

wine, and was drunken." The "curse of Canaan" was the lamentable result. Although this is the earliest mention of this loathsome vice, yet there is little doubt but it was known and practised long prior to this date. In the 20th verse of the same chapter, the expression of the words, "And Noah began to be an husbandman, and planted a vineyard," would lead us to believe that the office of the husbandman, and the use and properties of the vine, were not unknown to him; and that, probably enough, he carried the knowledge of these facts with him from the antediluvian world; and it may not be taking too much at a hazard to suppose, that drunkenness was one of the many evils which instigated the wrath of the Almighty to destroy, with such signal vengeance, both man and his wickedness beneath the overwhelming waters of the flood. This supposition will receive additional support, when we consider that wine originally must have consisted of only the simple juice of the grape or palm tree, and consequently did not possess intoxicating properties; and that it was not until the important discovery of the phenomenon of fermentation, either by accident or experiment, that it acquired that pernicious and seducing quality. And if we be permitted to take as our guide the experience of succeeding ages, we may fairly conclude that wine was in use for a considerable period before this eventful discovery was made.

Fermentation, it will be understood, is that process whereby the substance named alcohol is produced. This process is very obscure, and, indeed, quite "hypothetical." It will be sufficient for our purpose to state that the "vinous fermentation" is excited by adding to a solution of sugar some "azotized putrescible substances, such as albu-