, when

the moon has gone down, boats glide over the Rhine freighted with a soapy substance manufactured from potatoes, and called by its owners sugar. This stuff is thrown into the vats containing the *must*, water is introduced from pumps and wells, or, in case of need, from Father Rhine himself. When the brewage has fermented sufficiently, it is strained and laid away. The lees are similarly treated three, four, or five times over. When the dregs are so exhausted that further natural fermentation has become impossible, chemical ferments and artificial heat are applied. This cooking or stewing is continued often until midwinter, producing wines of every description for the consumption of every class. The noble fluid is sent away by land and water to its places of destination; and the dealers are seen no more until the next vintage season. Their business lies in the most distant parts to which the

beverage can be carried, where, of course, there is no end to their praises of its purity, its sources, and of the rustic simplicity of its producers.

“The example thus set by strangers has been only too closely followed at home. The nuisance is largely on the increase, and the honest vintner is the greatest sufferer. He rarely succeeds in selling his entire vintage at once, partly because the quantity of grapes required by these manufacturers is constantly diminishing, and partly because the practices described have driven away desirable purchasers from the localities. The ‘Gallization’ of wine benefits none but the professional adulterators and the poorest class of small growers, who are indebted to it for a sure market for their small and inferior crops. Some grapes are still required for the fabrication of wine, although an infinitely small quantity is sufficient.”

ADVERTISED ANALYSES.

Of late years there has come into vogue a practice which I think derogatory to good honest trade. Having obtained, too often from some venal quack, analyses purporting to guarantee that their commodities are wholesome, traders advertise the analysis (or such parts of the figures as may suit them) with a view to influence the public.

Before proceeding to discuss how far analyses of wine deserve confidence as tests of their value, and as guides in their selection, I would ask, *What guarantee is given to the public that the wine subsequently sold is similar to the sample analysed?* If a wine merchant be of standing, and acquainted with his trade, he would obviously consider his name alone ample guarantee for the wines he sells without needing an analysis to prop him up.

I have tasted sherry described by analysts as *natural*, in which the sweet of *vino dulce* was distinctly noticeable. If they were right in certifying that the sample they tasted was one of a natural wine, we must suppose that the bulk sold did not correspond with the sample analysed, and that every purchaser was shamefully gulled. Assuming the power of the analyst to define wine and to detect blending, what supervision has he over the sherry sold? Some sort of value might attach to an analysis if the chemist had personal supervision of each butt of sherry from the time that a sample was analysed until the wine leaves the cellar in bottle or small casks. As this is impossible purchasers depend upon the uprightness of the merchant. Now we have seen that a wine merchant, with reliance on his standing and confidence in his name, would not resort to

Bulk may differ from sample.

so very paltry an expedient as advertising an analysis. May not the same mark be put on any class of wine when shipped from Cadiz Bay? or, if blended in the London cellar, may not the seal and brand be put on any cork, whether the wine guaranteed be the same as that analysed or not?

Hitherto I have assumed that analyses of wine afford scientific guarantee of the quality of the sample under investigation. In the earlier editions of this work I pointed out how very misleading advertised analyses might be; and my endeavours met with so extensive a recognition and such general support as to lead me now to offer some further explanation.

Analysis is to resolve a compound into its elements, and to weigh these separately, and submit them to examination.

Unless the analysis be exhaustive (i. e. unless 100 parts per centum be accounted for), it is of value to show what the chemist has found, but does not establish the negative proposition, that the wine contains nothing foreign to the grape. If therefore the figures of any published analysis fail to show 100 parts per centum, they in no way prove that the liquor analysed is wholesome, for the unaccounted parts may be actually poisonous. A true analysis is made by taking the subject to pieces, and accounting for every part; and I doubt whether this could be done in wine on a less quantity than three or four gallons. Even then, however great the care and accuracy of the analyst, there would be loss. The hired analysts, who practise on the ignorance of a public necessarily unscientific, never attempt an exhaustive analysis. They assume that the liquor analysed is a beverage, and search only

for probabilities ; their investigations consist in looking for what they expect, and accounting for what they find. It would seem then that there lies this difference between men of science and charlatans, that the latter supply imitation analyses to order, stating what they have found, whereas the former examine and endeavour to classify and account for whatever there may be in the subject submitted.

In wine of course the principal component is water, the second is alcohol, and the third sugar ; over and above these are solid matter and certain acids, all of which admit of tolerably accurate determination. The character of a wine depends partly upon the proportion which these component parts bear to one another, but also very much upon an indefinable influence which is spoken of as *bouquet*. The liquid *ether* is now universally used as a rapid stimulant and

as an anæsthetic. Taste and smell ether, and you can learn why all chemists believe that bouquets have their origin in liquids of the same nature as ether; although no one of them has yet been successfully isolated and examined.

Percentage of alcohol *by volume* is to percentage of proof spirit by Sikes, as 1 is to 1·7525, and this proportion holds good whatever be the strength.

The proportion which alcohol per cent. *by weight* bears to proof spirit is less easily expressed, but for practical purposes the following figures will serve :

Absolute Alcohol per cent. by Weight.	Percentage of Proof Spirit at 60° F., after Sikes.
7·	15·28
8·	17·43
9·	19·58
10·	21·73
11·	23·87
12·	26·00
13·	28·13
14·	30·26
15·	32·38

Absolute Alcohol per cent. by Weight.	Percentage of Proof Spirit at 60° F., after Sikes.
16·	34·50
17·	36·61
18·	38·71
19·	40·81
19·57	42·00
20·	42·90

The proportion of alcohol or strength in wine is learnt by the easiest of chemical tests, but the result is variously expressed. I may safely say that no analysis is advertised in the desire honestly to inform the English consumer which omits to express the proportion of alcohol by proof spirit. In France quotations of alcohol are always made by volume, and thus are generally understood; in England, however, this end can only be attained by quoting in proof spirit, for without reference to tables, even a wine merchant would not readily understand quotations under any other denomination.

The first process of fermentation, when the substance used contains starch as

grain, potatoes, apples, &c., converts the starch into glucose (the scientific term for what is otherwise called grape sugar), the second process of fermentation converts the glucose (whether made from starch or existing naturally as in grapes and most fruits) into alcohol and carbonic acid gas. In all wine-growing countries means are known for checking fermentation, and wine from the same juice may be made to differ according as the process of fermentation is allowed to run its course or is artificially checked.

The chief vegetable sugars are divided by chemists into grape and cane.

Cane sugar is principally obtained from maple, beet, and the sugar-cane, but it is the product of vegetables other than those which produce grape sugar.

Grape sugar has not necessarily anything to do with grapes. What chemists call grape sugar or (more technically and

accurately) glucose, is found most abundantly throughout the vegetable kingdom. All home-made wines, gooseberry wine, currant wine, &c., contain it as well as grape wine.

With this introduction I proceed to offer a few remarks upon four analyses which have come under my notice.

Dr. Hardwicke, "medical officer of health, and public analyst for the parish of Paddington," writes: "I had the 'Spécialité' sherry tested in my laboratory, and am satisfied that it is a genuine, high-class, *natural* wine, and free from any *admixture* or *acidity*." Now

Analysis I. an analysis of this wine given below states the absolute alcohol by volume to be 20 per cent., which corresponds with 35·050 of proof spirit, according to Sikes's hydrometer. With reference to the natural strength of wine, I think I cannot do better than make the

following extract from Dr. Druitt's well-known work :*

“The best account of sherry is that given before the Committee of the House of Commons on the Import Duties on Wines, in 1852, by the late Dr. Gorman, physician to the British Factory, at Cadiz, long a resident in Spain. He says that no natural sherry comes to this country : it is all mixed and brandied. The quantity of proof spirit which good pure sherry contains by nature is 24 per cent., possibly 30. The less mature and less perfectly fermented the wine, the more brandy is there added to it to preserve it. ‘Yet let it never be forgotten,’ the late Dr. Gorman added, ‘it is not necessary to infuse brandy into any well-made sherry wine. If the fermentation is perfect, it produces alcohol sufficient to preserve the wine for a century in any country.’” — ‘Minutes of Evidence,’ Part 2. Question 5776.

* ‘Report on Cheap Wines,’ by Dr. Druitt. London : Renshaw, 356, Strand.

It will therefore be seen that Dr. Hardwicke certifies that a wine is *natural* which contains far more alcohol than the utmost limit which the scientific evidence before the House of Commons proves to be found in a natural wine.

A gentleman having purchased some of the aforesaid "Spécialité" Sherry had it analysed, and wrote to the vendor: "I am very particular as to the wine I drink; and as I have been hitherto buying 'Every-day Sherry,' at 60s. a dozen, I am rejoiced to find now that I can purchase wine of equal strength and superior bouquet at half that price." *Of equal strength!* Thus, after receiving Professor Redwood's analysis, he is satisfied of the value of the wine by reason of its strength. Whereas my readers have learnt that it

is the low-class and sweetened wines which most require aguardiente.

Here is Professor Redwood's Report, containing what the gentleman who appealed to him describes as "his most elaborate analysis." A cursory examination of the figures will show that anything pretending to be an analysis of wine could hardly be less elaborate.

PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY OF GREAT
BRITAIN.

17, BLOOMSBURY SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,
5th December, 1873.

*Analytical Department, under Dr. Redwood, Professor of
Chemistry to the Society, and Analyst under "The
Adulteration of Food, Drink, and Drugs Act."*

SIR,—I have completed the analysis of the sample of sherry you left with me, and proceed to report the results. Judged by the palate, it might be represented as a light, moderately dry wine, with nothing to object to in its flavour or apparent strength. It is slightly acid to test-paper, and has a specific gravity of 986·8. These characters correspond with those of a sample of reputed good Montilla sherry, the specific gravity of which was found to be 986·6, and the acidity almost identical with that of your sample.

I proceeded to make a more minute analysis, the results of which were as follows :

	Parts in 100.
Absolute alcohol, by volume	20·0
Free or unneutralized acid, partly	
volatile and partly non-volatile ..	0·54
Volatile acid (acetic acid)	0·1
Sugar and extract	2·5
Ash, from incineration of extract ..	0·45
Mineral acid, or inorganic matter, not yielded by grape-juice	<i>none</i>

These results are all satisfactory. The proportion of alcohol is that found in the best samples of sherry; the volatile acid (acetic acid) is not more than is usually present; and the fixed acid is the *true acid of the grape*, namely, tartaric acid. The ash is not more than it should be, and contains *nothing foreign to the grape*

In preparing this analysis, I have been enabled to observe that the alcohol, when separated from the other constituents of the wine, was *pure in flavour and of good quality*, and that there was *nothing objectionable* in the extract or other products that were separated in the process of analyzation.

I am, yours truly,

(Signed) T. REDWOOD.

Dr. Redwood finds that the specific gravity corresponds with that of “reputed good Montilla sherry.” He might have added that it also corresponds exactly with the specific gravity of brandy-and-water if mixed to match. In proportion

as spirit is added to water, the liquid becomes *lighter* in specific gravity. In proportion as sugar is added to water, the liquid becomes *heavier* in specific gravity. A skilful dispenser of the punch-bowl can therefore hold out to his boon companions the striking advantage that the specific gravity of the grog he offers them “corresponds with that of a sample of reputed good Montilla sherry.”

Dr. Redwood proceeds: “The proportion of alcohol is that found in the *best* samples of sherry.” He might have added, that the proportion of alcohol is that often found in the *worst* samples of sherry; for, in fact, the bulk of the sherry consumed in this country contains 35° of proof spirit more or less, corresponding to 20 per cent. by volume.

“The ash contains nothing foreign to the grape.” But what evidence is there that the analysis was exhaustive?

Dr. Redwood further states, “that the alcohol was pure in flavour and of good

quality." He might have added, that there is no test known in chemistry by which he can prove whether or not absolute alcohol is the product of the grape.

Now, I make bold to state that the meagre figures which he gives afford no proof whatever that the liquid was wine at all. By *tasting* he arrives at the conclusions that the sample was "a light, moderately dry wine," and that "the alcohol was pure in flavour." I would have it then remarked that it is through tasting (in which he is not an expert) that Professor Redwood judges of its vinous character; and the tests, which he as an expert employed, threw no light whatever on the matter. The analysis would apply as well to a mixture adroitly blended of fruit juice, Elbe water, and potato spirit, as it would to the finest sherry ever shipped from Spain.

It would appear that at times analyses are published by good firms who estimate their value at a rate different from their real worth. Mr.

Analysis III.

H. C. Bartlett, Ph.D., F.C.S., writing from his laboratory, 7, South Square, Gray's Inn, with reference to a particular sherry, says: "The analysis proves it to be a light, and clean dry wine with admirable flavour and good scent. Its alcoholic strength is low, acidity very slight, and its extracted matter well developed. Such wine must be considered very wholesome, gently stimulant, and free from the common defects of the heavier Spanish wines. The dietetic qualities shown in the analysis will especially recommend this manzanilla to all who have reason to be careful in their choice of sherry."

It has not been my good fortune to meet with Dr. Bartlett's figures. I am therefore in dark ignorance of how he by analysis judges of the bouquet of

manzanilla. This, however, I can confidently state, that no analysis which I have seen advertised would not have answered as well to a concoction of fruit sugar, brandy and water, and a little cream of tartar—pleasant perhaps to the taste, but not of the exact dietetic qualities of manzanilla; and, in common with the entire scientific world, I await the publication of an analysis which shall for the first time express in decimals the flavour and scent of sherry. Captain Cuttle would say, “When found, make a note of,” and the chemists in chorus will cry “EUREKAS!”

I have referred above to Hamburg sherry, and will now make a few remarks on the subjoined analyses, merely premising that “the Analytical Sanitary Institution” would appear to be migratory, as I do not find

Analysis IV.

it mentioned in the 'Post-Office Directory, 1875.'

REPORT ON HAMBURGH OR ELBE SHERRY.

THE ANALYTICAL SANITARY INSTITUTION,
2, ADELPHI TERRACE, STRAND,
LONDON, 15th April, 1874.

At the request of Messrs. ——— of Hamburgh, I have made a series of analyses of Hamburgh sherry. They contend that this wine, so far as they are concerned, consists of wine sweetened and fortified in the same manner as all or nearly all the Spanish sherry met with in the English market. It is for the purpose of testing these statements that the analyses in question have been undertaken.

The four following samples were received from them direct from Hamburgh. No. I. represents the natural wine which forms the basis of the Hamburgh sherry, and the other three samples the same wine in different stages of its progress towards the completed product.

	I.	II.	III.	IV.
Specific gravity ..	0·9973	0·9897	0·9840	0·9884
Absolute alcohol ..	5·555	11·154	15·055	18·231
Proof spirit	11·222	22·652	30·575	37·025
Acetic acid	0·087	0·041	0·009	0·019
Tartaric acid	0·637	0·459	0·484	0·439
Sulphuric acid	0·022	0·023	0·022	0·026
Phosphoric acid	0·030	0·022	0·031	0·021
Total solids	1·252	1·508	1·408	6·939
Mineral matter	0·214	0·152	0·148	0·088
Alkalinity equal to	0·052	0·026	0·023	0·033
Glucose	0·294	0·194	0·260	4·527
Cane sugar .. ..	..	..	..	0·430
Nitrogen	0·018	0·010	0·022	0·017

The four following samples were selected by me from their stock of Hamburg sheries in the bonded warehouse of St. Katharine's Docks.

	SHW V. Germania.	LP VI. Capella.	s \diamond s VII. Forth.	MM VIII. Wega.
Specific gravity ..	0·9974	0·9893	0·9947	0·9924
Absolute alcohol ..	18·36	17·094	17·563	18·230
Acetic acid	0·023	0·047	0·045	0·039
Tartaric acid	0·372	0·355	0·352	0·346
Sulphuric acid	0·019	0·023	0·020	0·054
Phosphoric acid	0·017	0·018	0·018	0·015
Total solids	6·758	4·628	6·324	6·552
Mineral matter	0·114	0·131	0·166	0·344
Alkalinity	0·021	0·028	0·030	0·038
Glucose	6·147	3·838	5·106	6·200
Cane sugar .. ..	..	..	..	..
Nitrogen	0·017	0·015	0·014	0·016

The whole of these analyses do undoubtedly establish the correctness of the statements of Messrs. ——— that Hamburg sherry is really made from a weak white wine fortified and sweetened in the same manner as the wines imported from Spain, and known in this country as sherry. Further, unlike Spanish sheries, these Hamburg sheries, with the exception of sample VIII., are not plastered.

ARTHUR HILL HASSALL, M.D.,

*Author of 'Food and its Adulterations,' 'Adulterations Detected,'
Editor of 'Food, Water, and Air,' &c.*

Let not my reader be seduced into any feeling of respect for these analyses

by the portentous array of figures nor by the multiplicity of constituent parts specified. They are as valueless as Dr. Redwood's, for not one of them is exhaustive, nor do they more than his afford any sort of proof that the liquor was even free from poison. .

Dr. Hassall gives his authority (whatever that may be worth) that "his analyses undoubtedly establish that Hamburgh sherry is made from a weak white wine, fortified and sweetened in the same manner as the wines imported from Spain, and known in this country as sherry." It is difficult to detect whether this sentence derives its origin from the blundering of an ignoramus or whether it was framed with an astuteness worthy of a practised diplomat. It may mean that in Spain wine is fortified with potato spirit and sweetened with beetroot sugar, or it may mean (in which case impudence has no limit) that

Hamburgh sherry is fortified with aguar-diente and sweetened with the vino dulce of Pedro Jimenez.

It is impossible for a person acquainted with sherry-rearing to read these so-called analyses without suspecting that they are not written by a lover of science, in the desire to elucidate truth and to pronounce judicially on the wines' merits, for they would seem to betray the art of a special pleader, whose occupation it is to draw up a one-sided statement, and make the best of his client's case. Port, so called, used to be made of malt spirit, diluted at the pump, coloured by logwood, and flavoured with syrup of violets; and a tolerable imitation of sherry may be made, I am credibly informed, with burnt sugar (caramel) and extract of dates. Some credit should attach to Messrs. — and their Analyst for elucidating what before was a mystery, viz. how there is pro-

duced that remarkable beverage known as "publichouse sherry."

Dr. Hassall implies that it is an habitual practice in Spain for a natural sherry of 11.282° proof to be fortified up to 37.025° . Such a statement is ridiculous, and would merit no further notice but for the unavoidable inference that the wine was of German origin. If there be Spanish wines so low in strength it is an utter impossibility that they could reach Hamburgh in sound condition after a voyage from Cadiz Bay; and for information, as to what Germany produces under the name of wine, I must refer my readers to page 49. When I add that the Hamburgh sherry, which Dr. Hassall describes as the "completed product," contains, according to his own showing, cane sugar, I have done with the subject. The trading may be honest, but as to the scientific guarantor, either his experience of sherry lies amongst wines of

the lowest class, or else he is not capable of distinguishing between what is wine and what isn't.

The last and one of the funniest attempts on the credulity of the public is the application by Dr. ^{Plaster.} Hassall and a Mr. Hehner for a patent for what they term "deplastering" sherry. It occasionally happens that sherry contains a small quantity of sulphate of potash, or free sulphuric acid, due to the use of gypsum in manufacture. These ingredients are perfectly harmless. Sulphate of potash, in larger doses than are ever found in wine, is the gentlest of purgatives, and weak sulphuric acid is an excellent tonic. The patentees propose to destroy them by a poisonous salt of barium. They promise that none of the poison shall be *left* in after it has served its purpose. I venture to suggest that none should be *put* in, for it stands upon

the confession of the applicants that their patent, unless used with perfect skill and judgment, produces a poisonous compound.

The patentees claim that sherry, by being submitted to their process, is improved in flavour ; but they are not first in attempting to foist upon the public sherry which is in reality a chemical mixture. The pretence of improvement is absurd, and I humbly submit that wine drinkers will do well to adapt their tastes to the natural flavour of the grape juice, instead of employing chemists to doctor the wine to their taste.

The water of Burton-upon-Trent, which produces the best beer in the world, is known to be charged with gypsum. When Drs. Hassall and Hehner have persuaded Messrs. Bass, Allsopp, and Salt to adopt the invention and "deplaster" their vats, it will be time enough for wine merchants to look into the matter.

Meanwhile my readers may rest content with wine as it has always been made in Spain and France, and with beer as brewed at Burton. In so doing they will avoid what seems to me a most serious danger, namely, that they, as well as the gypsum, should be neutralized by Dr. Hassall.

A favourite term of praise applied to sherry in an analysis is *free from acid*. Dr. Hardwicke and other writers would seem to think that acids generate acid, and ignore the fact that acid wines are beneficial in gout and rheumatism. The following quotations may show of what value this "freedom from acid" is:

Dr. Dobell, in his work on 'Diet and Regimen,' says:* "It is important to

* 'On Diet and Regimen in Sickness and Health.' By Horace Dobell, M.D., &c. London: H. K. Lewis, 136, Gower Street, W.C.

remember, that although a fluid may contain much acid, and therefore be unfit for some stomachs, it will not *generate acid* if it is free from saccharine matter; whereas a fluid containing saccharine matter will generate acid, although it may not *contain any*.”

Mr. Griffin, in his most practical and able work on wine testing,* says: “If new wines were fermented to maturity, their alcohol, and no doubt their acid also, would increase as their sugar diminished; for acetic acid is invariably produced during the fermentation of sugar into alcohol. Wines that are weak in acid are either poor altogether, or they are rich in alcohol, in sugar, or in some flavouring matter, which compensates for that agreeable sharpness which is given to wine by a due proportion of acid.”

* ‘The Chemical Testing of Wines and Spirits.’ By John Joseph Griffin, F.C.S. London: Griffin, 22, Garrick Street, Covent Garden.

Dr. Druitt, in his book before referred to, says: "In good wine the acidity is due to tartaric, malic, and volatile acids, each wholesome *per se*. If too acid, the fault may be excess *simpliciter*, or more probably defect of *body*, which should veil the acid. The only test of *quantity* of acid is the chemical one; and this shows that very first-class wines of the Rhine and Moselle contain most acid; port and sherry least. But it must be remembered that one-fifth or more* of port and sherry is not wine, but spirit; and secondly, that *the makers of sham wine can put in as little as they like, or can neutralize natural acidity by chalk or plaster*; hence quantity of acid is no test of quality of wine. Nay, the tartaric and other organic acids may actually themselves decompose, and spoiled wine be less acid than the same wine sound."

* This I think an over-statement.—P. V.

Now, I ask, is it not derogatory that professional analysts, who, if men of science, must be aware that the particulars they supply are no *Infra dignitatem scientiæ.* proof whatever as to the quality, value, or character of the wine, *and do not even prove that it is wine at all*, should allow their analyses to be advertised with a view to influence the public? The figures set forth pretend to show that the wine is to be depended upon for its excellence and purity, and this even in cases of life and death; for these analyses are often used to show that the wine has some peculiar medicinal qualities which render it specially suitable in cases of illness.

Dr. Druitt, under the heading of "Laputan Philosophy of Wine," says: "When a tailor wants to fit a man with a coat, he takes a tape and measures him, and cuts his cloth accordingly. But this is too simple for the philosophic tailors at

Laputa. They take the man's altitude with a sextant, his width with a geodesical goniometer, make a trigonometrical scheme, work out sines and tangents in logarithms, *and send in a terrible misfit.* Just so with wine. Do you want to know if it is good? Taste it! Does it agree? Drink a bottle at dinner! and then you will get knowledge truly empirical, positive, and not to be disputed. But the Laputan chemist amuses himself by calculating various ingredients to the fourth decimal, and then ventures to recommend the wine because of its proportion of alcohol, or acid, or the like. This is to substitute a roundabout way for a straight one, and to trust half a dozen hypotheses instead of one direct experiment. It is as sensible as to estimate virtue by weight, or wisdom by measure. The chemist, as Mr. Griffin wisely said, cannot say whether wine be good or wholesome. A good wine may

possess such and such elements in a given proportion ; but it does not follow that any wine with the same elements in the same proportion must be good.”

I run the risk of being asked, why interest yourself in these matters? why be at the pains to combat shams? why endeavour to enlighten a public content in its ignorance? My answer is, that I love Truth, and for her own sake I fight for her. Who has not listened with impatience akin to anger to the sleek Parisian bourgeois? when, in excuse for his withdrawal from all part in public affairs, he simpers, “I do not myself interfere in such matters, I have such perfect faith that truth will in the end prevail.” Yes, *Magna est veritas et prevalebit!* because noble souls, enamoured of Truth’s purity and surpassing beauty will contend, at any risk to them-

selves, in order that She should triumph, and at any cost of popularity or repute. But be it marked! She will reign despite desertions from the strife, by heroic efforts of the brave, and not through the silent sympathy of cowards.

CUSTOMS DUTIES.

When introducing his great fiscal changes in 1860* Mr. Gladstone expressed himself as most desirous of charging the duties on wine *ad valorem*. Finding this a sheer impossibility, he recommended that the duties should vary with the alcoholic strength of the wine. Accordingly the English duty on wine is 1s. per gallon (2s. per dozen) when it is under 26° of alcoholic strength by Sikes's hydrometer, and 2s. 6d. per gallon (5s. per dozen) if above that and under 42°.

In this respect the natural wines of the Jerez District are heavily weighted; for manzanillas — and the remark would apply to natural finos, &c., if they were drunk in England — are not commonly shipped till by process of nature they reach from 25° to 29°. On the voyage they gain strength, and so very rarely

* See Hansard, vol. clvi., February 10 and February 27.

reach England under 26° ; it is even necessary in some cases to administer a small modicum of aguardiente to fortify them against the change of air and effects of the sea voyage, but the added spirit does not, I believe, exceed a quarter of a jarra per butt, or five-eighths per cent. There is, however, a small quantity of cheap montilla, Seville wine, and other inferior qualities which pass at the 1s. duty, the venture in this case being made at less risk.

Now as to the natural strength of Spanish wines there is much misunderstanding, and the reason for this is, I conceive, that the distinction is not well understood between new and matured wines. In England, sherry in cask loses strength; in Spain it gains strength. By the hot climate the liquid is decreased in bulk at a greater rate than the spirit evaporates; consequently, every year the wine increases in strength. In England

it is just the reverse, as the wine loses strength by being kept in wood, the evaporation of spirit being greater than the decrease in bulk. Thus it will be seen that the strength of a natural Spanish wine must, in great measure, depend on its age in wood in the country of its production; a point which seems to me to have been overlooked in every book on the subject that I have seen; natural wines being always stated as of a given strength, without reference being made to their age.

The following, which was recently published by authority in *The Times*, seems to fall into the same error, for it classifies wines under only two heads:

“The Commissioners of Customs availed themselves of the opportunity afforded by the prominence given to wine in the last International Exhibition to obtain further information on the subject of the usual alcoholic strengths of wines manufactured with or without the addition of distilled spirit. The Commissioners employed for this purpose one of their acting inspectors of gaugers, Mr. Keene, and samples of 1264 different wines were tested,

no less than 1011 of these being furnished by Spain and Portugal. It will be borne in mind that the Governments of these countries maintain that the bulk of their natural wines are of a strength higher than that which would allow of their admission into this country at the lowest duty—namely, 1s. per gallon when containing less than 26° of proof spirit. The Commissioners state that *of the 554 samples of Spanish wines submitted for test on this occasion, only 282 were found to be natural—that is, free from the addition of spirit not produced by the fermentation of the juice of the grape.* Of these 282 samples of natural Spanish wines, the average strength was ascertained to be 24·10°. Of the 457 samples of Portuguese wines submitted, 381 were found to be natural. Of these 381 the average strength was ascertained to be 24·27°. The Commissioners observe that it is misleading to give the average strength of the fortified wines, because strength produced by the addition of distilled spirit may be carried up to any degree which the interest of the merchant or the taste of the consumer may require, and has actually, in one instance of wine supplied by Spain, been brought up to 56·7, a strength not much inferior to that of old Cognac brandy. It may be mentioned, however, that the average strength of the whole Spanish wines tested, including the 272 which had been more or less fortified, amounted to 28·10; and that the average strength of the whole of the Portuguese wines, including the 76 which had been fortified, amounted to only 25·96. The average strength of the whole of the 1264 wines of all countries, including the fortified and the natural, was 26·34. The average strength of the whole of such of the 1264 wines as were natural, amounting to 901 in number, was 24·09.

The Commissioners consider that these results are altogether confirmatory of the justice and expediency of the principles adopted and of the rates fixed at the final settlement of the wine duties in 1862. These were : First, that natural wines might be admitted at an exceptionally low duty ; secondly, that 26° of proof spirit represented fairly the full strength of almost the whole of the natural wines of the world ; and, thirdly, that any additional strength derived from extraneous spirit should, in justice to the British distiller, against whose fair competition the foreign distiller would otherwise be protected in the same industry, be taxed in relation to the spirit duties, and at a rate equivalent to that imposed on British spirits."

Hereafter I shall call attention to Mr. Keene's tests ; for the present it is sufficient to point out that, though the matter is too minute to earn the notice of the Commissioners of H. M. Customs, it is of vital importance to the almacenistas that *matured* natural Spanish wines exceed in strength 26° proof spirit without any addition of aguardiente. A natural wine which has been kept for five or six years is no doubt of increased value, and should perhaps pay a higher duty than that charged upon new natural wines. But let

us consider the way in which these duties fall upon Spain as compared with France and Germany, and it will be seen they are by no means *ad valorem* in their incidence, as Mr. Gladstone intended. For fair sherry you must pay 2s. 6d. a bottle, or something like it, and for a fair champagne you will be asked at least 4s. 6d.; yet the latter has paid a duty of 2d. and the former of 5d. As a rule only sherries worth 20s. and under per dozen pass at the 1s. duty, whereas of the wines of Champagne consumed in this country every bottle, good, bad, and indifferent, has passed in at the low rate, and there are imported at the same duty Hocks at 1*l.* a bottle, and Clarets and Burgundies of fabulous price.

A small concession, such as the Chancellor of the Exchequer might make without injury to the revenue, would hold out to sherry-makers a powerful inducement to rear natural wines. The

adoption of 28° as a limit would permit a very large quantity of cheap and wholesome natural Spanish wines to pass at a fair duty; more care would be bestowed upon the rearing, and so added alcohol would in fewer cases be required; and if 30° were adopted no further complaint would, I verily believe, be heard from Spain.

One would seem to emulate the deeds of Don Quixote in assaulting the London Commissioners of Customs, but Custom-house I am emboldened by the en-tests. couragement with which my former editions have met to challenge them and Mr. Keene, the chosen “inspector of gaugers,” to explain their *soi-disant* tests. On page 85 I have given in full their report upon the wines exhibited in the International Exhibition of the year 1874; and we read that “of 554 samples of Spanish wines submitted for

test only 282 were found to be natural; i. e. free from the addition of spirit not produced by the fermentation of the juice of the grape." Now, will the Commissioners of Customs permit Mr. Keene to give a like publicity in the newspapers to a statement of the process by which he arrives at this knowledge of whether a wine be *natural* or *fortified*? Nothing would please me better than to learn that a step so advanced in science has been made, but till the process is explained I must decline to accept the supposed results. The science of chemistry can test with perfect accuracy and can state to the smallest decimal the amount of alcohol which exists in a wine, but are there any means of detecting the way in which the alcohol got there? A common retort in the hands of a doctor's boy will test the alcohol present in the liquid, but can any chemist distinguish between a strong natural wine and a wine of equal

strength because fortified with aguar-diente? To put this question upon a popular basis, I assert that a natural manzanilla, five years old, of 27° or 28° by Sikes, is not to be distinguished by any chemical test from Chablis or Sauterne brandied up to the same strength.

Unscientific people have for laboratories and their contents a superstitious awe akin to fetichism, and they are apt to attribute to chemistry, powers of detection it does not possess, especially in cases where detection is possible by other means. Thus, added spirit may be detected by a practised taster, although (so far as I know) chemistry is powerless.

If, however, the Commissioners of Customs have at their command means of detecting whether the samples submitted to them have been fortified, the Chancellor of the Exchequer might safely charge the higher duty upon fortified wines, and allow natural wines, irrespec-

tive of their strength by Sikes, to pass the Customs at the low rate. It is admitted that when the line was drawn at 26° a rough and ready test was adopted in default of a better; but if the Commissioners now know of a more accurate test, the sooner it is adopted the better, for the change would give great satisfaction to the trade.

BRIGHT WINE, SO CALLED.

The chief obstacle to the consumption of natural Spanish wines is the incorrigible habit of Englishmen "to drink with their eyes." Unless a wine be quite bright, it is peremptorily rejected. Now a consumer of natural wine must not expect always to find it bright and clear. I know that in saying this I am running counter to preconceived opinions, for I have even known wine merchants reject a wine as impure because it showed a *flor*, whereas, this very want of what is called condition was proof positive of its purity.

The word *flor* requires explanation. There occurs a strange and peculiar phenomenon to natural wines which have turned out fino, and been kept free from spirit. At every period of about the flowering of the vine, and at about vintage time, the wine commences to "breed," that is, throw up a

Flor.

flor (flower), which remains for some time on the surface, and then, again, falls in sediment to the bottom, when the wine once more becomes bright. This phenomenon is looked for with great anxiety in the bodegas; for if it does not occur, the wine may be assuming some other and less valued character. Strange as it may appear, I have seen the actual *flor* rise in a bottle in England just as in the butt in Spain.

So long as English people expect their wines to look bright, natural wines must be fined on this side in order to make them clear: the result being that they lose a great deal of *finura* (delicacy). The force of habit is strong, but custom has conceded the point in Rhine and Moselle wines. We offer them to our guests in green glasses, Coloured Wine-glasses. avowedly to prevent the eye being used as a test, for the *flyers* and faulty appearance would be too visible. Why, then, should not the natural wines

of Spain be drunk from coloured glasses? A friend of mine has already adopted this custom, and uses red glasses, to the great embellishment of his table. If people would drink natural Spanish wines without exacting an artificial clearness, much larger quantities would be shipped to England.

Spaniards habitually speak in proverbs, and it is a favourite saying—“*Agua fresca vino puro.*” This they carry out by having a tumbler of water by the side of the sherry glass; before tasting the wine, a sip of cold water has the effect of rendering the palate sensitive to the very delicate flavour of unbranded white wines.

Many think that bottled sherries require no care in decanting, but may be run off to the last drop of the bottle.

Every old bottled sherry, how-

Decanting.

ever, has its sediment, and should be so

decanted as to leave the bottoms in the bottle. To put sherry on the table to perfection, it should be brought up from the cellar the night before it is required, and stood upright on the chimney-piece or in some moderately-warm place in the dining-room, and the next afternoon, about three hours before it is required, carefully decanted. A cork should be put loosely in the decanter in preference to a close fitting stopper; and the wine when required will then be found in its best state, as it will have had breathing time to develop its character and bottle flavour. This bottle flavour, so much prized in England, is strongly objected to by the Spaniard. Dinner wine is better drunk from the wood, or from an earthenware jar, where no bottle flavour is acquired; indeed, in low-class wines it is no advantage. But with dessert wines, which of course are not natural, the case is very different, for

the mellow flavour which results from the wine having been long bottled, arises from the thorough amalgamation of its component parts.

If it were better known that old bottled sherry requires as much, if not more, care in decanting than claret or port, the operation would not be blindly entrusted to the butler. Many a good firm suffers by the upright rules of its dealing in competition with others who are not too scrupulous to make use of bribes. The autocrat of the cellar is not always incorruptible.

The reader has now had clearly brought before him that what is offered in the market as the fermented product of grapes of the Jerez District, may be divided into three classes—Natural wine ; sherry, ordinarily so called ; and adulterated wine.

Against the last, he can best pro-

tect himself by buying where he can place confidence in the judgment and integrity of his wine merchant.

Natural wines are appreciated by sherry drinkers, only when the taste for them has been acquired. The demand for them is on the increase, notwithstanding prejudices confirmed through generations.

What we in England call sherry is a manufactured article, even if it has gone through no artificial process except that of fining to make it clear to the eye; but what article of consumption is not specially prepared?

Is tea a *natural* beverage, drunk, as it is in England, with milk and sugar?

Is beer adulterated when hops are put into the malt liquor?

Mutton broth and beef-tea are *natural* products of the meat; but who, on the ground that it is a manufactured article, rejects, when he can get it, *potage bisque* or *soupe à la reine*?

Pure sherry is manufactured entirely from the Spanish grape. No other compound or element enters into its composition, from the day when the grapes are brought in baskets from the vineyard, till, on its way to an English decanter, it leaves the Bodega years after on bullock-carts for the Trocadero mole.

APPENDIX TO SECOND EDITION.

THIS little brochure, although perhaps without much claim to literary distinction, will be found more valuable to the seeker after truth (the *nom de plume* of its author) than nine-tenths of the pretentious and long-winded treatises which have been thrust before the public of late years, by various scribblers, who have all been more anxious to “make a book”—or advertise their names gratis in the columns of the newspapers—than fitted by practical acquaintance with their subject to afford reliable information to their readers. Don Pedro (whoever he may be) evidently knows what he is writing about, and has fairly fulfilled his self-imposed task of “placing within the comprehension of every careful reader the expedients adopted by the Spanish wine rearers to suit the English taste.”

He gives a preliminary thrust at the “crass ignorance” of many wine merchants as to the origin and rearing of sherry, which incapacitates them from explaining to “persons of an inquiring mind,” why a particular wine has this or that character, and so leaves the inquirer under the false impression that there is something purposely kept in the background, which will not bear the light; whereas, in point of fact, a better answer cannot be given, because the merchant knows no more of the origin and production of sherry than his customer. Our author is careful to explain that the particular class of wine merchants he refers to as thus indirectly damaging the reputation of sherry, are those who, having *never learnt*

the trade, but having good connections, and wishing to augment their incomes, fearlessly assume the direction of a business, without even the rudiments of that education which is never completed. There is some reason even in this "preliminary canter," though perhaps rather too much importance is attached to the particular cause in relation to its effect on the "confusion of ideas" about sherry in the mind of the consumer; which has been more generated by the monstrous medical mendacities we have so often had occasion to stigmatize.

He next falls foul of co-operative stores, and gives us the details how, having obtained samples of the wines sold at these establishments, and, assisted "by two reliable members of the trade," compared them with specimens offered at similar prices by three well-known wine merchants, he proved to demonstration that, although deriving an income of some thousands a year for ticket money—being at no expense for delivery—bad debts impossible—and the system of prepayment supplying so much ready cash as to present the marvel of *trade safely conducted without capital*; despite all these advantages, they sell sherry *at higher rates* than first-class merchants; and this he thinks is either because the managers have not been trained to the business, or that the wines are sold at enormous profits, to cover the losses made in other departments!

The above flourishes only introduce us to the real substance of his work—the "simple account of what actually takes place in Spain prior to shipment," wherein, beginning with a description of the Jerez district, he goes steadily through the different stages of vintaging, rearing, and blending the different soleras—processes which are

all described in accordance with the name of the narrator, and which, though too well known to *our* readers to make recapitulation needful in these pages, will, we hope, be widely read by the consuming public, who may thus learn that “nothing which can be called a foreign substance is introduced throughout.”

It was not, however, until we reached the forty-ninth page of Don Pedro’s book that we began to feel something more than the languid interest which is inspired by the perusal of a volume already learnt by heart; but his remarks under the head of PUBLISHED ANALYSES, the greater part of which we subjoin, though perhaps only giving expression in print to what a great many of us have often thought and talked about, are so pertinent, and so pithily convey the whole gist of the question, that they entitle their author to the warmest approbation and thanks of all honest traders, who should reprint and extensively circulate them, as a *quietus* for the analysts who make it a trade to praise or blame—according to fee.

* * * * *

We have devoted considerably more space to Don Pedro Verdad than we had intended when we opened his treatise; but the writer of the above telling criticism merits whatever support it may be in our power to afford him, and we are sure all our readers will consider the room well filled we have thus allowed him to occupy.—*Messrs. Ridley and Co.’s Monthly Wine and Spirit Trade Circular.*

One of the most sensible little books on the sherry trade that we have seen for a long time. The author who writes under the *nom de plume* of *Verdad* (truth), evi-

dently understands his subject, and in a trenchant style shows up the ignorance of sundry doctors and analysts who have recently been frightening the public. The difficulty under which analysts labour, and the utter worthlessness of their analyses, are clearly shown by the fact that no chemical test has yet been devised which can measure the value of those æthers and bouquets which enable good wines to command high prices in the market. Until chemical research is pushed much farther in this direction connoisseurs will abide by their own judgment in preference to the dicta of their learned guides, although the unthinking may still be dazed by the halo of great names with half the letters of the alphabet at their tail. Our author is evidently not fascinated by coöperative stores, for he has been at the trouble of re-labelling some wines purchased from them, and sending these wines, thus disguised, to tasters of recognized standing. The result may be guessed; the wines from the co-operative stores were unusually dear, and not always correctly described by the clerk or manager of their wine department. A brief but succinct account of the process of making sherry, the necessity of blending, and the proportion of various *soleras*, give much value to this work.

* * * * *

Wine Trade Review.

This little volume gives more real and useful information about the growth, the manufacture, the various qualities and values of sherry than we ever remember to have seen previously in far more pretentious volumes. Let it be noted, too, that Don Pedro Verdad does not

display his knowledge and unfold his theories merely to lead up cunningly and finally to the conclusion that some one particular wine merchant is the only purveyor of genuine or good sherry. *From beginning to end of the volume there is no trace of a "puff,"* but there is a very scathing and well-deserved exposure of the system so unhappily prevalent just now, of eminent analysts lending their names as guarantees of the excellence of particular samples of sherry. Don Pedro Verdad points out how utterly valueless these analyses and testimonials really are. If, he says, the wine merchant be a man of good character and fair dealing, he does not require his wares to be propped up by a chemist's guarantee; if otherwise, what possible security can the public have that the wine sold to them is the same as that supplied to the chemist for analysis? The whole thing is therefore a farce. Our author goes farther even than this, and demonstrates pretty conclusively that some much advertised analyses reveal the facts that the analyst is altogether ignorant of the true characteristics of sherry, and that, if not equally ignorant of his own science, he has not scrupled to delude the public with high-sounding phrases signifying nothing. Don Pedro attacks some good old English fallacies regarding natural and blended sherries, and giving the reader ample grounds on which to form his own opinion, warns him that the skill of a taster is acquired only by long experience and careful training, and is certainly not to be replaced by the science of the chemist, which on this point leads nowhere and teaches nothing.—*The Licensed Victuallers' Gazette and Hotel Courier.*

This very unpretentious little book satisfactorily fulfils the task which the author laid down for himself. Upon the subject of analysts and their verdicts upon wines submitted to them, our author is justly severe.

It is pregnant with practical information respecting sherries, their manufacture, blending, and rearing; and we cannot but believe that Don Pedro Verdad will secure for himself as numerous an auditory as the genuine merit of his little book entitles him to.—*The Licensed Victuallers' Guardian*.

This interesting little book, a favourable notice of which, taken from our esteemed contemporary, Mr. Ridley's paper, appeared in our issue of August 18 last, has since come to hand. We fully agree with Mr. Ridley in his opinion as to the value of the information which it contains. What the writer says in respect to lack of knowledge among English wine merchants, whose trade for centuries has been chiefly in Spanish wines, applies with much greater force to this country, where the introduction of sherry wines is of quite recent date. The contents of Don Pedro's book are quite new here, and will be welcome reading to all intelligent dealers. We therefore consider that we cannot do better than give our readers copious extracts from it.

Bonfort's Wine and Liquor Circular, New York.

A thoroughly exhaustive history of sherry wine has yet to be written. Notices abound, but a history is wanting. That sherry was drunk by Englishmen at an early date, we glean from scattered notices; notably, in 1419, a certain

William Horrold was placed in the pillory for counterfeiting and vending "olde feble Spanysshe wyne for good and trewe Romeney." The cultivation of the vine for wine-making in Andalusia is supposed to have preceded the Roman occupation; in spite of the protective policy of Rome the "sherris" of southern Spain were possibly exported to Rome in competition with Italy's then more famous growths, and Lydia may have tippled the vintage of Jerez, substituted judiciously by a Roman vintner for "White Albanian." To Don Alfonso el Sabio appears to be due the extension of viticulture, then existing in the neighbourhood of Jerez, for in 1268 a grant was made to "Los Caballeros del Féudo" of six acres of vineyard, and a gift of land that they might extend cultivation; also "six acres of new ground to plant vines." The original record of these grants is still preserved amongst the municipal archives of Jerez. An Arabic document, printed by the Royal Academy of History, entitled 'The Diary of the Operations of the Army of Jusuf, when he Besieged the Town of Xerez, in the Reign of Sancho the Brave (1288),' states,—“On the 30 May, Jusuf removed his encampment to the other side of the river, between the vineyards and the gardens;” and again, various expeditions of the same troops are noted "towards San Lucar," but in no case are vineyards named in that direction. Without carefully investigating the archives of Jerez, it is impossible to fix with any accuracy the date when "sherris" sack was first exported to England; but Benito de Cárdenas, a scrivener of Jerez, has left us an interesting notice of the events of his day, in which he states, under the date of 1483,—“No English or Breton ships have

arrived this year to trade, in consequence of the war with the Biscayans." Curiously enough, there is a notice of the doings of these bellicose Basques, who fought a naval battle off Winchelsea, in the reign of our Edward III., in 'Tradiciones Vasco-Cántabras' (Tolosa, 1866):

Our ships of Biscay oak in hundreds float
By Winchelsea; the Basque and Anglians' boat
In shock of battle met; the Vascon quailed,
Dyed the blue sea with blood, and homeward sailed.

In Pedro de Medina's 'Libro de Grandezas y Cosas Memorables de España' (Alcala, 1566), reference is made to the fertility of the Jerez vineyards. "The vintage there ordinarily yields about 60,000 butts of wine, and there are shipped to England, Flanders, and other parts each year more than 40,000."

Señor Riaño notes that on the Andalusian coins of Acinippus, Orippus, Oset, and Julius Traductus, bunches of grapes are represented on the obverse. Pliny, Martial, and Silius Italicus allude to the fertility of the then, as now, "sherry district." Whether even the Romans get unadulterated sherry, may be doubted, for the vintner of all ages has been apt to "ameliorate" his wines. Even in sunny Seville he had his tricks, and the licentiate, Sebastian Horozco, wrote thus, *circa* 1500:

Rogue, thus with well and river the pricked wine thou dost fine,
And this same nauseous stew dost call the fruit of vine.
Wine! counterfeit and rogue, 'tis weak and poor and dark;
It has the look of turbid broth, and smells like tanners' bark.

If we may credit the 'Mysteries of Vintners' (1669), the sherry of that period was imported soon after vintaging,

as the diseases prescribed for are clearly the infirmities of extreme youth.

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We believe that a commission of experts and men of science was appointed some few years since in France to examine the gypsum question thoroughly, and that they reported that the use of it in no way unfavourably affected the grape juice; but that, on the other hand, it exercised a preservative influence over "musts" charged in excess with albuminous matter.

It is perfectly clear that the rearing and shipping of sherry wine is an art, and that while many practise it the artists are not numerous; for although you can classify the growths of Jerez under the heads of fino, oloroso, and basto, the variations in each are innumerable. It is the power of detecting these slight variations and foreseeing how they will affect the completed picture that constitutes the difference between the artistic "blender" and the bungler.

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The chapter headed "Preparation for Shipment" contains much information in a concise shape.

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Our author winds up his interesting and apparently accurate little volume with these words:—

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Don Pedro Verdad is, of course, a pseudonym, and its equivalent in English is Mr. Peter Veracity.—*Athenæum*.

Don Pedro Verdad has written a little tract with the view of explaining to Englishmen the composition of sherry in its different forms. There is first the natural wine, which is used in Spain, and is coming into use in England; next, manufactured sherry, which, though not a natural product, is made entirely from the Spanish grape; and thirdly, the adulterated liquors which are passed off as sherry.

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The great obstacle, however, to the consumption of natural Spanish wines is said to be the English prejudice against any wine which is not bright and clear. The natural wine is sometimes a little thick; but Don Pedro thinks this would not matter if it were drunk out of red glasses. The fining process takes away from the delicacy of the wine, and also adds to the expense.—*The Saturday Review*.

‘From Vineyard to Decanter’ is the fanciful title of a little book on sherry, written by a gentleman who assumes the *nom de plume* of “Don Pedro Verdad.” We can cordially recommend it as giving a very readable and truthful account of the growth and manufacture of sherry.

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The author’s method of judging is very simple: “Do you want to know if the wine is good? Taste it. Does it agree? Drink a bottle at dinner, and then you will get knowledge truly empirical, positive, and not be disputed.” As we are mercifully inclined, we would say, something more than half a bottle; and we wish that our host at many an entertainment during the last six months had subjected his wines to so simple a test.—*The Academy*.

This little book is what it professes to be—an account of the process through which the grape juice passes on its way from the vineyard to the decanter. A sensibly written little book.—*The Lancet*.

‘From Vineyard to Decanter; or, a Book about Sherry,’ by Don Pedro Verdad, a writer evidently possessing a practical knowledge of the subject, is a short but rather interesting account of the natural sherries of the Xerez district, the different characters which wines, though of the same vineyard and precisely similarly treated, develop during the first year or two in the butts, and the way in which they are blended—not adulterated—for the English market. A common sense, unpretending little treatise, with some sharp but not undeserved censure, *en passant*, for a modern trick of puffing³ very ordinary wines by a really meaningless chemical analysis.

The Graphic.

It has rarely happened to us to come across any book on the subject in a really condensed and popular form, such as the little volume before us assumes to be. At the outset it is a comforting assurance, from the mere name of the author, “Verdad,” that we shall at least know the truth about that most universal, and at the same time least understood, of all wines—sherry. The author has narrated, in a sharp, clear, and succinct form, all that is necessary to be known about sherry, from the time of the grape vintage to the uncorking of the bottle as we sit round the hospitable board, prepared to discuss the generous beverage. We will not do the writer the injustice of printing lengthy quotations from a book which itself

makes no greater demand upon the patience of the reader than one spare hour or less, but will content ourselves with remarking that if people really would wish to know something of the different processes in the manufacture of sherry they cannot do better than consult Señor Verdad, and read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest what he tells them. There is so much popular ignorance on the subject of the different characteristics of Montilla, Amon-tillado, Manzanilla, Solera, Oloroso, Fino, and Basto, and of the blending of various sherries, so as to produce certain given results of colour and flavour, that, practically, the average consumer is at the mercy of the dealer, who is often (especially in London) equally ignorant of the nature of his wares with the purchaser himself. On all these points Señor Verdad speaks with the authority of an expert, and we congratulate him upon having contributed, in a highly attractive and readable form, a valuable addition to the not over large stock of information we have hitherto had at our disposal on this most interesting subject.—*Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News.*

Our wine merchants, perhaps, have this excuse for selling doctored sherries, that the bulk of Englishmen rather prefer them. We have often noted in the Spanish wine shops in London, where they sell the various sherries as manufactured and drunk in Spain and as prepared for and drunk in England, the grimaces with which a customer has swallowed the former, and the evident relish he has experienced as regards the latter. The author of this brochure introduces us into the sherry district of Spain, of which, by the way, there is a well-drawn map, and

tells us all about the qualities of the various classes of this highly-esteemed, if somewhat ill-used Spanish wine. The process of making, blending, and fining is described briefly but sufficiently. Then are discussed the natural wines—Manzanilla, Montilla, and Seville wines—which are known in England. Then follows a criticism of “Published Analyses,” notably of “Spécialité” sherry. The whole concludes with a few general remarks. The little work is pleasantly written, and as most Englishmen are curious about sherry, while some go the length of prescribing what is, and what is not, good wine of Xerez, we advise our readers to consult these pages.—*Land and Water.*

This brochure gives, for the first time to our knowledge, not only the history, but the true composition and value of sherries. The public that drinks is not more nearly interested in the information than the merchants that import and sell. Both have much to learn from Pedro Verdad, this anonymous author who comes armed at all points to the discussion of the subject. There are few of us who are not interested in it, and there is no part of it which is not clearly, as well as fully, explained.

The Hour.

Those who are satisfied with a glass of sherry, and care not to investigate the products of viticulture in other districts than that of Jerez will do well to study ‘From Vineyard to Decanter.’ The author provides much information, calculated to be especially useful to such as may desire to drink not so much what suits their palate as what may best agree with their constitution.—*John Bull.*

A very excellent little book, containing a vast amount of valuable practicable information. Many a man prides himself on being a connoisseur of this wine; to such an one this little work will do one of two things,—it will either confirm him that he is really what he thinks himself to be, namely, a good judge, or it will show him that he is not, but at the same time teach him how he may become so. We cordially recommend ‘From Vineyard to Decanter,’ as dealing very sensibly and practically with the subject of which it treats.—*United Service Gazette*.

Some books on wine are to be avoided, as interested advertisements, *but the present is totally free from any suspicion of that kind*. The writer is evidently a good judge of a glass of sherry, and is anxious to impart all he knows about it, so that the British public may be no longer deceived. Certainly the fiery sherries retailed in many restaurants, and even kept in decanters at hotel bars, are such horrible decoctions as to be powerful aids to the temperance cause; but there is, nevertheless, such a thing as good sherry, though it is rarely to be met with. Sherry has come to be considered a common kind of wine and therefore common sorts have to be manufactured to meet the demand; and anyone who has ever been entrapped into tasting a glass of “Hamburg sherry” will feel vastly grateful to Don Pedro Verdad for his instructions as to what to “drink and avoid.”

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Don Pedro’s brochure will certainly prove interesting to more than *bons vivants*.—*Glasgow News*.

Don Pedro Verdad tenders his thanks to the writers of the above, and also to the friendly critics who have noticed his work in the

Court Circular.

Weekly Times.

Figaro.

Lloyd's Weekly London Newspaper.

National Food and Fuel Reformer.

Bristol Mercury.

Brighton Gazette.

Portsmouth Times.

Gloucestershire Chronicle.

Derby Mercury.

Lincoln, Rutland, and Stamford Mercury.

Leicester Journal.

Lymington and South Hants Chronicle.

Royal Cornwall Gazette.

Bath Chronicle.

Dover Chronicle.

Kentish Gazette.

Maidstone and Kentish Journal.

Oxford Times.

Oxford Journal.

Shrewsbury Chronicle.

Star of Gwent and South Wales Times.

Poole and South Western Herald.

Dorset County Chronicle.

Chelmsford Chronicle.

Northampton Mercury.

Bucks Herald.

Trueman's Exeter Flying Post.

APPENDIX TO THIRD EDITION.

WE are inclined to think that a reaction is setting in in favour of sherry, and that we have nearly seen the end of the mischief brought about by the untruthful, and too often mercenary, attacks made upon its reputation by pseudo-authorities on vinous matters. The exposure of the many fallacies thus propounded as to the composition of the wine, and the straightforward explanations of the manner in which it is really prepared, recently published in the columns of an evening contemporary, have doubtless been of no little service in dispossessing the minds of sherry-drinkers of the unfounded prejudices created by the so-called "Analysts;" and the little book noticed in our July number, 'From Vineyard to Decanter' (which we are glad to see has passed into a second edition), may also be credited with no small share in the dissemination of honest practical information, all acting as an antidote to the medical poison.—*Messrs. Ridley and Co.'s Monthly Wine and Spirit Trade Circular.*

This is a useful little handbook to the art of sherry making and sherry adulteration. The author justly attributes half the bad wine to which we are constrained to submit to the ignorance of wine merchants. Every other trade is supposed to require a long and patient apprenticeship; but every man that has been born and bred a gentleman thinks himself, on any reverse of fortune,

ready for the wine trade, without any compromise of his gentility, and the trade ready for him, without any danger to his possible customers. For some obscure and unknown reason, whilst to sell good oil would be considered derogatory to one who has once been a captain in a line regiment, or veterinary surgeon in a cavalry one, to sell bad wine is looked upon as an honourable way of maintaining a position in society and increasing one's income. The wine trade thus acts as a harbour of refuge for the unlucky among men, as the profession of teaching does or did until quite lately for the unallotted amongst women. As a matter of fact, to acquire any real knowledge of wines and their various blendings requires long years of patient study, and it is very rare for palates which have been neglected or outraged in youth to acquire delicacy of discernment with age.

The author of this little treatise—for it is nothing more—shows clearly how the various kinds of sherry known in Spain are made, and how those intended for the English market are prepared. Unfortunately, the rage for cheap wines has extended too far amongst us to be controlled by advice or protests. Every one must have sherry on his table whether he can afford it or not, and many of those who can afford it are ignorant of the difference between good and bad. The result is that the English market is deluged with all varieties, “basto” or “raya,” third-rate wines charged with sulphur and dosed with brandy to prevent their turning sour. Of such wines we have nothing to say, except that the most persistently puffed as being natural are in nine cases out of ten absolutely unnatural in the Spanish and trade sense of the term.

Our author in conclusion shows the folly of the pub-

lished analyses of various advertised wines, and proves very conclusively how little consolation such chemical statements can convey to palates properly trained to distinguish between the true and the false. A good wine may possess such and such elements in a given proportion, but it does not follow that all wine with the same elements in the same proportion must be good.—*Examiner*.

Don Pedro Verdad understands his subject, and the second edition of his little work on sherry will be generally welcomed by those who are interested in it, for it contains a lively account of the vintages and making of the wine, with instructive hints as to analyses, brightness, blending, decanting, bottle flavour, &c. Into these matters we will not enter, but we must cite the following passage, on account of the piquancy of its rebuke to certain offensive pretensions.

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We have found few brochures about wine pleasanter than that of Don Pedro Verdad.—*Liverpool Daily Post*.

This little work should be carefully read by drinkers of sherry, who may glean a large amount of useful information.

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The work is well written, and deals with the subject so ably that no wonder a second edition of it has been demanded soon after the appearance of the first.

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Hampshire Advertiser.

In an interesting little brochure, a gentleman assuming the "nom de plume" of "Don Pedro Verdad," gives us a great deal of information about sherry. He evidently understands his subject, and exposes in most merciless fashion the "crass ignorance" of wine merchants and others.

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Nottingham Daily Guardian.

Don Pedro Verdad tenders his thanks to the writers of the above, and also to the friendly critics who have noticed the second edition of his work in the

Coventry Standard.

Leicester Daily Post.

Nottinghamshire Guardian.

Bradford Observer.

Wolverhampton Chronicle.





