

ON BEER: A STATISTICAL SKETCH

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On Beer: a Statistical Sketch by Max Vogel

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MAX VOGEL

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SKETCH**

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BY

M. VOGEL



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1874

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DEDICATION.

To CHARLES WHITEHEAD, Esq., F.L.S.

SIR,—The manufacture of beer has assumed such wide proportions, its use is so general, that it has undoubtedly become an article of trade highly important in its economical and social as well as fiscal and ethical bearings.

We find it a beverage much patronised by almost all civilised nations and governments, although there are not wanting large sections of the community, especially in England and America—no doubt honest, sincere, and good men—who, animated by the utmost hostility against what are generally known as “intoxicating liquors,” will not hesitate to put beer and spirits under one head, for the sake of cutting it off at one stroke, as Nero wished he could have done with his Roman subjects.

It has, therefore, appeared to me that it might be interesting in many respects to examine the position of

the brewing-trade in the leading brewing countries. I feel, however, that my labour is far from being satisfactory; for the insufficiency, and sometimes incorrectness, of the statistical information published make it often a matter of serious difficulty to find out the correct positions. Moreover, such a work should also examine the relative positions of the beer and ardent liquor trades. But that is almost an impossibility; for in the first instance, the exact figures of the manufacture of distilleries are not everywhere easily to be got at; then there is a large consumption of spirits for trades and manufactures, and even for household employment, that cannot be distinguished from those actually used as beverages.

I have not included the United States in my tables, for the want of official statistics. We know, however, that there the consumption of beer exceeded 8,000,000 barrels in 1872, while in 1864-65 the consumption only amounted to about 3,500,000 barrels, yielding 3,657,000 dollars to the Exchequer,¹ and some of the States composing that confederacy are just those that put most impediments in the way of the spread of beer.

France also I had to omit for want of reliable statistics

¹ Dr. C. Freiherr von Hock. *Finanzen und Finanzgeschichte der Vereinigten Staaten von America* (Stuttgart, 1867), pp. 254, 768.

of the latter years. I may state, however, from personal knowledge, that brewing there is rather on the decrease of late. The tax, which is raised on the contents of the coppers, has been increased one-half of its former amount (from fr. 2, 40c. to fr. 3, 60c. for beer, and from 60cmes. to 90c. for small beer—*petite bière*—per hectolitre) and it is a matter of notoriety that drunkenness has also fearfully spread since that alteration was made.

You, sir, who by your valuable writings on the cultivation of hops have acquired the esteem and acknowledgment of all those persons who have had the gratification and happiness of having come into personal relations with you—you will appreciate the difficulties I found in my way in treating of the subject before me.

By your kind permission I dedicate these pages to you, and trust you will judge them with kindness and forbearance; and if I have contributed to give the least information towards a useful estimation of the important and much debated question of beer, my endeavours will be amply rewarded.

M. VOGEL.

NUREMBERG, September 1873.



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