



[From Hogarth's 'Progress of Cruelty.']

LXXVI.—B E E R.

HOGARTH blundered when he introduced the brewer's drayman as a type of the "progress of cruelty." The man is asleep: he would not willingly hurt a fly, to say nothing of a child, but, "much bemused with beer," he knows not the mischief his wheels are doing. He can scarcely even be accused of carelessness, for how could he expect a child to be there unguarded? It is the nurse or mother that is to blame. Nobody who has to do with beer is inhumane. Beer cannot make a rogue an honest man—even the ale of Lichfield could not work that miracle upon Boniface—but it mollifies his temper.

"I have much to say in behalf of that Falstaff," and, though scarcely so near akin, we have much to say in behalf of that brewer's drayman. Look at his smock-frock, his hat, his gracefully-curving, ponderous whip: beside the sceptre of an Ulysses or Agamemnon it would show like the pendent birch beside a bare hop-pole, and yet would crush a Thersites more effectually. When cracked in the horses' ears it knells like a piece of artillery. And so accoutred as the brewer's drayman was in the days of Hogarth, so may he still be seen in the streets of London, perched upon or striding beside his stately dray. He is one of the unchanged, unchangeable monuments which live on through all transmigrations, telling a story of forgotten generations to a race which remembers them not—like the circle of grey stones which beneath a grove of embowering oaks witnessed the inhuman rites of the Druid, and now obstruct the reaper's sickle amid the golden grain—like the little drummer-boys, all so like each other that the man in his grand climacteric could fancy them the same he gazed after in his childhood, and take the elf, at this moment loitering before the guardhouse in Hyde Park, for the identical one to whom the "friend of humanity" gave sixpence, and "nice clever books by Tom Paine the philanthropist."

The brewer's dray is worthy of such an ancient pillar of the constitution. Benjamin the Waggoner and his poet are both right eloquent in praise of their "lordly wain." Nor need it be denied that it had a stately and imposing presence of its own, alike amid the thunder-storm in the mountain gap, or

“ With a milder grace adorning
 The landscape of a summer morning,
 While Grassmere smoothed its liquid plain
 The moving image to detain ;
 And merry Fairfield, with a chime
 Of echoes, to its march kept time,
 When little other sound was heard,
 And little other bus'ness stirr'd,
 In that delightful hour of balm,
 Stillness, solitude, and calm.”

But every one must feel that one half of the beauty of the Westmoreland waggon is owing to the associations that cluster around it; whereas the brewer's dray suffices in itself. When the head of the foremost of its colossal horses is seen emerging from one of those steep, narrow lanes ascending from the river side to the Strand, (sometimes is it there seen, though the coal-waggon has pre-eminence in that locality of dark arches looking like the entrance to the Pit of Acheron,) there is a general pause in the full tide of human life that flows along the thoroughfare. Heavily, as though they would plant themselves into the earth, the huge hoofs, with the redundant locks dependent from the fetlocks circumfused, are set down, clattering and scraping as they slip on the steep ascent; the huge bodies of the steeds, thrown forward, drag upward the load attached to them by their weight alone; in a long chain they form a curve quite across the street, till at last the dray, high-piled with barrels, emerges from the narrow way like a reel issuing from a bottle, and, the strain over, the long line of steeds and the massive structure, beside which the car of Juggernaut might dwindle into insignificance, pass smoothly onwards.

It is no unimportant element of London life that is launched with all this pomp and circumstance into its great thoroughfares. There is a system organised, by which the contents of these huge emissaries from the reservoirs of the breweries are diverted into a multiplicity of minor pipes and strainers which penetrate and moisten the clay of the whole population. From “morn till dewy eve” the huge, high-piled dray may be seen issuing from the brewery gates to convey barrels to the tap-houses, and nine-gallon casks, the weekly or fortnightly allowance of private families. At noon and night the pot-boys of the innumerable beer-shops may be seen carrying out the quarts and pints duly received at those hours by families who do not choose to lay in a stock of their own; or the mothers and children of families, to whom the saving of a halfpenny is a matter of some consequence, may be seen repairing with their own jugs to these beer-conduits. You may know when it is noon in any street in London by the circulation of beer-jugs, as surely as you may know when it is 11 A.M. by seeing housekeepers with their everlasting straw reticules and umbrellas. And in addition to these periodical flowings of the fountains must be taken into the account the “bye-drinkings” of carmen, coal-whippers, paviours, &c. at all hours of the day—of artisans at their “dry skittle-grounds,” and of medical students and other “swells” at taverns.

It is not easy to form an estimate of the quantity of beer annually strained through these alembics, but we may venture upon what Sir Thomas Browne would have called “a wide guess.” In 1836 the twelve principal brewers in London brewed no less than 2,119,447 barrels of beer. The quantity of malt

wetted by all the brewers in London in that year was 754,313 quarters; the quantity wetted by the illustrious twelve, 526,092 quarters. According to this proportion, the number of barrels of beer brewed in London, in 1836, could not fall far short of 3,000,000. The beer manufactured for exportation and country consumption may be assumed, in the mean time, to have been balanced by the importation of Edinburgh and country ales, and Guinness's stout. In 1836 the population of the metropolis was estimated at 1,500,000. This would give, hand over head, an allowance of two barrels (or 76 gallons) of beer per annum for every inhabitant of the metropolis—man, woman, and child. This is of course beyond the mark, but perhaps not so much so as one would at first imagine. At all events, these numbers show that beer is an important article of London consumption: thus corroborating the inference naturally drawn from the high state of perfection to which we find the arrangements for injecting it into all the veins and arteries of the body corporate have been brought.

There is a passage in Franklin's 'Memoirs' which illustrates the minuter details of the injecting process in his day:—"I drank only water: the other workmen, near fifty in number, were great drinkers of beer. . . . We had an alehouse boy, who attended always in the house to supply the workmen. My companion at the press drank every day a pint before breakfast, a pint at breakfast, with his bread and cheese, a pint between breakfast and dinner, a pint at dinner, a pint in the afternoon about six o'clock, and another when he had done with his day's work. I thought it a detestable custom; but it was necessary, he supposed, to drink *strong* beer that he might be *strong* himself. . . . He had four or five shillings to pay out of his wages every week for that vile liquor." The pressman whose bibbing feats are here recorded, it must be admitted, rather verged towards excess in his potations: he did not administer the malt in homœopathic doses; but his lack of moderation conferred no right upon "the water-drinking American" (as the "chapel" christened Franklin) to vilify "the good creature Beer" by the epithet "vile liquor."

Beer is to the London citizen what the water in the reservoirs of the plain of Lombardy, or the kahvreez of Persia (which is permitted to flow into the runnels of the landowners so many hours per diem), is to the village peasantry of those countries. It is one of those commonplaces of life—those daily-expected and daily-enjoyed simple pleasures which give man's life its local colouring. The penning of the sheep in a pastoral country—"the ewe-bughts, Marion" of Scottish song—is poetical, because the bare mention of it calls up all the old accustomed faces, and sayings and doings, that make home delightful. In London it is our beer that stands foremost in the ranks of these suggestions of pleasant thoughts. Therefore it is that a halo dwells around the silver-bright pewter pots of the potboy, and plays, like the lightning of St. John, about the curved and tapering rod of office of the brewer's drayman. Therefore is it that the cry of "Beer!" falls like music on the ear; and therefore it is that in the song of the jolly companion, in the gibe of the theatrical droll, in the slang of him who lives "on the step" (of the 'bus), in the scratching of the caricaturist, the bare mention of beer is at any time a sufficient substitute for wit. It needs but to name it, and we are all on the broad grin.

Beer overflows in almost every volume of Fielding and Smollett. There never

was hero who had a more healthy relish for a cool tankard than Tom Jones. There is an incident which all our readers must recollect in the story of Booth's Amelia, that positively elevates brown stout into the region of the pathetic. As for Smollett, the score which Roderick Random and Strap run up with the plausible old schoolmaster, fancying all the while he is teaching them, is perhaps too rural an incident for our present purpose; but the pot of beer with which Strap made up the quarrel with the soldier, after the misadventure which attended his first attempt to dive for a dinner, was of genuine London brewing.

Goldsmith appreciated the capabilities of beer in an artistical point of view: how could the author of *Tony Lumpkin* fail? He has immortalised it both in prose and verse. The story of the Merry-Andrew out of employment, whom he picked up in the Green Park, would have lost great part of its zest had it not been told over "a frothing tankard and a smoking steak." Who does not feel that the conversation of the imprisoned debtor, porter, and soldier, about an apprehended French invasion, is rendered more pointed by the good malt liquor that takes a part in it?—" 'For my part,' cries the prisoner, 'the greatest of my apprehensions is for our freedom. If the French should conquer, what would become of English liberty? My dear friends, liberty is the Englishman's prerogative; we must preserve that at the expense of our lives; of that the French shall never deprive us. It is not to be expected that men who are slaves themselves would preserve our freedom, should they happen to conquer.' 'Ay, slaves,' cries the porter, 'they are all slaves, fit only to carry burthens, every one of them. Before I would stoop to slavery, may this be my poison,' and he held the goblet in his hand, 'may this be my poison—but I would sooner list for a soldier.' The soldier, taking the goblet from his friend, with much awe, fervently cried out, 'It is not so much our liberties as our religion that would suffer from such a change: ay, our religion, my lads. May the devil sink me into flames,' such was the solemnity of his adjuration, 'if the French should come over, but our religion would be utterly undone.' So saying, instead of a libation, he applied the goblet to his lips, and confirmed his sentiments with a ceremony of most persevering devotion." And, without the allusion to beer, how dry would have been his description of the region where authors most abound!—

"Where the 'Red Lion,' staring o'er the way,
 Invites each passing stranger that can pay;
 Where Calvert's butt, and Parson's black champagne,
 Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury Lane;
 There, in a lonely room from bailiffs snug,
 The Muse found Scroggen stretch'd beneath a rug."

To a poet of a later day than poor Goldy it was given to sing a royal visitation to a London brewhouse; and as our readers may expect us, while upon this subject, to introduce them to the interior of one of these great establishments, they may prefer visiting it while a king is there. The hurry of preparation to receive the illustrious guest was spiritedly sung by the modern Pindar:—

"Muse, sing the stir that Mister Whitbread made,
 Poor gentleman, most terribly afraid
 He should not charm enough his guests *divine*,
 He gave his Maids new aprons, gowns, and smocks;
 And, lo! two hundred pounds were spent in frocks
 To make the Apprentices and Draymen fine.

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Busy as horses in a field of clover,
 Dogs, cats, and stools and chairs, were tumbled over,
 Amid the Whitbread rout of preparation
 To treat the lofty ruler of the nation."

The irreverend manner in which the poet describes the rapidity with which the royal questions were huddled on each other may be passed over. Suffice it to say, that, by the clack of interrogatories,—

"Thus was the Brewhouse fill'd with gabbling noise,
 While Draymen and the Brewer's Boys
 Devour'd the questions that the King did ask :
 In different parties were they staring seen,
 Wondering to think they saw a King and Queen ;
 Behind a tub were some, and some behind a cask.
 Some Draymen forced themselves (a pretty luncheon !)
 Into the mouth of many a gaping puncheon ;
 And through the bung-hole wink'd, with cunning eye,
 To view, and be assured what sort of things
 Were Princesses, and Queens, and Kings,
 For whose most lofty stations thousands sigh.
 And, lo ! of all the gaping Puncheon clan,
 Few were the mouths that had not got a man."

The picture of Majesty examining " a pump so deep " with an opera-glass of Dollond is good, but we hasten to the " useful knowledge " elicited on the occasion :—

" Now Mister Whitbread serious did declare,
 To make the Majesty of England stare,
 That he had butts enough, he knew,
 Placed side by side to reach along to Kew.
 On which the King with wonder swiftly cried,
 ' What, if they reach to Kew, then, side by side,
 What would they do, what, what, placed end to end ?'
 To whom with knitted, calculating brow,
 The man of beer most solemnly did vow
 Almost to Windsor that they would extend.
 On which the King, with wondering mien,
 Repeated it unto the wondering Queen.
 On which, quick turning round his halter'd head,
 The Brewer's horse, with face astonish'd, neigh'd :
 The Brewer's dog, too, pour'd a note of thunder,
 Rattled his chain, and wagg'd his tail for wonder.
 Now did the King for *other* Beers inquire,
 For Calvert's, Jordan's, Thrale's entire ;
 And, after talking of their different Beers,
 Ask'd Whitbread if *his* Porter *equall'd theirs*."

The Muse of Painting, at least the Muse of Engraving, was equally assiduous with the Muse of rhythmic words in its attention to the staple liquor of London. Hogarth has immortalised its domestic, and Gilray its political history. In his engraving of ' Beer Street ' Hogarth has been rapt beyond himself. There is a genuine " tipsy jollity " breathed over all the groups. The key-note is struck by the refreshing draughts of the tailors in the garret ; it rises to a higher pitch in the chairmen, one of whom wipes his bald head while the other drinks ; it becomes exuberant in the lusty blacksmith brandishing the astonished French



[From Hogarth's 'Beer Street.']

porter in one hand and his pewter-pot in the other; and it soars to genuine poetic inspiration in the ingenious artist who is painting with such unutterable gusto, "Health to the Barley Mow." Gilray, under the inspiration of good ale, became classical and allegorical. The Castor and Pollux of his 'Whig Mythology' are two lusty brewers of his day—incarnations of strong beer. His 'Meditations on a Pot of Porter' are bold and grotesque in conception, yet executed in conformity to the severest rules of sculptural grouping. His 'Triumph of Quassia' is worthy of Poussin.

This union between beer on the one hand and art and literature on the other was not a mere playful fiction of the imagination. The fine spirits of London loved good ale as Burns loved his "bonny Jean," whom he not only be-rhymed but took unto his wife. It was no mere Platonic flirtation that they kept up with the beer-barrel. The brows of Whitbread were bound with the triple wreath of brewery, the drama, and senatorial oratory; his own brewhouse, St. Stephen's, and Drury Lane Theatre were rivals in his affections. The names of Thrale and Johnson must go down to posterity together. We have often had occasion to sigh over the poverty of London in the article of genuine popular legends—one brewhouse is among the exceptions. The workmen at Barclay and Perkins's will show you a little apartment in which, according to the tradition of the place, Johnson wrote his dictionary. Now this story has one feature of a genuine legend—it sets chronology at defiance. It is no invention of a bookman, but the unsophisticated belief of those who know books less from personal inspection than by report, as something the knowledge of which makes a learned man.

Before Johnson made his acquaintance with the Thrales, two men eminent in their way in literature; the one belonging to the generation of authors who preceded the Doctor, the other destined to earn his full harvest of praise after the lexicographer had retired upon his pension, shook hands over a cup of good ale. Mandeville and Franklin had a meeting when the former visited London in

early life, which is thus noticed by the latter in his Autobiography:—"My pamphlet by some means falling into the hands of one Lyons, a surgeon, author of a book entitled 'The Infallibility of Human Judgment,' it occasioned an acquaintance between us: he took great notice of me, called on me often to converse on these subjects, carried me to the Horns, a pale-ale house in — Lane, Cheapside, and introduced me to Doctor Mandeville, author of the 'Fable of the Bees,' who had a club there, of which he was the soul, being a most facetious, entertaining companion." It is worthy of remark that Franklin has not a word to say against the "vile liquor" when it was imbibed by one he felt flattered by being introduced to; and it may also be observed in passing, that we are here introduced to the out-spoken sceptics of London, with whom Franklin sympathised as completely in his youth as he did with those of Paris in his advanced years. The former he found in pot-houses. Mandeville was a gentleman, but Chubb and the others always look like the arguers of some cobblers' debating society. The French wits, on the contrary, were men of fashion; and yet it may be doubted whether there were not more nerve and shrewdness in their homely English predecessors. The difference is illustrative of the varied characters of the two cities as well as of the individuals.

This "exaltation of ale" scarcely belongs to the very oldest period of our literature. Chaucer gets eloquent at times upon the subject of "a draught of moist and corny ale," and Skelton has sung its praises; but the dramatists of the Elizabethan age made little account of it. "Our ancestors drank sack, Mrs. Quickly." Shakspeare speaks rather compassionately of that "poor creature small beer." Nor was it altogether an affectation of being more *recherché* in their drink: the ale of the olden time must have been at best but a sorry tippie. Hops only came into cultivation in England about 1524; before that time brewers made a shift with broom, bay-berries, and ivy-berries—sorry enough substitutes. Ale was almost certain to get "eager" before it was ripe. Nor was this all: in the minute and specific directions for brewing which are to be found in Holinshed it may be seen that it was the custom to eke out the malt with a liberal admixture of unmalted oats. From the trial of Beau Fielding, quoted in a former paper, it would appear that an inferior sort of liquor called oat ale was in use in families.

The truth is, that they were only learning to brew drinkable beer in London about the time of Shakspeare. It appears from the information collected by Stow that in the year 1585 there were about twenty-six brewers in the City, suburbs, and Westminster, "whereof the one-half of them strangers, the other English." Hops appear to have been grown in great quantities in the vicinity of the Pomeranian Hanse Towns as early as the thirteenth century, and beer to have been one of the staple articles of export from these great trading communities. The circumstance of so many of the London brewers in the sixteenth century being foreigners seems to point to the conclusion that hops, and persons capable of teaching the right way to use them, had been imported about the same time.

The London Company of Brewers was incorporated, it is true, in February, 1427, and bore for a time their coat of arms impaled with that of Thomas à Becket. The Company, however, and its trade, do not appear to have emerged

into consequence until the confirmation of their charter in July, 1559, the second of Elizabeth. That there had been songs in praise of ale before this time argues nothing for its goodness. The decoction of malt and oats, bittered by ivy berries, must have been much such a mess as the "boosa" of the Upper Nile and the Niger: it made men tipsy, and when tipsy they bestowed exaggerated praises on the cause of their exhilaration. This is the utmost that Chaucer finds to say for "the ale of Southwark" in his time. The symptoms of his Miller, by which the host saw that he "was dronken of ale," are those of a man who drinks to get drunk, not because the liquor is palatable. His very gestures show it:—

"The Miller that for-dronken was all pale,
 So that unethes upon his hors he sat,
 He n' old avalen neither hood ne hat,
 Ne abiden no man for his curtesie,
 But in Pilate's vois he gan to crie,
 And swore by armes and by blood and bones."

The delicious rapidity and incongruity with which his images crowd upon each other in the prefatory speech he delivers show the state he was in, and, what is more to the purpose, his boasts show that he is proud of his condition:—

"Now herkeneth, quoth the Miller, all and some;
 But first I make a protestatioun
 That I am dronke, I know it my soun."

This is the full amount of the spirited eulogy:—

"Back and side go bare, go bare,
 Both feet and hand go cold;
 But belly, God send thee good ale enough,
 Whether it be new or old."

In Elizabeth's day beer was rising in estimation: alarmed by the increase of alehouses, the Lord Mayor, aided by the magistrates of Lambeth and Southwark, suppressed above two hundred of them within their jurisdictions in 1574, and the example was followed in Westminster and other places round London. It was about this time, or perhaps later, that the saying, "Blessed be her heart, for she brewed good ale," first came up. Launce, in the 'Two Gentlemen of Verona,' speaks of it as quite of recent origin. But as yet beer (the name is said to have come in with hops, to distinguish the improved liquor from the old-fashioned ale) seems to have been chiefly in request with those who could not afford wine. Prince Hal apologises for longing for it; Falstaff never tasted it; it was the most raffish of all his followers, Bardolph, whose meteor nose glared through the alehouse window, undistinguishable from its red lattice blinds.

The years 1585 and 1591 are the earliest for which we have found any statistics of the beer trade of London. The twenty-six brewers in 1585 brewed among them 648,960 barrels of beer. This they sent to their customers in open barrels before the process of fermentation was completed; at least it is to the loss occasioned by its being transmitted in that state that, in their answer to a complaint against them made to the Chancellor, they attribute the enormous deficiency of one gallon in nine. In 1591 the "twenty great brewhouses, situate on the Thames side from Milford Stairs in Fleet Street till below St. Cathe-

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rine's," brewed yearly the quantity of seven or eight brewings of sweet beer or strong beer for exportation to Embden, the Low Countries, Dieppe, &c. The produce of all these brewings might amount, one year with another, to 26,400 barrels. This trade was often interrupted; for as soon as corn began to rise in price, the exporting brewers were complained of as the cause, and a proclamation issued to "restrain from brewing any sweet or strong beer to be transported by casks as merchandise," or what was called *portage beer*. The apprehensions were probably unfounded, for the foreign beer trade seems to have been little more than a cloak for the smuggling of very different commodities. A complaint was made to the treasurer of England in 1586, that "There was deceit in the vessels of beer that were transported; that under the name of these passed many barrels stuffed with prohibited goods, as pike-heads, halberd-heads, pistols and match, candles, and soles of shoes of new leather, cut out in pairs of all sizes, and the like, the bungs of the barrels being besmeared with a little yeast, to the hindrance of the Commonwealth and the profit of enemies." Falstaff made bitter complaints, and swore there was no faith in villanous man, because he found a little lime in his sack: had he been a beer-drinker, how he would have grumbled at such a dainty mixture as is here described! The return barrels were employed in the conveyance of more delicate wares:—"Another deceit that the strangers, foreigners, and others practised with the brewers and their servants was packing up-cases and pieces of silk, and delivering them as empty barrels on the brewer's wharf. The brewers straight besmeared them with yeast, and so sent them to the merchants' houses, as barrels of beer for the household, to the hindrance of the Queen's customs."

Some notice was taken, in the paper on St. Giles's, ancient and modern, of the persecution of the alehouse-keepers under the Long Parliament. Enough was said then to show that ale, as a drink, had become a popular favourite. That the excise imposed upon beer, in 1643, was found worth the continuing, may be taken as a proof that the liquor was improving. "Muddy ale" would have been driven out of the market by such an increase of price. Down to the time of the Revolution, however, although good ale might be met with in wealthy families who could afford the expense of making it—or in corn districts, which, in that age of bad or no roads, enjoyed no facilities for conveying their surplus grain into more sterile districts (which may account for the high terms in which Boniface speaks of his ale in the 'Beaux Stratagem')—English beer seems to have been rather an indifferent liquor. The ecstasies in which lamb's-wool, and other ways of disguising it, are spoken of, show that it was taken merely for its intoxicating effects, and that its taste required to be disguised. Who would think of spoiling the XXX of Barclay or Goding with foreign admixtures?

An anonymous writer in the 'Annual Register for 1760' enables us to trace the progress of the London beer-trade from the Revolution down to the accession of George III. In the beginning of King William's reign, the brewer sold his brown ale for 16s. per barrel; and the small beer, which was made from the same grains, at 6s. per barrel. The customers paid for their beer in ready money, and fetched it from the brewhouse themselves. The strong beer was a heavy sweet beer: the small, with reverence be it spoken, was little better than the washings of the tubs, and had about as much of the extract of malt in it as the

last cup of tea which an economical housewife pours out to her guests has of the China herb.

A change came over the character of London beer in the reign of Queen Anne, owing to two very different causes: the duty imposed upon malt and hops, and taxes, on account of the war with France, on the one hand, and the more frequent residence of the gentry in London on the other. The duty on malt exceeding that on hops, the brewers endeavoured at a liquor in which more of the latter should be used. The people, not easily weaned from the sweet clammy drink to which they had been accustomed, drank ale, mixed with the new-fashioned bitter beer, which they got from the victualler. This is the earliest trace our antiquarian researches have enabled us to detect of the very palatable beverage "half-and-half." The gentry introduced the pale ale, and the pale small beer, which prevailed in the country; and either engaged some of their friends, or some of the London trade, to brew their liquors for them. The pale beers being originally intended for a more affluent and luxurious class, the brewers who engaged in this new branch of the business paid more attention to the condition in which it was delivered, increased their store of casks, and kept them in better order. The pale ale was more expensive than the old London beers: its price was 30*s.* a barrel, while the brown ale was selling at 19*s.* or 20*s.*, and the bitter beer at 22*s.* But the spreading of a taste for the new drink, and the establishment of "pale-ale houses," such as that in which Franklin met Mandeville, stimulated the brown beer trade to produce a better article than they had hitherto made. "They began," says the writer before alluded to, "to hop their mild beer more; and the publican started three, four, sometimes six butts at a time; but so little idea had the brewer or his customer of being at the charge of large stocks of beer, that it gave room to a set of moneyed people to make a trade, by buying these beers from brewers, keeping them some time, and selling them, when stale, to publicans for 25*s.* or 26*s.* Our tastes but slowly alter or reform: some drank mild beer and stale; others what was then called 'three-threads,' at 3*d.* a quart, but many used all stale, at 4*d.* a pot." This we may imagine to have been the state of the beer-trade when Sir Harry Quickset, Sir Giles Wheelbarrow, Knt., and company, accompanied Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq., to Dick's Coffeehouse:—"Sir Harry called for a mug of ale, and 'Dyer's Letter.' The boy brought the ale in an instant, but said they did not take in the 'Letter.' 'No!' says Sir Harry. 'Then take back your mug: we are like, indeed, to have good liquor at this house.' . . . I observed, after a long pause, that the gentlemen did not care to enter upon business till after their morning draught, for which reason I called for a bottle of mum; and finding that had no effect upon them, I ordered a second and a third: after which Sir Harry reached over to me, and told me, in a low voice, that the place was too public for business; but he would call upon me again to-morrow morning at my own lodgings, and bring some more friends with him."

About the year 1722 a bright thought, we are told, occurred to the brewers—that they might improve their trade by improving their liquor; at least such is the only meaning we can attach to this oracular passage:—"The brewers conceived there was a mean to be found preferable to any of those extremes, which was, that beer well brewed, from being kept its proper time, becoming mellow,