

ancients. The discovery was an epoch surpassed by none other and the heathen showed their wonder at it in their Mythology. Egypt claims the invention for her God Osiris, Greece for Bacchus, and Rome for Saturn. The Greeks assert that the very name belongs to them, for the drink was first discovered in *Ætolia*, by Orestheus, the son of Deucalion, whose grandson Oeneus was so called from Oinos, which was the old name of the vine. Thus Oinos, oinon, vinum, wine. Then, by these nations, the praises of wine and of the wine gods, one and all, were sung in the later times. It is not to the savage a mortal thing at all. It lifts the man who takes it into a higher sphere of life, or it degrades him to the lowest. It introduces him, as it were, to a new human organization, that is not to be a passing phenomenon, but for good or evil is to remain through ages. Much more might be said of the praises devoted to it by the ancients, but this will suffice to show with what reverence they held it.

We will, for a time, leave the consideration of wine and alcohol as drinks, and dwell briefly on the uses to which these fluids have been applied in other purposes. The study is peculiarly interesting, and I could easily carry you on for a whole hour with the narration of it. I shall refer only to the salient points, and to a few only of these. From the very first its preservative and antiseptic qualities were known, and it was used for preserving animal and vegetable substances.

The Roman butchers had their fresh and salt meats (as we moderns), curing the latter by pouring sweet wine over the flesh they wished to preserve. The Egyptians used it in their most costly processes of embalming the bodies of the dead, and we in our day preserve our specimens in our museums in a moist state by immersion in spirit. It was also used for extracting the active principles from plants and other substances possessing medicinal virtues.

Dioscorides, one of the fathers of medicine, made a vinous tincture from the mandragora, which has a romantic history.

In the Isles of Greece there has grown for ages a plant, called mandrake, of the same family as Belladonna, or deadly-nightshade. From the root of this plant the Greeks extract, by the means of wine, a narcotic possessing strong anesthetic power.