king to abandon his plan, and he became the only distiller in his kingdom.

A dignitary of the church remonstrated with his majesty, and remarked that there were two things with which a prudent king should not meddle, namely, religion and Brandy. With the concerns of the first, Gustavus had very little to do; but the second he pursued with ardour. He even interdicted the importation of foreign Brandies, and levied heavy penalties on the slightest infringement of any of his regulations, which occasioned numerous complaints, remonstrances, and menaces in every part of the kingdom; and discontent rose so high, that even in the metropolis it was found necessary to station guards at the royal Brandy factories to prevent their destruction by an indignant populace. This expression of public feeling led to a fresh modification of the laws.

Consett says grain is not the only ingredient used in the Swedish distilleries. A large species of black ant, which affords in distillation a resin, an oil, and an acid, is employed with rye to give flavour and potency to the Brandy. This insect is commonly found on small round hills at the bottom of the fir tree. It is declared that these insects are not only distilled, but eaten by all classes. As soon as they are caught the heads and wings are nipped off and the body eaten; the flavour is that
of the finest acid, and resembles that of lemons. Chemists have tried the distilling of ants, and have obtained an acid-like vinegar, the properties and attractions of which are not further described.

Clarke, in his Travels,* says, in relation to the Laplanders, the only evil with which the people are beset is the habitual use of Brandy. Their love of this liquor is such, that they have been known to give a crown for a glass, and to exchange one of their best rein-deer for six drams of the common Swedish Spirit. They regard their passion for it as a misfortune, but when remonstrance is made on the subject, they say that without Brandy they could have no wives. This, unhappily, is too true, for when a young Laplander wishes to choose a wife, he must first furnish a friend with some bottles of Brandy to mediate between him and her father, who is disposed to permit the visits of the lover only in proportion to the Brandy he brings. This perquisite too often induces a parent to postpone the nuptials of a daughter for two or three years.

From the pleasure it gives in this world, they consider a little of it necessary for comfort in the next, hence they put into the coffin of a deceased friend a flask of Brandy, with other articles, in order that he may cheer himself on his journey.

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In a country where the winters are so rigorous, and the cold so intense, it need scarcely seem surprising that ignorant and savage people should have recourse to strong liquors to enliven the solitude of their rocks and mountains, and to give a brisker flow to their spirits.

It is a ceremony not unworthy of relation, that when a Laplander has laid hold of the glass or mug out of which he is about to drink, he first dips his forefinger into the liquor, rubs a little of it to his forehead, then on his bosom, and with the celerity of lightning empties the contents into his stomach. These innocent people think that such precautions prevent the arduous of the Spirits from injuring either head or heart. Their chief supply of Brandy is drawn from the border fairs of Norway, Sweden, Muscovy, and Finland. To these places they generally resort in caravans, or companies, travelling in sledges drawn by the rein-deer, and their furs, baskets, cheese made of rein-deer milk, dried fish, toys, and the deer itself is even marketable for their favourite liquor, and for such necessaries as they may want. Whole families go to market in this manner, and seldom return without experiencing some of the fatal consequences of too great an indulgence in their passion for intoxicating Spirit.

Lapland abounds with the rubus chamaemorus, or, as it is called, cloud-berry, from being found on the
tops of mountains, the fruit of which is about the size of a good hazel nut; it is of a scarlet colour at first, but as it ripens, becomes yellow: when eaten with sugar or cream, it is cooling and delicious, being full of saccharine matter and strongly subject to fermentation. It is singular that no Spirit has been made from it, particularly amongst a people whose attachment to alcohol is strong and un-governable. Of this fruit great quantities are sent annually from the Gulf of Bothnia to Stockholm; it is used in sausages, and in making vinegar, and is said to possess medicinal virtues in cures of debility.

The Laplanders appear to require more than any other nation the services of a Teetotal Society; and when the curse of drunkenness is rooted out of Great Britain, a special mission should be directed towards this northern clime, for one traveller informs us that the Laplanders are so passionately attached to spirituous liquors that they will kiss the ground in obeisance to any one from whom they hope to obtain them, and exclaim "auna, auna, minule vina!" give me, give me, a little wine! "Addi mungi vedni!" give me some Brandy wine! A few years ago, for six dozen of common Swedish Brandy, a Laplander would press the acceptance of one of his best rein-deer, and deem it an affront if this remuneration were declined.
BRANDY.

Regnard, in his journey to Lapland, informs us that at marriages Brandy is freely circulated, and when the bridegroom demands the rein-deer, the promised portion of his wife, if he neglects to bring Brandy with him, he is generally disappointed of the expected dowry. It is a prevailing custom in Lapland to make love through the medium of Brandy, and a marriage is never concluded without drinking several bottles of Spirits; the warmth of a lover’s attachment is estimated by the quantity of Spirits he distributes; a particular name is given to the spirituous liquor thus brought by the lover to the habitation of his mistress, and that is soub-bouvvin, or the lover’s Wine. At the funerals of the Laplanders, Spirits are sprinkled over the place of interment; all the mourners drink of it; the rein-deer employed in carrying the deceased to the grave are, three days after, slaughtered to make a feast for the mourners, at which repast the pali-gavin, or fortune liquor, is drunk in honour of the deceased, whom they think is happy. Mothers even pour Brandy down the throats of infants, and at all their christenings and funerals intoxication prevails, the ceremonies of rejoicing and mourning being made mere pretexts for dram drinking. At feasts, says Malte-Brun, they seldom depart before the whole repast is consumed. The puolem-vine, Brandy brought from Flensburg, circulated freely,
and mirth is evinced in noisy loquacity. All the
guests thunder the wild discord of their jolias, or
national songs, and the amusement is sometimes
varied by cards made from the bark of trees, and
coloured with the blood of the rein-deer. The
Laplanders, when inflamed with liquor, never com-
mitt any acts of cruelty, shewing only an elevation
of spirits, which prompts them to shout, jump, and
laugh, craving drams with hysterical screams till
they drop on the ground in total disregard of all
that belongs to them, offering anything they possess
for Brandy. When sober they are as gentle as
lambs, and of the most placable disposition. Like
the gipsies, they practise several modes of divina-
tion; one is by inspecting a cup of liquor, and
which, to insure the greatest possible certainty,
must be a cup of Brandy, which at once explains
and ensures the whole business of the prophecy,
evincing that the love of strong drink, even on such
occasions, predominates over the love of money.

The tastes and habits of the Finns are little
better than those of their Lapland neighbours, for
without tobacco, beer, and Brandy, they consider
life to be joyless. Old and young possess a like
propensity, and although little acquainted with
debility; the excessive use of Spirits undermines
their physical vigour, and often renders them dis-
gusting objects of intemperance and folly.
The desire to obtain Brandy often induces the Finns to undertake incredible journeys; both men and women would sooner starve than be deprived of it. It is related of one, that having travelled from a great distance to Abo to purchase an iron pot, he observed some Brandy and tobacco in a shop for sale, and such was his infatuation, that he spent all he had in their purchase, and returned home without the utensil for which he had undergone such fatigue.

When the people repair to the great fair at Abo, they immediately have recourse to their favourite liquor, and in this weakness they are indulged by the artful traders who traffic with them. While under the influence of intoxication they disclose all their plans to each other; and in these unguarded moments the trader or his agent contrives to hear their communications, in order to take advantage of their simplicity.

It is calculated that, on an average, a Finlander annually consumes from twenty-seven to thirty rix dollars in Brandy, which is equal to the purchase of a cask; but, according to Von Buch,* neither the Finn nor the Norwegian drinks Brandy to keep him warm, or to lighten labour, all is consumed before the door of the merchant with whom he traffics, and the infatuated being would be

* Von Buch's Travels through Norway and Lapland, p. 295.
surprised at himself were he to return home without being raving mad with Brandy. Edicts have been issued to prevent the merchants supplying them with this liquor to excess, but to no effect. The poor creatures, when reproved for such irregularities, exert all the little intellect and ingenuity they possess to defend the practice. With the greatest self-complacency they urge, as an unanswerable argument, that "Brandy is as equally strong, and as equally nourishing, as bread, because, like bread, it is prepared from grain; and bread being the staff of life, Brandy, which is prepared from it, must be equally nourishing as it is exhilarating." Thus this unfortunate propensity enervates every spring of activity, every incentive to improvement, and every moral sentiment. By the influence of this stimulant the imaginations are carried to the height of frenzy and enthusiasm. In their moments of merriment, they boast of an intercourse with fairies at banquets and dances; they talk with triumph of the feasts which they have shared in the elfin caverns, where Wine, Brandy, tobacco, the productions of the fairy regions, have flowed in abundance. With these and similar notions many of the gloomy days of life are enlivened, while poverty is forgotten amidst the reveries of intemperance and folly.

When Mr. Bullock, an Englishman, visited Finland in 1822, for the purpose of procuring a
herd of rein-deer, he could effect nothing without Brandy. One of the natives, finding he could not get a glass, told this traveller and his companion that he wondered what sort of people they were, not to have so much as a drop of Brandy.

Barrow, who lately visited Finland, confirms the observation of Mr. Bullock; he affirms that drunkenness is an habitual vice among the Finlander; they drink votki raw, and in large quantities, so that they soon became intoxicated.

In Russia, distillation is one of the most extensive and beneficial branches of trade, Brandy being the idol of the people. According to Storch, this art was first introduced into the country in the sixteenth century, and was obtained from the Crimea, which was then in the possession of the Genoese. Shortly after its introduction Spirits became the rival of Mead, the chief and original drink of the country. Rye and barley are the kinds of grain principally used in all distilleries; these, for the most part, are malted and mixed in proper proportions. We are unable to state the extent of manufacture at the present time, but it is something enormous. Thirty years ago there were upwards of 400 stills in the province of Penza and the adjoining districts. This may afford an idea of the extent of the operations, as these distilleries employed upwards of 1,100 men. In Kamtschatka,
the most eastern district of the Russian empire, a Spirit resembling Brandy is distilled from a sweet grass, called by the natives Slatkaia trava; by others Sloka trava; in botany, spondilium foliole pinatifidi. It is gathered and made ready for the distilleries in the following manner:—"The stalks being cut, and the downy substance scraped from the surface, they are placed in small heaps until they begin to heat and smell. When dry, they are put into sacks of matting, where they remain for a few days, and become gradually covered with a saccharine powder which exudes from the hollow of the stalk. Only one quarter of a pound of the powder is obtained from thirty-six pounds of the plant in this state. The women who conduct this business find it necessary to defend their hands with gloves while they are scraping the stalks, the rinds being of a quality so acrid as to lacerate any part it might touch. The Spirit is drawn from the plant by the following process:—Bundles of it are steeped in hot water, and the fermentation is promoted in a small vessel with berries of the gimolost, or of the golubitsa; care being taken to close the mouth of the vessel, and to keep it in a warm place whilst the fermentation continues, which is often so violent as to agitate the vessel which contains the fluid, and occasions a considerable noise. When the first liquor is drawn off, more hot water is
poured on, and a second fermentation ensues in the same manner. Both liquors and herbs are then put into a copper still, and the Spirit is drawn off in the usual way. The liquor thus prepared is called by the natives Raka. According to Steller, the Spirit distilled from this plant when unscraped, is very pernicious to health, and produces sudden nervous disorders."*

Those who do not distil this Spirit procure it from Russia; and the Cossack traders are well aware of the attachment to its delusive qualities, and avail themselves of it. The following anecdote, related by Lesseps, will serve as an illustration:—

A Kamtschatdah had given a sable for a glass of Brandy; inflamed with the desire of drinking another, he invited the seller into his house. The merchant thanked him, but said he was in a hurry. The Kamtschatdah renewed his solicitations, and proposed a second bargain: he prevailed. "Come! another glass for this sable; it is a finer one than the first!" "No!" said the merchant, "I must keep the rest of my Brandy, I have promised to sell it at a certain place, and I must begone!" "Stay a moment! here are two sables." "'Tis all in vain!" "Well! come, I will add another!" "Agreed! drink!" Meanwhile the three sables

were seized, and the hypocrite made a fresh pretence to get away. His host redoubled his importunities to retain him, and demanded a third glass. Further refusals were given, and further offers were made. The higher the chapman raised his price, the more the Kamtschatdah was prodigal of his furs. Who would have supposed that it ended in the sacrifice of seven most beautiful sables for the last glass? They were all he had.

In the northern parts of France a Brandy is produced from rye and malted barley.

In Normandy a Spirit is made from sour apples, which partakes much of the flavour of the fruit; and another Spirit is manufactured termed eau de vie de blé. A great deal of Brandy is made from cider, and also from syrup and molasses, particularly where there are sugar manufactories. A Brandy of a very rough character is also made from the fruit of the sloe tree: some of this is manufactured by the peasantry in the neighbourhood of Thronville.

In some parts of the north of France the root of the Jerusalem Artichoke (*helianthus tuberosus*), has been used for Brandy manufacture. The Wash made from this root is found to yield a very pure, strong Spirit, resembling grape Spirit more than any other substitute yet known, Morewood says, "as this root grows readily in Great Britain, and might be cultivated abundantly, it would be
well to try the experiment here, as we have no medium Spirit between genuine French Brandy and the fiery produce of grain, sold under the denominations of Gin and Whisky. In Ireland the cultivation of this plant would be attended with great advantage, since it thrives well in a boggy soil; and in a country like it, where there are so many unreclaimed and waste lands, its culture would be a profitable speculation, for, while the roots would afford a fine material for distillation, the tops would yield more fodder than the same space of ground if sown with ordinary grain."

From potatoe apples large quantities of Brandy have been distilled in France. The process is very simple: the apples or berries being gathered at full maturity, are then carefully bruised by means of cylinders, the pulp is put into vats and left to ferment; when this is finished it is distilled, and a hectolitre of Brandy, at about 15 under proof, is obtained from twenty to twenty-five hectolitres of uncrushed berries. From experience we can pronounce favourably on the potatoe apple Spirit. The writer, when a boy, with an apparatus manufactured by himself, made some of this Spirit for his amusement. It was submitted to a rectifying distiller, who declared it to be the closest approximation to vinous Spirits he had ever tasted. Dr. Ure says that potatoe apples give by proper treat-
ment as much alcohol as an equal quantity of grapes, when bruised and fermented with one-eighteenth or one-twentieth of their weight of yeast. This no doubt refers only to such grapes as those of Lorraine which yield little less than half their volume in Wine.

Distillation from beet-root also forms an important manufacture in France, and has been carried on with great success, and gives an excellent and clean Spirit.

The reduction of the duties upon foreign Spirits, leaving a difference of only 5d. per gallon in favour of British manufacture, has caused the introduction into England of various imitations of French Brandy, and large importations are arriving from Holland and the Mediterranean ports, with casks of Spirit bearing most impudently the brand of Cognac; in fact it is known to the writer that many houses send over to Hamburg fresh emptied casks, having the original brand of some of the best shippers of Cognac Brandy. These casks are filled with Hamburg Spirit, pale or brown, at a cost of about 3s. per gallon for proof, and those who are not acquainted with the manœuvre are too often deceived by the external appearances. A favourable opportunity is given for this fraud by the Brandy being generally sold in bond, and the impression upon the minds of the uninitiated is, that
if they get their Spirits direct from bond they are secure from imposition. The importer and dealer in this spurious Brandy has a considerable advantage over the British rectifier; he sells the article in bond, his customer paying the duty, whilst the rectifier has to find capital for duty, runs altogether a greater risk, and whilst he supplies a very much better Brandy, derives considerably less profit. If the spirit merchant requires any other than Cognac Brandy he may be assured that the English manufacture is infinitely superior to any we have mentioned, owing to the improvement in the stills, the boilers being worked with steam, by which means contact with the fire is prevented, all empyreumatic character is avoided, and the greatest care is now taken in order to procure a perfectly clean Spirit. In this the majority of makers have succeeded, and by the addition of judicious flavouring, British Brandy is infinitely superior to foreign fabrications. We have no national prejudice in making this assertion; it is founded upon the practical experience of very many years. We know that with the English manufacture the process is simple, and a genuine, wholesome Spirit is obtained; whilst in the foreign importation, essential oils and deleterious drugs are used which render the Spirit pernicious. We again repeat our opinion, and are prepared to support it,
that there is no Brandy manufactured abroad equal to our own British manufacture; we except, of course, the produce of the grape, but in many Wine districts the Brandy is inferior to our corn Spirit. The public should not be imposed upon by advertisements of "Imperial," "Patent," "Channel Island," or other high-sounding titles. Let a respectable rectifier who understands his business, produce his best British Brandy, and he may challenge the foreign distiller to show its equal. It would be invidious in us to point out particular houses as famed for excellent Spirit; they may, however, be discovered by those disposed to make the enquiry.

With this cursory recognition of the inferior and artificial products, we will now direct our attention to that which is par excellence the Eau de Vie of the universe, the far-famed Brandy of COGNAC.

The western district of France, although not very remarkable for its Wines, is one of the richest in consequence of its manufacture of Brandy. The two departments lying on the banks of the Loire, Indre and Loire, and Marne and Loire, although possessing 40,000 hectares of vineyards, are of little importance as compared with the Charentè. The principal growths, Joué, Bourgueit, Vouvray,
and the White Wine of Jaumur, bring from 50 to 100 francs the piece of 220 litres, and are sent to Belgium and Paris only, while the Cognac Brandy is liked and sought after by all Europe.

More than 2,000,000 hectolitres of Wine are annually devoted in Aniss, Saintonge, and Angonois, to the distillation of Brandy, producing from 400,000 to 500,000 hectolitres, amounting in value to 40,000,000 or 50,000,000 francs. These figures show in what lies the importance of this region, which, in this respect, is unrivalled by the south of France.

Of the 200,000 hectares of vineyard in the Charente and Charente Inférieure, only one-third is cultivated for home consumption or exportation; the remaining two-thirds are employed in the making of Brandy. Of this there are two classes: that which is produced in the plain of Champagne, in the arrondissement of Cognac, of which there are again distinct qualities, Champagne fine and common, Champagne de Bois (wood Champagne), and Eau de Vie de Bois; and that of Aniss, produced from the vines on the banks of the river.

The time for the manufacture into Brandy depends upon the vintage. The grape gathering seldom begins before the 15th of September, and continues from that time to the 15th of October, according as the season is more or less favourable to
the maturity of the grape. If the weather is fine, the gathering seldom occupies more than three weeks, but when unfavourable it may extend beyond four weeks. When the Wine is of superior quality, owing to the season being really favourable to the maturity of the grape, a certain portion is exported to Paris, and other parts of France, for consumption, but this applies only to the Red Wine, and it is the Red Wine alone that is retained for the inhabitants in the district, whilst almost the whole of the white grapes are converted into Brandy, and in the entire district three-fourths of the grapes grown are white.

The distillation commences when the Wine is sufficiently fermented, or between All Saints' day (1st November) and Christmas.

The Brandy called Fine Champagne, or Grand Champagne, is the finest quality that can be produced. The soil on which the vine grows, to which we owe this Brandy, lies altogether in the arrondissement of Cognac. It is composed of very light earth, so light on the surface that it much resembles wood ashes, and the bottom is invariably chalk. Another quality of very fine Brandy is called Little or Petite Champagne; and there is also a very fine Brandy known as Premier Bois. These three qualities are mostly grown in the arrondissement of Cognac, or its immediate vicinity.
BRANDY.

The white grape makes much better Brandy than the red, and only a very small portion of the red grape is converted into Brandy.

In good average years the hectare* of vines in the Charente and Charente Inférieure yields from forty to fifty hectolitres of Wine, but when the vintage is abundant, it produces from sixty to seventy hectolitres of Wine. The average quantity of Wine required to produce one hectolitre of Brandy at proof is about eight hectolitres, that is when the Wine is of good quality; but in wet or unfavourable seasons, when there is not much saccharine in the fruit, or it has not come to perfect maturity, eleven, twelve, or even thirteen hectolitres of Wine are required to make one hectolitre of Brandy at proof.

The following, translated from the "Cognac Journal Viticole," of 4th October, 1863, in relation to that year's vintage, will show that the produce is variable:—"The vintage is nearly completed; the quantity of Wine made considerable, and its alcoholic force very satisfactory. In the 'Grand,' or 'Fine Champagne' vineyards, almost exclusively planted with white vines, the average is 150 hectolitres per hectare; and the product, by distillation, is in the proportion of one measure of Brandy to nine of Wine.

* The hectare is 2 acres 13½ rood English. The hectolitre is about 22 English gallons.
In the ‘Bois’ the yield of Red Wine is very mediocre, but the White averages about 90 hectolitres per hectare. On the aggregate it is estimated that the production surpasses that of 1858 in the ‘Champagne,’ but it is inferior to it in the ‘Bois’ districts.”

In the Champagne district the mode of culture is alternate rows of vines and cereals. The ages of the vines vary considerably; in the same vineyard there may be a row of young plants one or two years old, of others three or four, of many from ten to twenty, and we have had pointed out to us some venerable old stocks declared to be one hundred years old and upwards. The vine seldom bears fruit before it is four or five years old; it is most vigorous from the age of 15 to 30 years, but a great many bear well up to 50, 60, or 70 years, and some even give fair crops at the age of 100 years. The white grape generally succeeds better than the black in the Cognac district, especially in years when no great injury is done by frost. Within the last quarter of a century, the agriculturists in Charente have surprisingly improved in circumstances. Those who a few years since were mere labourers are now proprietors of land and growers. They are a very hard-working people—satisfied with very little of the plainest food, and they are exceedingly temperate—they drink the poor red Wine, the produce of their own land, Brandy they
seldom or never taste, either diluted or otherwise.* Altogether their habits and style of living are most inexpensive. Any one who observed these people congregated together at the Cognac or Jarnac market or fair, would at once recognise them from their appearance as a class of men who, having had a difficulty in getting what wealth they possess, are determined to keep it, and are earnest in their endeavours to increase it. Although in their best apparel, they are ill-dressed, and shabby-looking; the clothes they wear might at some time or other have been genteel. Some appear in dress coats, with outrageously large coloured silk handkerchiefs round their necks. The ill-fitted clothes show that

*If Brandy were not more required for consumption elsewhere than in Cognac, it would be in very little demand. Upon excellent authority we are informed that not a puncheon is consumed in twelve months in Cognac, and we fully believe it. On our first visit to Cognac we arrived from Angouleme very late at night, and we followed the porter who took our luggage to the Hotel de France. It was too late to prepare supper, we put up with bread and butter, and not liking the quality of the Wine, which was very ordinary—indeed extra ordinary—we called for some Cognac—but there was none, it was never required, they did not keep it; there was Rum and Kirschenwasser. "Was Monsieur unwell that he wanted Brandy?" An English lady, residing in Cognac, who occasionally took a little Brandy and water, when she was unwell, informed us that she believed from the expression in her servant's countenance, and from the free remarks the latter had made, she was considered a lady inclined to dissipated habits.
the present wearers are not the original proprietors, and were supplied from the Holywell Street of Angouleme or Cognac. Watch these men at market; almost all their faces wear a half Jewish, half Jesuitical expression. It is a very solemn affair with them, this discussing the price of Brandy; there is not a spice of humour or a spark of merriment visible in one of the whole assembly. The very presence of two or three Englishmen in the town would agitate and excite the market. They would immediately be suspicious, and fancy that some great contract was to be taken, and the Englishmen were come to purchase. This is no fiction; we were for some days in Cognac, and making occasional excursions in the adjoining districts, we attended the fair, and were told by one of the merchants that our being there, making enquiries as to price and produce, had the effect of causing some of the farmers to ask higher prices for their Brandy. Many of these farmers hold large stocks. A few years ago, after a succession of good vintages, the farmers not being disposed to sell at the then low market price, held their Brandies, parting with only just enough to supply their limited requirements; then came a series of bad vintages, and Brandy trebled in value: this was the making of the farmers, who became at once rich and independent. One keen and subtle
looking man, whose clothes would not have fetched five shillings, was pointed out to us as a man worth eighty thousand pounds; and there were many others present who, we were informed, were worth from twenty to thirty thousand pounds; in fact, the farmers of the arrondissement were the richest in all France. There are but few peasants, nearly all being proprietors or small farmers.

Nearly every farmer possesses a still, and distils the Wine produced upon his farm. Some few small proprietors have no still, and sell their Wine almost as soon as it is made to others, whose principal business it is to buy Wine and distil it, and who, very soon after the Brandy is made, come and offer it to the trader.

The stills used by the farmers are of a very primitive character, merely a simple boiler, head and worm. They vary but slightly in contents, generally containing from 2 to 2½ hectolitres. Some few large farmers or Wine buyers use large and improved stills, by which they are enabled to distil quicker and more economically; but the character of the Brandy is impaired in consequence, and preference is given to the Spirit made in the small original stills, which is more readily bought by the trade. Nothing can be more simple than the process adopted by the Cognac farmers, and the rude appearance of the distillery is somewhat
provocative of merriment to those accustomed to the magnitude and systematic order of our English establishments. There are generally two stills in operation, and the fire is maintained with wood. When the operator commences making his Brandy he continues working his still day and night, until he has converted all his Wine into Spirit, he first makes his Low Wine, re-distils this, and his Brandy is complete; he uses neither alkali, wood ashes, nor charcoal, nor does he clean the Spirit by filtration, and thus the whole of the essential oil is retained. As the stills are in constant operation during the making period, there is in most of the outhouses in which the stills are placed a sort of "wig-wam," similar to those described as the habitation of the aborigines of New Zealand, in this the distiller coils himself up to take his nap when he has an opportunity. It is sufficiently contiguous to the fire to involve its occupant in serious risk of being roasted alive, and an insurance would not be easily effected in England upon one of those distilleries, when we take into consideration the inflammable nature of the Spirit, which runs into vessels unprotected, and the materials of the wigwam, brushwood and turf, which a few sparks from the fire would readily ignite; the wonder to us is that accidents are not more frequent, and we expressed to the proprietor of one of these buildings our fears
that some day a fatal catastrophe would happen. The farmer, however, only shrugged his shoulders and said, "well, if the man is burnt alive, it will be his own fault for not being more watchful." A farmer who has a vineyard of two or three hectares of land only, generally cultivates it himself, and, although it is hard work, he makes his Wine and attends to his own still, scarcely trusting to any one else to manufacture his Brandy.

A very general impression exists that much of the Brandy received from Cognac is mixed with Spirit made from grain or 'beet-root, &c., and it is impossible to say that such is not the case with some that finds its way into the market at a figure much below the average quotations. Still there are very stringent legal enactments against the practice, and the tribunals of justice are very severe when they have proof of such delinquencies. In the years 1857 and 1858 several farmers were convicted of these offences, and committed to long terms of imprisonment. These punishments had a very salutary effect, and contributed in a great degree to stop all adulteration and sophistication.

When the peasant proprietor has made his Brandy, and wants money for his several necessities, he loads his cart with a few casks of this new Spirit to convey to the neighbouring town of Cognac. He puts on a clean blouse and his broad
brimmed hat, which seldom sees daylight excepting upon Sundays and such occasions as now present themselves. The wealthy proprietors, such as those we have described who attend the markets, wear, incongruous as the appearance is, the fashionable "Chapeau de Paris," and their transactions being more extensive, are negotiated with brokers, who buy for most of the large establishments. But the peasant farmer prefers making his own bargain and delivering his own goods. He soon finds his way to Cognac, and announces his arrival by those peculiar cracks of his whip, which are more pleasant than painful to the horse he has driven, but which to the ear of an Englishman are similar to rifle shots, and almost as alarming. He halts at one of the many establishments from which England and all parts of the world get their supply. It is an anxious moment with this small farmer; he, perhaps, is not satisfied with the price he is offered for his Brandy, he will only leave one cask, and he then goes to another merchant, hoping as he proceeds further he may get a better price, probably he is disappointed, and he returns with the remainder of his load to the establishment where he left his first cask. Let us follow him, and presume that he has been so fortunate as to obtain a purchaser for his Brandy in the manager of the Société Vinicole, better known in England as the United
Vineyard Proprietors' Company, whose premises are so pleasingly and favourably described in "Household Words." There is a committee of taste, presided over by the proper officers. The quality has to be decided upon, and each cask is tasted separately; the strength has also to be tried and the value judged accordingly. If the quality be not first rate, it is not likely to find its place with kindred Spirits under Mr. George Salignac's protection. The quality and strength determined upon, the quantity is soon ascertained, and French ingenuity makes facile that which we elaborate. The Brandy is either drawn off from the farmer's casks with a syphon, or is at once pumped into a receiving cask, which has outside it a glass tube with a graduated scale attached, and the number of litres it contains is immediately shown, hence the calculation is soon made, the farmer gets at once his empty casks, and proceeds to the Bureau for his money; he then goes on his way rejoicing, to make his purchases or invest his cash in any other way.

Mr. Dickens, in No. 269 of "Household Words," May, 1855, has given a lively and graphic account of his visit to Cognac, and we shall, to some extent, avail ourselves of his description of its commerce, taking the liberty of occasional emendations and interpolations, as we may presume to be more
familiar with the process of Brandy manufacture than our talented author. We would recommend to our readers the charming general description of the town of Cognac and its neighbourhood, as given in the same paper.

One of the largest establishments is that of the United Vineyard Proprietors' Company, which was originated in 1838 by Mr. P. A. Salignac, the father of the present manager, who merged his own very old establishment into the association above named. The great object was to supply pure Cognac of the best growths of certain districts, and this has been successfully carried out, as may be seen by the shipments of the company from its commencement to the present year.

**Shipments of Brandy by the United Vineyard Proprietors' Company of Cognac.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For the Eight Months ending ...</th>
<th>Puns.</th>
<th>Hhds.</th>
<th>Qrs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 1, 1839</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For the Year ending July 1, 1840</th>
<th>Puns.</th>
<th>Hhds.</th>
<th>Qrs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>1068</td>
<td>631</td>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>July 1, 1841</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>July 1, 1842</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>July 1, 1843</td>
<td>431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>July 1, 1844</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>July 1, 1845</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>July 1, 1846</td>
<td>443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>July 1, 1847</td>
<td>459</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the Year ending July 1, 1848  419  3154  1717
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1849  605  3525  2609
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1850  590  5957  4743
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1851  511  3595  3587
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1852  576  3402  3898
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1853  557  6515  4247
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1854  340  7304  4981
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1855  269  4893  2780
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1856  143  5326  3256
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1857  68  3851  1742
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1858  5  782  866
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1859  275  4438  3660
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1860  115  3458  2800
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1861  94  1793  2139
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1862  130  1332  2020
Do.  Do.  July 1, 1863  357  2396  2969

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7767  81346  59136

Being a grand total of 148,249 casks, equal to 63,224 puncheons.

The whole establishment stands upon something like six acres of ground, and cost in its erection upwards of £20,000. It is approached through a gateway of a very imposing character, resembling a triumphal arch, and, from the general style and magnitude of the premises as seen from the road, a stranger would be in doubt as to its intent and
purposes, it having much the appearance of a government depot or arsenal. En route to the offices, we passed well-kept flower beds, and orange trees in large tubs, arranged at proper intervals; a character not usually associated with places devoted to business purposes was thus imparted; and yet all seemed appropriate, and good taste and judgment were exhibited in the arrangement. We have often dwelt upon the recollection of this visit, as we thought with how much greater cheerfulness a man would go to his business place if it were made so pleasantly inviting, than when, as is the case in England, it is unattractive and, or even worse, dirty, dark, disagreeable, and only endurable for the sake of profitable results. The counting houses, committee and manager's rooms, are perfect models,—large, convenient, well ventilated, and comfortable as such offices should be, when it is remembered the many hours of weary flagging the merchant or his clerks have to undergo in them.

The manufacturing departments, by which are meant the vatting, bottling, and store warehouses, are upon a large scale. The blending vat, which is necessary to preserve a uniform quality, will contain about thirty-five puncheons; in this there are two rummagers employed for amalgamating the various purchases; these are worked by
BRANDY.

horse power. From this vat the Brandy is conveyed by pipes into the store warehouse.

"Here," says Mr. Dickens, "you will be introduced into a vast hall containing two and forty colossal vats, ranged in double row, so massive and towering, that they make you feel as if you had entered some old Egyptian cave, and with an iron tramway running between them, on whose rails glides a tremendous tub for mixing or making the coupe, as an easy way of fetching samples from the different reservoirs of Eau de Vie. When I was there, four men were hard at work agitating the contents of this moveable vat by means of a central paddle-wheel, whose handles were bent at right angles downwards, round from the top of the tub, in order to reach the level of ordinary humanity. But besides mixing by force of arms, there is machinery, which is kept acting by quadruped strength; so that it may be correctly stated that it requires a two-horse power to make a single glass of Brandy! The very same mill works a set of pumps; the horses, therefore, are able to produce either simple water—the aqua pura of learned apothecaries—or water of life—and death—at will. Robert Houdin himself cannot do much more."

The colossal vats above alluded to contain from fifty to fifty-one puncheons each; they are arranged in double rows, and by an under pipe two vats
are connected, which are thus filled and emptied simultaneously.

There is a little ambiguity in the description of the centre moveable vat, which runs upon an iron railway. This cask takes its supply from the store vats, and, indeed, acts as a feeder for the casks that are sent out, such as puncheons, hogsheads, and quarter casks. It is a most ingeniously contrived apparatus. When the proper quantity of Spirit is furnished from the adjacent vats, it is run on towards the liqueur, or the colouring vat, and when the proper proportions are put in, the "rum-maging" takes place, and the liqueur or colouring is properly incorporated. The smaller casks are then soon filled, and the contents of each determined by the indicator attached to the feeder.

In the bottling, capsuling, labelling, and packing departments there is much to interest the visitor, and great activity and admirable system are displayed. The bottles pass through many hands before they are ready for exportation; after being filled by one man, they are taken by another to be corked, but this is done more expeditiously and safely by a machine than by the old method.

"The corking machine," says Mr. Dickens, "is a forcible method of forcibly stopping a vessel's mouth; but they say fewer fractures are made by it than by
the more common and modern mode, while the operator is in no danger of being maimed by broken glass. A Cognac inventor claims, and has patented his clever machine for capsuling the already seated and gagged individual. The patient is laid in a reclining position, a leaden night cap is slipped over his head, he is hitched a little forward, exactly like a man presented to the guillotine, the executioner pulls a lever, which acts upon a set of wheels and springs, and the imprisoned Spirit is as completely secured from breathing of the external air as if it were buried in a leaden coffin."

The capsuling and labelling done, and the bottles wrapped in paper, more for the protection of the artistically embellished label than of the bottle, the next process is that of packing, and this is now done in boxes or cases, principally of one dozen bottles each. Some art as well as much care is required in this operation, and the energetic manager somewhat surprised us by his method of testing the efficiency of packing. We accompanied him several mornings in his survey of the various operations; and upon the first occasion, when he entered the department where the packers were engaged, we were amused by observing him take from the floor a case of Brandy which a workman had just packed, but we were more astonished than amused to see him suddenly dash the case with some vehemence upon the floor. He was angry at
the result, for the leakage told that some of the bottles were broken, which we confess did not surprise us, seeing, as we did, the violence of the fall. The workmen looked concerned; the foreman humbly submitted that the force used in throwing the case down was greater than any likely to occur in a natural fall, and exemplified it in his way by toppling over about a dozen cases that were placed upon each other, and out of the whole lot not a single fracture took place. But our manager was not satisfied; he would have them re-packed, that they should stand his test. The following morning he again tried the same experiment, and again more breakages took place. He threatened that if on the following day the same result occurred, all engaged in the packing department should be dismissed. We felt for the poor anxious looking men, and with some concern attended our energetic friend upon his third trial. He went to work as vigorously as ever; after several attempts he failed in smashing a single bottle, so that his threatenings led after all to a satisfactory improvement.

The cooperage and the warehouses for storing casks are very extensive. The lower part of the premises adjoin the Quay, and there is a rolling way to a canal, up which the lighters come to receive the Brandy for shipment on board the vessels lying in the adjacent river Charente.
In thus having given some prominence to the premises belonging to the United Vineyard Proprietors' Company, we must not be considered as showing a partiality for one house over another. We addressed a friendly letter of enquiry to each of the largest houses, asking for information with respect to their own establishments, and generally in relation to the Brandy trade and manufacture, and their respective shipments. With a reticence which in plain English may be designated as uncourteous, our application, with one honourable exception (that of Mr. George Salignac on behalf of the Vineyard Proprietors' Company), met with no reply, nor even an excuse or acknowledgment. The fact is, there are some houses in Cognac who are desirous that the public may not be informed as to the nature of the Brandy trade, and would like the English consumer especially to remain with the delusion that a special name branded upon the exterior of a cask has everything to do with the quality of its contents. They would not wish the world to know that any one merchant in Cognac who has cash to go to market with can purchase from the farmers as good Brandy as another. It is time the real state of the case was fully understood.

The princely residences in Cognac belonging to men who have made immense fortunes, will show the Brandy business has been a very profitable one,
and that John Bull has been paying for many years rather expensively for a few special letters on the outside of a cask.

Upwards of thirty years' experience in the trade enables us to speak with confidence, and we do unhesitatingly affirm that there are houses in Cognac whose brands are but little known in England, who, not having expensive establishments to maintain, can supply better Brandy at considerably lower prices than those charged by the houses who have to some extent monopolised the trade. We know that this will be corroborated by many intelligent and business-like men, who have profited by the knowledge; but when a prejudice exists amongst the small dealers or the publicans in favour of some particular brand as superior to another, the merchant is obliged to get that which his customer requires. To prove that it is the brand and not the Brandy that is in repute, it is a common practice (but a very dishonest one), with some merchants in England, when they have not the particular Brandy ordered, to procure empty casks of such shipper's brand, and rack other Brandy into them. The customer is satisfied he has good quality at least inside the cask, and his eyes are delighted with the name that is outside. The practice, however, is nothing less than fraudulent, and no merchant of integrity