

ALCOHOL.

A LECTURE DELIVERED DEC. 7TH TO THE ST. GEORGE'S TEMPERANCE SOCIETY, BY DR. GEO. A. BAYNES.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN:—

According to Bartholomew Parr, one of our most learned scientific classics, the word alcohol was derived from the Arabic A'l-ka-hol, to designate a subtle essence or impalpable powder with which Eastern women used to tinge the hair and margins of the eyelids. As this powder (namely, the ore of lead) was impalpable, the same name was given to other subtle powders, and then to the Spirit of Wine in its highest purity and perfection as a subtle essence. The word employed in this sense merely tells us of a refined fluid substance, obtained by a subtle process of separation. But it was not applied to the special fluid now under consideration, until long after that fluid had actually been separated.

I shall not enter more minutely into this separation than to say that Alcohol is an inflammable liquor, lighter than water, of a warm, acrid taste, colorless, transparent and of a pungent, aromatic smell.

It is the product of the distillation of vinous liquors.

The practice of exciting fermentation, and of obtaining this coveted fermented liquor, once known, the knowledge soon extended, until from various vegetable substances, wine became a product of manufacture.

The use of the expressed juice of the grape, and other juicy fruits—such as the mulberry, the apple, the pear, and the peach—led to those juices which exude from trees; and from these to other substances, such as manna and honey; and from fruits the transition was easy to seeds; and from the seeds that were soft and succulent, to seeds that were hard and of the character of what we call grain.

This fluid was called wine, and was worshipped by the