

TREATMENT OF CORKS FOR BOTTLING.

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The following remarks have been prompted by a number of inquiries as to how the turbidity in bottle beer caused by the corks might be prevented, and therefore they are supposed to be of interest to the trade at large.

The cloudiness in bottle beer may be due to various causes, viz., to elimination of albuminous matter, to the separation of yeast and microderna cells, and also to the separation of albuminous matter by tannic acid contained in the cork. If no sediment formed in the bottle beer is very slight and light, and yeast cells and other microscopic organisms are absent, we may conclude that the turbidity is due to corks, as stated.

The tannic acid in the corks, to which the precipitation in the beer is principally due, is contained chiefly in the brown, powdery substance present in the pores of the corks. The poorer the corks are, the more of the brown substance is generally contained in them, and by the removal of this substance the cork is greatly improved for beer bottling purposes. The best and simplest means to accomplish this, at least in a measure which is recommended several years ago, consists in placing the corks in a rotary drum, such as a chip or shaving washing machine, and in throwing them around, by revolving the drum for half an hour or so. The amount of brown substance separated from some kinds of corks in this manner is surprisingly large.

After having treated the corks in this manner they should be placed in an abundance of cold water for about twenty-four hours, and be stirred around from time to time. Shortly before use the corks are withdrawn from the cold water, and placed in warm water, temperature 60° R. or over, for about five minutes, when the same are allowed to drain off and the corks are ready for immediate use. As a further precautionary measure the corks may be squeezed through a corking machine to eliminate the last traces of liquid which they contain. Instead of using pure water to soak the corks, water to which a small quantity of carbonate or bicarbonate of soda is added is also employed in some parts. These chemicals are quite harmless and increase the solubility of the tannic acid in these corks; however, the last traces of acid brought in solution by their application, must be carefully removed by thorough washing with water or otherwise.

It is stated that a very diluted solution of hypochlorite of lime (bleaching powder) is also used for the steeping of bottling corks, probably chiefly with a view to its bleaching action.

In all cases where chemicals have been used a thorough washing in clean water should follow, and if possible they should also be squeezed through the corking machine. In performing the latter operation it would be well if the cork could be touched with some blotting paper, and some paper or similar material while being squeezed, as this will help to remove the liquid.

The dipping of the corks in molten paraffine is also recommended in order to prevent the tannic acid of the corks from entering the beer. To do this successfully, however, the corks must be dry. If they have been soaked in water they should be dried before dipping them in paraffine. It might be advisable to dip them after most of the tannic substance has been removed by shaking them in a drum, as above described, if they do not leave the corks in a sufficiently pliable condition. The paraffine has to

be quite hot to afford a coating thin enough to prevent its peeling off while being pressed into the bottle. In case the corks should not be pliable enough after having been dipped in paraffine, it might be well to soften them mechanically previous to dipping by passing them through a bottling machine or otherwise.

The question whether it would be well to boil the corks in soda solution we should hesitate to answer in the affirmative, as this process is likely to injure the elasticity of the corks.

ONE HUNDRED DRINKS PER YEAR

The Average Amount of Whiskey Consumed by the American People.

AMERICANS are accounted a fairly sober people in the hurlyburly of nations, but the figures of the internal revenue commissioner for the last year are quite a drop of whiskey or beer says the *Atlanta Constitution*. We distilled last year 87,346,884 gallons of liquor, not including 1,430,353 gallons of brandy, making in all 88,777,187 gallons of alcoholic spirits. Expert bartenders estimate sixty-three drinks to the gallon. Therefore there were 5,604,062,891 drinks produced in this country. A conservative estimate of how much was imbibed across counters is about 37,000,000 gallons of whiskey, brandy and other distilled spirits, or in other words we drank 6,000,000,000 glasses of whiskey for which we paid over \$7,000,000,000 or \$5,000,000 more than all the annual appropriations of Congress combined. This represents a consumption of 100 glasses of whiskey each year for every man, woman and child between the rock-bound Pacific and the storm-tossed Atlantic, or counting only the male adults, 500 glasses per year each. Of beer, the figures are equally astounding. The consumption was 31,902,543 barrels; that is 12,785,169,200 glasses, representing the expenditure for this mode of intoxication of \$617,258,400, or about 10 cents for each inhabitant. In the neighborhood of 220 glasses are charged up in this calculation against each of us as our annual allowance. Therefore, if we do not average our daily glass we may be sure that our neighbors are getting the benefit of our abstinence. By estimating this year's internal revenue receipts from spirits on the basis of last year's product, with the increased tax of \$1.10 per gallon, the internal revenue receipts will be \$97,074,905.

THEN AND NOW.

In the early days of the temperance movement, it was the personal, rather than the legislative, aspects of the question that were most insisted upon, and that fact may be traced the rapid progress of the movement in those earlier times, says an English paper; and our older readers, whose memory covers any considerable period of temperance agitation will fully corroborate our English friend's statement as the American history of that movement. "Unfortunately, there were many who dreamed that legislation would be a short and easy way of dealing with drunkenness. But experience has demonstrated that though seemingly omniscient, the legislature can accomplish much less than is imagined in the promotion of temperance. Attention is being continually concentrated upon the subject by countless agencies, from the hold of the public house upon the community is not greatly relaxed. In sermons, in lectures and in cartoons, intemperance has been dealt with. Orators,

\$5,000,000 is an immense fortune, but is only a conservative estimate of the amount saved in doctors' bills to the people of the Dominion by the use of St. Jacobs Oil. Its timely use not only saves money, but much suffering; a trial will win your endorsement.

preets and painters have depicted its horrors; but the vice has not yet been abolished, although it has been much abated through the influence of reason and public opinion, which unite in declaring that excess is shameful and not to be countenanced by either respectable or only semi-respectable people, so-called. At this moment, English Bishops, inspired with a desire to conquer it, have assumed that if drink shops are only people all will be well; but all these schemes are failures here and in England, because they try to eliminate the Anglo-Saxon nature from man, depending for their success on the fallacy that the Irish or American nature will give up its guiding star of personal liberty. There may, perchance, be some scheme devised that will effect what philanthropists desire; but, meanwhile, the old path of personal abstinence seems still the most effective way of grappling with the question.—*Western Review*.

A NEW ENGLAND BEVERAGE.

It is the rankest sort of heresy to judge English traditions—in which the juice of the apple is treated with all the reverence bestowed upon other symbols of the British Isles—to question the moral influence of that interesting beverage known to the sons of men as hard cider—quarrier old stuff, of which the hard Puritanical quizzler might say, as the genial Omar-Khayyam said of another drink:

Fill me with the old droll liquor!

Medicines I might recover by and by.

Yet here comes the Boston Herald, which denies that

Within this jug there is good liquor,
Fit for parson or for vicar.

even though it be labeled cider, and says that "intoxication from cider is in all the most demoralizing drinks in its effects possible. Beer renders those who drink it comparatively good natured; hard cider arouses all that is evil and quarrelsome in those overcome by it. The same is true in this violent drinking of liquor in the world more detrimental. And then to this violent heterodoxy a Brocton paper adds injury by saying: "Those whose business calls upon them to notice drunkenness and its causes right here in Brocton will agree with this statement of the *Herald*. The hard cider fellows imagine, and he gets on at the experts call 'one of the meanest drinks.' Hard cider seems to have a tendency to inflame the fighting qualities of its drinkers; and as for its healthful qualities, it has few. Physicians recommend whiskey and beer occasionally to those who are ill, but who ever heard of their recommending hard cider?" Thus one by one the roses of New South England will be just like other folks.

AUGUSTE

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