

**THE FIRST BOTTLES**

THEY WERE UNDOUBTEDLY MADE OF HIDES OF ANIMALS.

Some of These Ancient Receptacles For Wine Were of Gigantic Size. Skin Bags Are Still Used in Spain, Portugal and Greece.

The most ancient receptacles of wine were formed of animal hides. These must be almost as old as wine itself, for there certainly would have been very little use in expressing the juice of the grape and allowing it to ferment unless there had been vessels of some sort to contain it. Even if stored in underground cisterns, as is still done in southern Europe, bottles would be required for carrying the liquid on journeys or even for consuming it at home. Frequent mention is made of such bottles in ancient literature. At a feast in the liquid in the "Iliad" the servants are described as bearing wine upon their shoulders in a bottle of goat-skin, from which the goblets of the guests were filled.

Throughout the interior of Spain wine is still conveyed from place to place in bottles made of goat or pig skin identical in every respect with the description given by Herodotus, says the Chicago Chronicle. It will doubtless be remembered that in the vents on the Sierra Morena Don Quixote's room was hung around with these cures and that the doughty knight, mistaking them for the myrmidons of a wicked enchanter, valiantly attacked them with his sword until the room was inch deep in red wine flowing from the gashes made in the skins.

In Portugal and Greece these skin bags are also used for the conveyance of wine, as they are much more portable than any other sort of vessel, especially in a mountainous district, where they have to be borne by mules. These leather bottles have a peculiar interest, for in make and material they connect the viniculture of today with its origin in the unknown past. They are survivals which have floated down to us on the stream of time unaffected by centuries of age.

A leather bottle capable of holding an armed man would seem today too unwieldy for practical purposes, but there is evidence that many of those used by the Romans were of still greater dimensions. Among the ruins of the ancient city of Pompeii a mural picture has been discovered representing an enormous skin bag on a wine cart which is being borne along by a machine shaped like a boat. Two men were drawing the wine off into amphorae. In order to gain popularity a Roman politician would occasionally dole out wine wholesale to the clients whose favor he courted, and this picture probably portrays the conveyance on which the wine skin was borne through the streets and the men engaged in circulating it.

The coronation ceremony of Ptolemy Philadelphus excelled in pomp and pageantry every procession recorded in history, not even excepting the triumphant progress with which Alexander the Great celebrated his escape from the deserts of Gedrosia. Perhaps the object of Philadelphus was so to dazzle his subjects that they should forget the domestic crimes with which he inaugurated his ascent to the throne. The cost of the procession is estimated at over \$500,000 of American money. It lasted the whole day, being opened by the figure of the morning star and closed with that of Hesperus.

Eighty thousand troops, cavalry and infantry, clad in gorgeous uniforms, marched past. Although the festival was held in winter owing to the delicious Egyptian climate, abundance of fresh grapes were provided on one of the vehicles of the procession and a vintage scene faithfully represented. To the sound of the flute and song sixty satyrs under the superintendence of Silenus, bearing his symbolic cantharus, trod out the grapes and flooded the streets with foaming must.

Perhaps not the least appreciated part of the show was a car thirty-seven feet long by twenty-one feet broad, bearing a gigantic uter made of leopard hides and containing 3,000 amphorae of wine. As the Greek amphora is equivalent to eight imperial gallons, the liquid contained in the uter would have equaled the enormous quantity of 24,000 gallons.

The sides must have been strengthened with some material stronger than leather to enable the skins to resist the pressure of such a weight of liquid. As the car moved along in the stately procession the wine was allowed slowly to flow from it so that the thirsty multitude could fill their drinking vessels as it passed.

The scholastic Latin term for a wine skin is uter, but the colloquial word used was butis, and thus a small skin was the diminutive buticula. From this buticula is derived the word "bottle," and, with slight linguistic modification, the same has been adopted in all modern languages.

Although skins were never used for wine in England, even when grape juice was fermented there, the leather bottle or blackjack was one of the earliest drinking vessels. It is celebrated in many old English ballads and is not an uncommon alehouse emblem at the present day. Some of these leather bottles were silver lined and were ornamented with silver bells "to ring peals of drunkenness," as Becker says in his "English Villainies Seven Times Pressed to Death." When so ornamented they are called "gynge boys."

Many of those in ordinary use were made in the shape of a boot, which oc-

casioned the French prisoners to report on their return to France that "the Englishmen used to drink out of their booties."

They evidently took the fancy, however, of some of the French nobility, for in the expenses of John, king of France, when prisoner in England after the battle of Poitiers there is the following entry: "Pour deux bouteilles de cuir achetées a London pour Monseigneur Philippe, 9s. 8d." no inconsiderable price in those days, A. D. 1350-60.

As the arts improved leather bottles were supplemented, but not displaced, by vessels of clay, great care being taken in the construction to avoid sandy earth or any substance likely to be porous. These, like the hides, partly to prevent the liquor from exuding, were all coated on the inside with pitch, but principally as an antiseptic, to keep the wine sound. These vessels were called amphorae and doubtless originally held the standard gauge of eight gallons, but as their use became limited to cellar storage their size gradually increased until they attained frequently the capacity of 100 gallons and upward.

The smaller amphorae were made on the potter's wheel, but the larger in molds sunk in pits, where they were baked over furnaces. In many of the modern bodegas in Valdepeñas wine is still stored in similar earthenware vessels, narrow at the base and widening upward, with arms or ears on either side at the top, and every one of them has its coating of pitch exactly the same as twenty-five centuries ago.

**PACKING ORANGES.**

The Way the Golden Fruit is Handled in California.

The things one sees in an orange packing house are a pleasure to the eye, delightful to the olfactory and, when the local manager or overseer is a generous and indulgent person, also most excellent to the taste. The operations are quiet and simple, but systematic, and carried on by all possible mechanical and automatic devices for the saving of labor and effectiveness of service.

At one end of a long building the oranges are unloaded from the vans. At the other end, a few minutes later, they are snugly ensconced in a railway car, ready at the door to begin its long journey eastward. Between these points of exit and entrance much has been done in a quick and quiet way. First the oranges are gently dumped into a receptacle, whence they are carried on a belt or moving platform to an upper part of the building, where they pass slowly along before a group of workers, who pick out the culls or imperfect fruit and drop them into chutes for disposition elsewhere. The other oranges are allowed to pass on down an incline to the separators, in the meantime their weight being taken and registered automatically as they move along.

The separators consist of long troughs with slits or openings of varying widths at the bottom, through which the oranges drop, according to their sizes, as they are carried along, thus separating themselves into the three grades by which they are known to the market. These grades are based on size and are known as "standard," the smallest; "choice," the next in rank, and "fancy," the largest of all.

As they separate themselves and drop from the moving belt the oranges run down in the gulches by little side chutes to a small canvas platform or box, whence they are removed by the nimble fingers of the packers, usually young women, wrapped in soft paper and placed in boxes for final shipment. An expert packer will fill from eighty to ninety boxes per day. From these busy young women the boxes are carefully trundled to a nearby bench or table, where other employees deftly nail and close up the open side. One more turn by other ready hands, and the finished boxes are passed into a car drawn on a convenient siding, where, carefully secured and piled to the roof, they are seen no more until they reach the great distributing centers in the eastern markets.—La Salle A. Maynard in Leslie's Weekly.

**The Indestructible Tooth.**

The temple at Yakadama, Japan, contains a wonderful relic in the shape of a tooth which, tradition says, one of the gods pulled from his jaw in order to have a weapon with which to dispatch an immense cobra. Years ago, according to the tradition, after the tooth had been worshiped by heathen devotees for centuries, a change of sentiment took place in regard to the relic. It was declared to be a fraud and was accordingly ground to a powder and then thrown into the river. But the particles came together, so the priests say, and again formed themselves into a perfect tooth, which was found as perfect as before the ordeal, quietly reposing in the bed of the river. After this miracle the "temple of the sacred tooth," which had also been destroyed by the unbelievers, was rebuilt and the tooth again enshrined as an object of adoration. At present it is kept in a gold box wrapped in silks from the sacred white spider's web. Nonbelievers in the power of the sacred indestructible tooth say that it is simply a molar of some extinct species of gigantic animal.

**A Poisonous Frog.**

People in general look upon all species of the frog as being perfectly harmless. Should you be traveling in New Granada (United States of Colombia), however, you would do well to let a certain little tree croaker severely alone. He secretes a poison equally as deadly as that of the rattlesnake. It exudes from his skin in the shape of a milky liquid and is used by the natives as a poison for their arrows.

**SOURCES OF MEDICINES.**

What Various Drugs Look Like in Their Crude States.

Upon going into a pharmacy and looking over the mysterious jars and bottles and boxes that line the shelves did you ever wonder where on earth all of the drugs came from and how they appeared before they were ground up and made into oils or dried or pulverized or crystallized into queer shapes? Each jar and box seems to hide some secret which you immediately become curious to solve. How many different lands do they represent? And after they leave the jars that hold them now what are they made into?

Who, for example, would connect a great pile of dry, thin twigs neatly tied into small bundles with sarsaparilla? These twigs are the creeping roots and rootlets of a prickly shrub that grows in Jamaica, and they are worth from 10 cents to 50 cents a pound.

Some what similar in appearance is ipecacuanha, which also comes to us in dry twigs, which are part of the trailing root of a plant found in the damp forests of Brazil.

These roots receive no preparation save drying before they are shipped off to the United States. They are packed in large sacks, and the workmen who open the bales must beware of breathing the pungent, irritating dust given off and which is productive of unpleasant results if incautiously inhaled.

Castor oil, too, is hard to recognize in the pretty little brown beans spotted with black and with polished skins that arrive in bags from India. They look far too attractive to suggest the much hated dose of our early days.

Aloes, the base of many nauseous medicines, may be seen in its crude form as a solid mass resembling brown sealing wax, packed in heavy wooden boxes, from which it is chipped out in flakes with a chisel and hammer.

It is of different qualities and prices, according to whether it comes from Arabia, Socotra or the West Indies, and may bring any sum from \$4 to \$45 per hundredweight. Aloes is the juice of the big-fleshy leaves of the plant of that name. This juice is pressed or evaporated from the leaves and poured into chests or kegs in a semi-fluid state, hardening presently into a solid block. Not infrequently it is inclosed in the dry skins of monkeys and in this strange form brought to market.

One of the most interesting of drugs is opium, both on account of its awful potency and by reason of its great value. A case of opium, about 225 pounds, is worth \$400, roughly. The case is of rough deal, lined with tin, and contains a number of soft, dark lumps, like large handfuls of dough, packed very closely together in a quantity of dry, chaffy seeds.

The opium which reaches America is of two qualities, one for medicine, the other for smoking, and comes from Persia and Asia Minor, China and India.

Another costly and all important drug is quinine, which arrives in its crude form as large slices of bark, packed either flat or in "quills"—that is, curled round upon itself like a roll.—Philadelphia North American.

**Poison a Blessing.**

Strangely anomalous as it may appear, the existence of active poisons in the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms of nature has done more for the development of modern civilization than have all the other innocuous elements of things which aboriginal man found to his hand. These active poisons were man's first stimulus to first adaptation of poison to the uses of man. The aborigine found himself at once the hunter and the hunted of creation. Whether as hunter or the hunted, he was a pygmy compared with many of the carnivorous beasts in his environment. He saw that, whereas his own considerable physical force and power were as nothing to some of these creatures, the fang of the serpent was all compelling. Where the poisonous serpent struck with poisoned fang and killed its quarry he saw it eat without discomfort or injury. To kill his own food through the venom of the serpent must have been one of man's first elaborated mental processes. As this aborigine applied the venom of the serpent to his arrow and later blended it with the poisons of the vegetable world he may be said to have grown in mental stature.—Technical World Magazine.

**Castoria.**

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