MESSRS. WORTHINGTON'S BREWERY AT BURTON

To a stranger, the first view of the famous old town of Burton-on-Trent, should this be obtained some time after sunset on a Sunday evening, when the surrounding landscape is enveloped in a mantle of snow, and an iron frost makes pedestrian exercise alike uncomfortable and dangerous, is rather peculiar than picturesque. It was under such circumstances as those hinted at, that the writer of these columns emerged for the first time from the Midland Railway Company's premises into Stationstreet. Considering the enormous traffic this midland town must supply to the railway, it must be admitted that Mr. James Allport, 1 enterprising manager as he undoubtedly is, has done little for Burton in the way of station accommodation. The waiting-rooms are by no means cheering to the senses or to the more corporeal feelings of a frozen-out traveller, already irritated by the fact that he has been almost as long getting the less than thirty miles from Leicester, as it took him to traverse more than three times the distance from London to the capital of the hunting county. Again, subsequent research necessitates the admission that in Burton-on-Trent cabs are not altogether unknown; and moreover, there is an omnibus attached to the Queen's Hotel, which attends the arrival and departure of certain trains. But on this particular Sunday evening, at the time alluded to, neither cab nor omnibus was visible, so carpet-bag in hand, the writer boldly and manfully braved the perils of the unknown but slippery thoroughfares.

My first feeling with regard to Burton was one of protest - silent but earnest. On what ground, æsthetic or other, did the authorities local, municipal, or railway, ever consent to bestow the unromantic appellation of "Station-street" on a thoroughfare which for centuries had borne a place - by no means unimportant - in the history of Staffordshire and Derbyshire, under its old

name of Cat-street? It is very possible that some of the authorities referred to may have a feeling of contempt for what Shakspeare calls the "harmless necessary cat," but that animal was once the means of saving the lives of many good burgesses of Burton, and therefore deserves to be commemorated in its annals. This is the story: In the year 1286 there was a very sore and terrible famine, during which the people suffered grievous straits; and there was no food remaining, until some one bethought him of the cats, which were collected and killed and distributed equally at a spot about the centre of the present thoroughfare, and this timely relief served to save the people's lives until help and supplies arrived from distant countries. The following year Thomas Packington, who was then the Abbot of St. Modwen's, the famous abbey whose early records are the history of Burton, commemorated this event by building Cattlestreet, which connected the town by a bridge with the great Roman Highway, known as the Icknield-street, from which it had formerly been cut off by the river. On the 27th of November, 1514, an old record tells, that "their hapned a great floode at Burton-upon-Trent the lyke whereof (comyne upon so small cause of rayne) was never seen." During this flood Cat-street was overflowed, and similar disasters occurred in 1771, 1792, 1795, and 1852, in all of which this ancient thoroughfare suffered seriously, and now all memory of these events are buried under the name of Station-street.

But to resume. Looking round him in Station-street the new comer will be attracted by piles of buildings made of red brick, extending on both sides of the way for considerable distances, and if he inquires their character he will find that all of them have to do with beer. This brewer's new offices, another's malt-house, a third's cooperage, an extension of a fourth firm's brewing

premises, and so on to the end of the chapter. If he pursue his inquiries he will find that the forest of chimney's seemingly rising in close proximity to each other, all without exception belong to breweries. Then he will probably arrive even so early, at the conclusion that our ancestors, in their habitual carelessness about orthography, had made a mistake in the spelling of the town and that its real name was Beer-ton-upon-Trent. Thus pondering as he walks he may experience a feeling of astonishment when for about the tenth time he finds himself stumbling across the lines of a railway, or is called upon to arrest his steps while a locomotive dragging a long train of cars puffs calmly across one of the principal thoroughfares. He may then think perhaps he has mistaken his route, and involved himself in the labyrinthine mysteries of a railway goods depot. He will be told, however, that so deep is the respect in which beer is held by burgesses of Burton, they have willingly, nay gladly, permitted to all the large brewers the inestimable privilege of laying down private railways in almost any direction they please, in order that they may move their goods about from one portion of their premises to another, and finally send them away to the railway station without any, or at all events with very little, horse service. After this it is hardly surprising to hear the opinion of an expert that sixty per cent. of the population of Burton, which is over twenty thousand, depend entirely, and that ninety-five per cent. of the remainder live indirectly, upon Beer. Such are the undoubted facts, and as Burton-on-Trent is one of the most flourishing, and most rapidly increasing towns in England, as it is exceptionally well supplied for its size with churches, chapels, literary institutions, schools of art and design, charities, medical, educational, and general, board schools, public buildings, provident institutions, social, cricketing and rowing clubs and newspapers, as it is well lighted with gas, has a good system of drainage, possesses active and more than usually intelligent local rulers, as its leading inhabitants have a world-wide fame for their public spirit and munificence, and as finally the rate of pauperism is very low, it is impossible to do better than commend these facts to the very careful consideration of Sir Wilfrid Lawson. Surely here he will find food for reflection that may suggest some doubts whether his crusade against beer is altogether warranted. Let him, for example, compare the relative progress of Burton and Brayton!

So much by way of introduction to the real purpose of the visit to Burton, the results of which will be found recorded here. The great names of the leading brewers of Burton, the Bass's, the Allsopps, the Worthingtons, the Salts, and others, are known far and wide wherever the English tongue is spoken, or English beer is relished, and volumes have been written about the origin and rapid rise of the Burton breweries, the peculiarities of the Burton waters and other kindred topics. It suggested itself, however, that much material deeply interesting to the readers of this journal might be gleaned by tracing the progress and personal, as well as trade history of some one Burton firm which, to use a sporting phrase reversed, had been "in at the birth," as it were, of this great development of a special trade. Diligent study of county and borough histories made it abundantly clear that of the thirty or so firms of brewers now existing, the oldest is that of Messrs. Worthington and Co., which moreover has had the advantage of continuing in a direct line from father to son, from the time of its establishment in the early part of the last century to the present time. So to Messrs. Worthington common-sense directed the inquirer who would glean from headquarters the most exhaustive information on all points connected with the staple product of Burton. And in this place it is but the merest act of justice on the part of the writer to acknowledge the courtesy and the patience with which he was received, and the fund of interesting matter connected with the rise and progress of their firm, placed at his disposal by Messrs. Worthington.

Many attempts have been made to trace the origin and commencement of brewing in Burton, but to whatever period researches are allowed to extend, there are always seems to remain a probability of some earlier practice of the art of brewing. Sir Walter Scott, who generally took great pains to be historically correct in his local allusions, speaks in his romance of "Ivanhoe" of the great fame of the Burton beer; and as the scene of this story is laid little m ore than a century after the Norman Conquest, it is more than probable if Scott's allusion be justified, that even

In the merry old times of our ancestors, When the Saxons and Danes ruled here,²

Burton was famous for its brewing. This is more likely because, while to the Saxons and hardy Norseman beer was a favourite and habitual beverage, the Normans had acquired during their short sojourn in "the fair land of France," and brought with them to this country, a

decided taste for the lighter and weaker wines of that country, and were therefore unlikely to have originated the brewings. A century subsequent to the time of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, however, we find ourselves on firm ground, for from the existing records of the ancient abbey we learn that, in 1295, "Matilda, the daughter of Nicholas de Shobenhale, released to the Abbot and Convent of Burton-on-Trent that service and custody of their abbey-gate, together with the custody and annual rent thereto belonging, and all the tenements within and without the town of Burton which came to her by inheritance from Walter de Shobenhale, formerly janitor of the same. For which release they granted her daily for life two white loaves from the monastery, two gallons of conventual beer, or cider if they drank it, and one penny; also seven gallons of beer for the men and one sextary of hay and another of corn from their granary yearly, and a mark of silver yearly. Also to her son Ralph handsome food and cloathing from the abbey." It is clear from this comment that the abbots either brewed or had brewed for them two qualities of beer, and in all probability they had their own maltings, as it was a common covenant in the leases of mills on the abbey property for the malt of the lords of the manor, both spiritual and temporal, to be ground free. Other facts tend to prove that large maltings existed in the town from this period until the dissolution of the abbey by King Henry VIII., and it is only fair to suppose that where the maltings were there also were the brewings, locomotion not being in those days as to favour a division of localities for the completion of the process of manufacture. Moreover, the large and elaborate works which were fostered in Burton by the abbey authorities clearly proves that the peculiar geological strata of the valley has been explored, and as on these depends the peculiar excellence of the Burton water for brewing purposes it is hardly likely this was wasted. It would seem, however, that after the dissolution of the monasteries both the elaborate works and the breweries suffered grievously, by which it would almost appear that the abbots and their brethren not only ornamented their home but drank considerably. The former never recovered the blow, but among Englishmen at all events the love of beer is not confined to men of any one creed, and very soon the manor of Burton had been bestowed by the bluff monarch on Sir William Paget, the ancestor of the present holder, the Marquis of Anglesey, large maltings were in existence in the market-place and other parts of the town. In the time of Elizabeth, Burton had

unquestionably regained some of its old reputation for beer, and not only supplied its own wants, but even those of some of its neighbours, for in the correspondence that passed between Walsingham, the secretary, and Sir Ralph Sadler, governor of Tutbury Castle, during the imprisonment of Mary Queen of Scots, in answer to an inquiry as to "what place neere Tewbury beere may be provided for Her Majesty's use?" Sir Ralph replies that "beere may be had at Burton, three myles off." The distance by the way is really five miles. It would seem though, the export trade, even to this distance, could not have been very great, on account of the difficulties of transport, as Sir Ralph proceeds to suggest that "if Mr. Henry Cavendish's brewhouse in Tutbury may be borrowed, sufficient quantity of beere may be brewed there, and so the countray much eased in carvage." These last words give one a pleasant notion of the state of the roads in the sixteenth century, and suggest a somewhat delightful contrast between the facilities the Burton brewers derive from a net work of railways, and those they must have possessed at a time when the "countray" could be eased by saving the "carvage" for three miles, of the beer for one person's household, and that person a prisoner. It would seem that Mr. Cavendish's brewhouse could not be borrowed, for certainly the Queen's "beere" was supplied from Burton. What was the name of the brewer is unfortunately not recorded, but he was evidently one of the many men who felt the fatal influence of Queen Mary's evil beauty, for history tells that it was by the contrivance of this Burton brewer that information of Babington's conspiracy was regularly conveyed to the Queen of Scots. At this time Burton, besides its breweries, had established some considerable woollen manufacturies, and became specially famous for manufacture of "kerseys;" but its troubles were not yet over, for the outbreak of the civil war between Charles I. and his Parliament, resulted in a complete prostration of both industries.

Again, as was the case after the dissolution of the monasteries it was beer that was first to rise from the ruins, and indeed the clothing trade never became of so much importance in the annals of Burton. But in 1680 or thereabouts, the town was visited by Dr. Plot,³ the quaint author of a famous work on "Natural History," who has much to say about the waters of Burton, and the industries of Staffordshire, and in his own peculiar fashion, makes the following reference to the breweries:

"Before we leave the arts belonging to the water, we must also remember they have an art of making good ale, which, being liquid and nothing else boyled water impregnated with mault, must be preferred thither. In the management of which they have a knack of fineing it in three days to that degree, that it shall not only be potable, but as clear and palatable as one would desire any drinke of this kind to be; which, though they are unwilling to own it, I guess they does by putting alum or vinegar into it whilst it is working, which, as Dr. Wilkes asserts, will both stop the fermentation and precipitate the lie, so as to render it potable as when it stood a competent time to ripen." He further remarks "at some places they still thrash their corn after the ancient manner, sub dio, as I saw them upon the pavement in the open streets at Burton-on-Trent." It is clear from the former of these quotations that Dr. Plot, with all his learning, had failed to penetrate the secrets of the Burton water in rendering new brewed beer so rapidly fit for use, and indeed all the brewers of the kingdom puzzled over this mystery for many years afterwards, and were inclined, like the doctor, to attribute the results to adulteration or admixture of some kind. The importance given to the subject by Plot, throws considerable discredit on the statement of Shaw⁴ in his county history that the introduction of brewing in Burton was due to Benjamin Printon about the year 1708, this being more than a quarter of a century after Plot's visit. It is certain that the excellence of Burton ale had been long established and widely recognised throughout the country long before Printon's time. Nevertheless, the production must have been extremely limited, and the consumption mainly local, and that Printon did much to advance the reputation of the ale and to extend its use the local records amply prove. The Act of 1698, which opened up the navigation of the Trent and afforded direct communication between Burton and Hull, by giving a waterway to the seaboard and thence to the ports of the Baltic and the north of Europe, furnished the precise opportunity required for the encouragement of Printon's enterprise. From that date the trade had merely to grow. By the year 1748 the trade had become really considerable with Russia, Poland, and Germany, in all of which countries Burton ale had become by 1760 the common beverage of all the wealthier classes, from Peter the Great and the Empress Catherine downwards these two potentates being said to have, both of them, been immoderately fond of the beverage. By 1789 there were no less than nine breweries in Burton, the proprietors of which bore the names of Clay, Hill, Musgrave, Wilson (two), Leeson, Sketcheley, Worthington and Evans. All these firms, save Hill's - now Charles Hill and Son - have passed away, except the two I have placed at the end of the list became united in marriage, as will be shown more fully hereafter, and their descendants now form the famous house of Worthington and Co., which is perhaps the largest brewery in the world entirely in the hands of one family. Having thus brought the brewery trade of Burton to a point at which it had become an important item in the commercial interest of the nation, it is time to return to the more special history of the firm selected to illustrate the subject. First, however, it is but an act of justice to acknowledge that in the preparation of this account much assistance has been derived from Dr. Plot, from Shaw, from Glover's "History of Derbyshire," from Langford's "Staffordshire and Warwickshire," and from Mr. William Molyneux's "Burton-on-Trent."5

As already remarked incidentally, the two families of Worthington and Evans are united in the persons of the present heads of the firm, and both of these families are of considerable note in the annals of Derbyshire, and Staffordshire. The first Worthington with whom this article has any concern migrated from Orton-on-the-Hill, in Leicestershire, where the family had been settled for many generations, to Burton-on-Trent, ere the eighteenth century was yet in its teens. He was born in the year 1687, and while yet a young man established a small brewery on the east side of the High-street of Burton-on-Trent. The actual house in which this business was commenced is one door to the north of that now used as the general offices of the firm, which was acquired as a comparatively recent date, and is a really handsome and well-appointed mansion, the residence of the Hawkins family, and subsequently of the Pratts, both names well-known alike in the town and county. Indeed, one is inclined to regret that the rooms which erst echoed with the merry laughter of happy children, or were graced by the fair forms and faces of young girls and comely matrons, should now be desecrated with the dry recordings of maltings, with numerations of hogsheads, barrels, and kilderkins, or prices of French and Norfolk barley or Kent or Bavarian hops. But consolation comes with the thought that Burton High-street is no longer the quiet and desirable place of residence it may have been in the days when Benjamin Printon first thought of sending his Burton beer to the Baltic, and

that now the house is the fountain-head whence spring the supplies that make happy scores of other homes, and render smiling hundreds of other faces, all depending for their worldly well-being on the prosperity of the house.

This by way of digression. To return. Although the mere house is no longer the same, the stores, cellars, and other extensive premises in the rear, of which more anon, are those occupied by the first William Worthington when he laid the first foundations of the house. A few years after his first start this gentleman determined to follow the example of Printon, and add the wine trade to his business as a brewer; and his son, the second William Worthington, while yet almost a boy, finding himself the sole possessor of the business, joined a partner in shipping a large proportion of the season's brewings as a joint speculation to St. Petersburg. But those were the days when communications with foreign lands were difficult, when posts were rare, irregular, and untrustworthy, and eighteen months went by and no news arrived of the venture on which so much had been risked. The sharer in the cargo became nervous and dispirited, and at length, when the underwriters refused to take insurances on the goods, he came to William Worthington and offered for a small sum to give up the entire of the venture. Small as the sum was in proportion to the yield of a successful trading, it was vet as much as under the circumstances the share was worth. But William Worthington had the courage and confidence which seems to have ever been a characteristic of his house, and was anxious to close with the offer. His business, however, was not then the extensive concern it subsequently became, and so much of his available capital had been locked up in the seemingly unlucky adventure, that there were difficulties in the way. Once more, as has so frequently been the case in the history of mankind, a woman proved the dea ex machinâ. William Worthington was at the time engaged to be married to Mrs. Tarratt, and this lady, after considerable thought, agreed to advance the money. Her sacrifice was rewarded as it deserved to be, for six months later - months, doubtless, of weary anxiety to the young brewer - news arrived, not merely of the safety of the cargoes, but of a trading successful beyond hope and expectation, and this success established the fortunes of the house beyond fear of trifling shocks, and when William Worthington died he left behind him a fortune which in those days was considered large. He was succeeded by his son, the third William

Worthington, who was born in 1764, and on July 28, 1791, married Martha, daughter of Henry and Martha Evans, and so united the two families. And here it is necessary to go back a little to bring up the history of the Evans's to this point.

The Evans's of Allestree, Darley, Mathfield, etc., etc., as the county history of Derbyshire describes them, are descended from a long line of yeomen, who for centuries had formed part of that splendid body of men dividing the feudal noble from the tenant farmer, which is peculiar to England, and is, alas! dving out even here, sometimes by natural decadence, and sometimes, as in the present case, by rising into the rank heraldically above them. In the year 1710 Edmund Evans, who was the son of Anthony, the last veomen of the name, by Hannah, sister and co-heiress of Edmund Ferne, of Bonsall, gentleman, was declared one of the heirs of his uncle, and was admitted to the copyhold lands of Bonsall, becoming thenceforward in the records of the Herald's College "gentleman" instead of yeoman. This Edmund had seven children, two of whom, both younger sons, are especially noteworthy. One, Thomas Evans, became a banker at Derby, was for many years County Treasurer, and died at the age of ninety-one, having amassed a very large fortune. His grandson, William Evans, who, by the failure of the elder branch, had become the representative of the family, was High Sheriff of Derby, M.P. for Retford, Nott., and one of the wealthiest landowners in the county. The oldest son, Henry, came to Burton-on-Trent, where he established a brewery on the west side of the High-street, immediately opposite the Worthington's, where in 1756, he built himself a house, which is now occupied as a residence by Mr. Horace T. Brown, F.C.S., the chief brewer and general out-door manager of the firm.⁶ It was this Henry Evans's daughter that was married to Mr. William Worthington. At his death, after a most prosperous career as a brewer, his business descended to his son John and his son-in-law, but after a short time John Evans withdrew from the firm, and retired to his seat, Callingwood Hall, in the county of Staffordshire, and the two breweries became one firm. The Evans family remains one of the most important in the counties of Derbyshire and Staffordshire, but they now pass away from the subject of this article.

During the lifetime of the third William Worthington the house vastly increased in importance, and it is curiously interesting to pore over some of the old letter-books in the possession of the firm. Owing to the vivid pictures they present of the methods of trading employed only a few generations ago. In a series extending from 1788 to 1795 there are really scores that would repay printing did space permit. They show, taken as a whole, that in those days every trader had to a great extent to depend on barter in all large transactions, and that when a brewer sent away beer to St. Petersburg he was glad enough, if money was not forthcoming, to take iron or timber in exchange. There is, too, a quaint old-world phraseology about the letters, telling of a friendly feeling introduced into all business transactions, which might be more frequently adopted nowadays with advantage. Here, for instance, is a letter addressed to a St. Petersburg firm:-

"Burton, March 3, '89.

"Messrs. Rothlander and Boyd.

"Gentlemen, - We write to you that we have forwarded to your care twenty hogsheads ale, 789 gallons. We have herein the pleasure to hand you the bill of lading of the said ale, shipped on board the Humber, Captain Thomas Wright, master, which we hope will be received safe and come to a good market, as we think the ale is of a good quality, and hope you will do the best in your power for our interest that it may incourage us to send a larger quantity another year; and for return desire you will send us the best crown pipe and hogshead staves - those that be full of wood and free from vain, and desire we may have the earliest account of sales and bill of lading that we may have time to insure them. We received your favour of 26 January, but it was some days after we wrote to you, so that if sent forward it must have been detained somewhere, that we had not time to have the bills of lading deliverable in Jahwater; but if turn out well another year will have bill made out to be delivered in Jahwater, if you do not order the contrary."

Here is another of the same kind to a Dantzic house on the same day:-

"Messrs. Koustrupp and Fromm.

"Gentlemen, - Your much-esteemed favour of 6th January we received in due course. The within is the invoice of the ale you were pleased to order, with account charges and debenture, leaving a balance due to us of £328 19s. 10d., which on examination we hope will be found right, and we think the ale is as good as

can be brewed, and hope it will prove such as will induce you to give us larger orders another year. The fifty casks marked D are shipped on board the Humber, Captain Thomas Wright, for Dantzig, and the fifty marked Æ are on board the Porter, Captain John Mentrup, for Elbing, both of which were expected to sail on the 1st or 2nd instant, wind permitting, that we hope you will receive it safe in a short time. Have sent John William Anderson, Esq., and Co., the same account as that within, that they might get insurance made thereon; we likewise enclosed them bills of lading. We wrote two letters (to go by the ships) to Messrs. H.A. Thalbitzers Widow and Co., to desire they would pay the Sound dues for your account. At this time we have a great many staves by us, but if we should have the honour of receiving an order from you another year, hope our stock will be so reduced as to enable us to take some from you."

There is sufficient in these letters, which are selected at random from hundreds, to show the delays and difficulties that environed all commercial transactions only eighty-five years ago, but here is one that will be interesting to most readers of this journal for quite a different reason:-

"Burton, Nov. 26, '89

"Messrs. Thos. Ellis and Sons.

"Gentlemen, - Inclosed we send you a bill value thirty pounds, the receipt of which please to acknowledge. Have ordered Mr. Bass's clerk at the Bell, Wood-street, to pay you 16s. 9d., which with discount 15s. 9d., and the enclosed bill, makes £31 12s. 6d., the balance of your account. With difficulty we found the hops. They were delivered to a Mr. Sherratt of this town, who hath used one pocket of them. If you had sewed a card to them with our name at length, or mentioned in your note whom they were for, there would not have been any mistake. Think you overcharged us in these hops. You advised us the best price was but £17 5s., nor did you say whether money or credit, that we of course expected it was payable in six months, or to have discounted if we remitted on receipt of the hops, so think when you advise the price of hops, you should mention money or credit. It will be the means to avoid disputes.

"W.W. Jr."

Messrs. Ellis and Son certainly seem to have conducted their business in a very careless fashion, and thoroughly deserved the wigging they got from W.W., jun, but the most interesting line [in] the above letter is that referring to Mr. Bass's clerk. That Mr. Bass was the founder of the brewery which now bears the well known name.

Nine years after the date of this letter, most people of England were more or less alarmed by the open threats of invasion uttered by the French, and in every portion of the country patriotic meetings were called to devise the best means of repelling the attack, and of strengthening the hands of the Government. Although as far from the coast as possible, Burton-on-Trent was not behind its neighbours, and on February 28, 1798, a meeting of the inhabitants was held at the Town Hall, at which it was resolved that an "immediate subscription should be entered into for the purpose of aiding Government in resisting any attempt which the enemy may make to invade this country, or to be applied in any other way His Majesty's Ministers shall think most advisable for the Interest of the Nation, and that the following gentlemen be appointed a Committee for the purpose of managing the above Business:-

Rev. Hugh Jones Mr. Osborne
Mr. Peel Mr. Buchanan
Mr. A. Hoskins, jun. Mr. F. Dicken
Mr. W. Worthington, jun. Mr. E. Smith
Mr. Thos. Worthington Mr. Jos. Lathbury
Mr. Cantrell Mr. J. Clay

Mr. Allen

Of these thirteen gentlemen it will be seen that only the Messrs. Worthington represent any of the existing brewery firms of Burton - a pretty conclusive proof of the modern growth of the trade in its present character. The high esteem in which the firm under notice was held at that time is shown that by a subsequent resolution Mr. W. Worthington, jun., was appointed treasurer. A sum exceeding £2000 was collected, of which Messrs. Worthington and Son contributed £50, there being only three subscriptions of larger amount, one being that of Isa Hawkins, Esq., a county magnate; another that of Mr. John Peel, a member of the family of the Peels, of Drayton Manor; the third that of Messrs. Joseph Clay and Son.

Sir Wilfrid Lawson and his allies are so fond of dilating on the villainous systems of adulteration practised by brewers and Licensed Victuallers, that although all these enormities at the present time exist only in their own imagination, they will probably be grateful for receiving proof that three-quarters of a century since, even some of those more closely connected with the production of beer, believed in the policy of a little judicious "doctoring." They may perhaps accept this fact as a set-off to the sad picture already drawn of the prosperity of Burton and the blessings of beer. On the 2nd of December, 1801, Mr. W. Williams, of Bush-lane, Cannon-street, wrote to Messrs. Worthington, expressing the gratitude felt by the firm he represented, Messrs. Baxter and Noble, hop-factors, for an introduction given them Messrs. Worthington to Cartwright and Lathbury, which had been the means of obtaining them a considerable order, and to show his sincerity, transmitted a recipe for brewing porter, which he assured them was "an original one now in use by" a firm, then and now one of the largest and most famous in London, and the name of which it would therefore be indiscreet to publish, "and given to me by their head clerk some time ago." Unfortunately, or otherwise, as the reader may prefer to decide, the Messrs. Worthington, almost alone among the brewers of Burton, have not for many years brewed porter, so the recipe is now for the first time given to the world:-

RECIPE FOR FIVE BARRELS OF PORTER

One quarter malt. Eight pounds hops.

Nine do. treacle.

Eight do. liquorice-root. Eight do. essentia bina.

Eight do. colour.

Half ounce capsicum.

Ten ounces Spanish liquorice.

Quarter-ounce oculus India berries.

Two drachms salt tartar.

Quarter-ounce heading.

Three ounces ginger.

Four ounces lime slacked, and the water after having received the spirit of the lime poured into the essentia bina or colour in your making.

One ounce linseed.

Two drachms cinnamon.

Then follows directions for making essentia bina and colour, the former of which is simply burnt, while the latter is boiled moist sugar; heading being a mixture of alum and sulphate of iron. Then the entire mixture is

harmless enough, though it is satisfactory to know that nowadays brewers refrain from putting even a quarter of an ounce of "Oculus India berries" into five barrels of porter. But cannot the reader imagine the terrible picture a teetotal lecturer could make of such awe-sounding words as are to be found in the above list, carefully, of course, concealing the quantities and the date of the recipe. They are welcome to it. Messrs. Worthington had to pay eightpence for the postage of the letter from London, and it has never yet earned its money.

Some personal characteristics of the third William Worthington are still fondly remembered in Burton, and are worth recording. He was a keen, shrewd man of business, popular with his neighbours, and respected by all who had dealings with him. These dealings, by the way, if they related to the brewery, all were compelled to have before two o'clock in the day, by which time he considered he had fairly earned the right to dispose of his time as to himself seemed best. He first started the wine trade in 1799, and also was a partner in the mills situated between Burton and Newton, and was celebrated as a great patron of coursing, having as many as twenty greyhounds. This William Worthington is the one mentioned above as the chairman of the committee formed in 1798 an account of the expected invasion of the French. In his house, in Burton high-street, was born his eldest son, the fourth William, on February 16, 1799; and this gentleman received his education first at the Burton Grammar School, and subsequently at Ashborne School - one of his schoolfellows and closest companions being Michael T. Bass, now M.P. for Derby, the friendship then formed between these two gentlemen being destined to endure for sixty years. In November, 1867, at a luncheon given in Messrs. Worthington's large hop-room in Station-street, to celebrate the presentation of a lifeboat to the Royal National Institution by the town of Burton-on-Trent, Mr. Bass, the chairman of the committee, in proposing the health of his colleague and vice-chairman, Mr. W. Worthington, said, "We were schoolfellows sixty years ago, and from that day I know he will concur with me in saying that our friendship has not been interrupted for a single moment. There are many here who have known him for many years, and there is not a man among us who can say that wrong he has ever done." At this point, too, it may be convenient to remark that there are other ties besides those of friendship between the two families, as the Rev. Roger Bass, brother of the member for Derby, married Miss Anne Worthington, sister of the gentleman now under notice; while, among the various transactions of the two houses, they have bought and exchanged land for mutual convenience, Messrs. Bass's new cooperage and what is known as the Middle Yard standing on land thus acquired from the Worthingtons.

This William Worthington entered into partnership with his father on attaining his majority in 1820, and four vears later married Marianne, second daughter of Francis Calvert, of Houndhill, Staffordshire. The late Mr. Worthington retired from the brewery only in 1870, and he died on October 7 of the following year, leaving, besides his widow, four sons and a daughter to mourn his loss. During his long life of usefulness Mr. Worthington filled many public offices of trust and importance. He was a justice of the peace for the counties of Stafford and Derby, one of the feoffees of the Burton Town Lands, a trustee of Burton Grammar School, first vice-chairman and afterwards for many vears chairman of the Burton Board of Guardians. In this last office he succeeded the late Sir Oswald Mosley, Bart., and when he resigned in the autumn of 1868, he was presented by the guardians and officers of the union with a magnificent silver epergne, "in recognition of his long and valuable services." He was also one of the Burton town commissioners from 1853 till 1857, when he was succeeded by his eldest son, the present head of the firm. He was, moreover, the first member enrolled in the Burton troop of yeomanry, under the captaincy of his cousin, Mr. Henry Worthington. Mr. Worthington was also one of the partners in the banking firm of Blurton, Webb, Peel, Worthington, and Bott, which, in 1839, amalgamated its business with that of Messrs. Clay and Sons, and became the present Burton, Uttoxeter and Ashbourne Union Bank, of which Mr. W. Worthington was for many years, and until the time of his death, a director and chairman. But though he filled so many public offices, and by the universal testimony of his fellow townsmen did his duty thoroughly in all of them, it seems clear that the dearest wish of his heart was rather to fill the part he best loved, and most thoroughly performed - that of an English country gentleman; and this led him, at an early age, to abandon the customs of his predecessors by fixing his private residence at his seat of Newton Park.

To show the interest he ever took in all that concerned the Licensed Victuallers of the kingdom, it will be sufficient to mention the one fact, among many others of a similar character, that on the 9th of June, 1859, he took the chair at the annual festival of the Licensed Victuallers' Asylum the occasion being the first on which the dinner was held, at the Crystal Palace. The result was the most satisfactory to the funds of our noble charity, and it could not have failed to be a source of much gratification to Mr. Worthington that he was supported on his right and left hand by his distinguished fellowtownsmen, Michael Bass, M.P., and Henry Allsopp, M.P.

One thing more is necessary to be added to complete the history of the firm previously to its coming into the hands of the present partners. During the lifetime of the late Mr. Worthington, he entered into a partnership for twenty-one years with Mr. Robinson. This term commenced in 1841 and terminated in 1862, when the firm, which for this period had been Worthington and Robinson, again became Worthington only, Mr. Robinson building an extensive brewery for himself in Station-street.

WILLIAM HENRY WORTHINGTON, ESQ.

This gentleman, the present head of the firm, the eldest son of his father, and fifth William Worthington in direct descent, was born on August 23, 1826, in the Highstreet of Burton-on-Trent, and is now, consequently, in his forty-ninth year. Mr. W.H. Worthington was educated a Rugby School, and had the good fortune to enter in the palmiest days of the school, towards the close, namely, of the famous head-mastership of the celebrated Dr. Arnold, and finishing his course under the hardly less successful *régime* of Dr. Tait, now Archbishop of Canterbury. On leaving school he at once entered the brewery, commencing his duties on the 1st of January, 1844, and on his attaining his majority in 1847, was received into partnership.

Like his father, Mr. W.H. Worthington has taken a keen interest in public affairs of various kinds. He is a Feoffee of the Burton town lands, and one of the town commissioners. He has been Vice-Chairman of the school board from its formation, and is a trustee of the Endowed Schools. He was one of the first and principal promoters of the Burton Infirmary, now a flourishing institution. On the first formation of the 39th Staffordshire (Burton) Volunteer Corps, he was appoint-

ed captain, and has, at all times, shown himself equally eager with his ancestors to throw himself with zest into any good work for the benefit of the town or of the nation at large. He is a great patron of rowing, and is the President of the Burton Leander Rowing Club. Mr. W.H. Worthington's private residence is at The High-lands, near Burton, and here he is as popular as in the town itself. The very excellent portrait of this gentleman which appears in this issue, is from a very recent photograph by John Burton and Sons, and may therefore be depended on as representing him "in his habit as he live."

ALBERT OCTAVIUS WORTHINGTON, ESO.

The younger member of the firm, Albert Octavius Worthington, the fourth in order of birth, but second surviving son of the late William Worthington, was born at Newton Park, Nov. 20, 1844, and has, therefore, only just passed his thirtieth birthday. He was educated at Repton School, one of the best-known and best-reputed educational establishments in the county, under the head-mastership of the Rev. Dr. Pears. On leaving school, in 1862, when he had completed his eighteenth year, he at once joined the business, and, on attaining his majority three years later, was made a partner in the wine trade, and, after a further probationary period of five years, attained to the full honours of a share in the brewery on his father's retirement in 1870. Mr. A.O. Worthington is a thorough master of all the details of every department of the business, but he is also an enthusiast in sports of all kinds. In the foreground he would probably place cricket, of which he is one of the best exponents in his native county. He is a member of half-a-dozen clubs, and his averages in a large number of matches are most respectable. It is worthy of note that the first "county" match ever played by Derbyshire was against the once invincible Gentlemen of Kent. In this match the Midland Gentlemen achieved a one-innings victory, and Mr. Albert Worthington had the satisfaction of making the "Leger" against the bowling of Mr. Lipscombe and others. He was also the secretary and whip of the Newton Harriers, is a member of the Meynell Hunt, and of a Burton Rowing Club. In his public capacity he is very appropriately a member for two counties of the Trent Fishery Board. He was to a great extent the projector of the Burton Club, an institution which supplies a great social want in a town like Burton, which for its size contains so large a number of



W.H. WORTHINGTON, ESQ.,

OF THE FIRM WORTHINGTON AND CO., BURTON-UPON-TRENT.

(From a Photograph by J. Burton, jun., of Leicester and Burton.)



A.O. WORTHINGTON, ESQ.,

OF THE FIRM WORTHINGTON AND CO., BURTON-UPON-TRENT.

(From a Photograph by Sarony, of Scarborough.)

wealthy merchants and producers. Mr. A.O. Worthington inherits his father's political opinions, and is a steady Conservative and a determined upholder of the connection between Church and State. He is a member of the St. Stephen's Club in London, and an active supporter of the local political organisations. He was secretary to the Burton Lifeboat Fund, which boat is now stationed at Redcar, on the Yorkshire coast. On the 28th of October he presided at the annual dinner of the Birmingham Licensed Victuallers' Society, on which occasion he acquitted himself most admirably and greatly to the delight and satisfaction of all the members of that important association. On Feb. 16, 1871, Mr. Albert Worthington married the daughter of the late John Etty, Esq., of Malton, Yorkshire, and niece of Sir George Cholmley, Bart., of Boynton Hall, Bridlington. On the 21st of December following, Mrs. Albert Worthington gave birth, at her husband's residence, Willington House, near Burton-on-Trent, to a son and heir, the sixth William Worthington; and as this young gentleman's birthday occurred the very day of our visit at Burton, we very heartily drank to his future health and prosperity in the beer of the firm. And here let it be noted that it is a custom at Messrs. Worthington's, on the birth of a son, to brew some beer specially for his coming of age. Some of the ale thus brewed in 1799, on the birth of the late William Worthington, is still on the premises in splendid condition. Having thus fully introduced the reader to the personnel, it is now time to turn attention to the materiel of this old-established firm, and give some description of

THE BREWERY AND STORES

The entrance to Messrs. Worthington's premises are in the middle of the High-street of Burton-on-Trent, on both sides of that thoroughfare. On the east side they stretch down to the Hay Wall, and nearly to the banks of the Trent, immediately close to the spot where the independent line of the London and North-Western Railway for goods traffic, for which an Act was obtained last session, is to cross the river. On the west side the premises extend in a somewhat diagonal line to Station-street, and thus they occupy a practically solid but irregular-shaped block in a most advantageous position in the very centre of the town. Entering the offices, the first impression given by the appearance of the old house is one of solid respectability, contrasting pleasant-

ly with the spick-and-span brand new buildings that have in recent years been erected in various parts of the town. After noting the general clerks' office, which was probably once the dining-room, the visitor is attracted by a small apartment, specially fitted with a sloping skylight, which is used as a sampling room, where all the hops and barley purchased by the firm are sampled and examined - the hops by Mr. Albert Worthington, in conjunction with Mr. Horace Brown, the chief brewer, and the malt and barley by Mr. Worthington. Leaving this, and again passing through the general office, it is not unlikely the eye will be caught by the Messrs. Worthington's appointment as Purveyors in Ordinary of Burton Ales to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, dated April 13, 1866, and being first of the kind made.

Proceeding down the yard to the old brewery, a pause is made for a moment to examine and smile at an ancient cooler, which, some century and a half ago was sufficient for the purposes of the first William Worthington's trade. The coolers nowadays cover the floors of vast apartments, large enough for public ball-rooms. This old affair, which remains where it was first fixed, measures nine feet in length, by six in width, and is eight inches deep, and, at the ordinary rate of cooling, will contain a three-barrel brew of 108 gallons. After having seen the present resources of the establishment, this cooler naturally looks like an insignificant plaything, which could never have been of any real use; yet it was probably the foundation of all the rest.

Then comes a striking contrast between the old and the new in the shape of a malthouse built early in the last century, and another erected in 1864. The former is a one-storey building, with a sloping roof starting from the very ground; the latter is a noble building in many floors, where every process of malting can be seen from the barley lifted in sacks to the upper floor by a duplex-action crane, until the malt with the "comb" removed is again thrown into bags ready for use. This process of malting may be briefly described as follows:-

First the barley is screened to cleanse it from all extraneous matters. Then it is placed in the "cistern" and "steeped" by being covered some six or eight inches in water. The barley remains in the cistern from two to three days, according to the state of the atmosphere, the water being changed twice a day. It is then drained and thrown into the "couching frame" and remains twenty-

four hours, during which time it is gauged by the exciseman and the duty calculated. Next it is "floored," id est, spread thinly over the gypsum floors of the malthouse, when the process of germination gently proceeds, great care having now to be taken to preserve a uniform temperature, and to turn the barley regularly so as to procure a uniform rate of progression. In twelve days from the commencement the barley arrives at the kiln, over which it is spread on perforated tiles in layers of several inches, and subjected to a gradually increasing heat. When the necessary colour is obtained, the malt is drawn off the kiln. Altogether sixteen days are thus occupied, and then the malt is passed through a screen, to remove the comb, and stored ready for use. On the day named there were some 500 quarters of malt in the houses in the east vard in the various stages, but including the malthouses in the west vard, Messrs. Worthington can "malt" about 15,000 quarters annually. This, however, is less than half their consumption, the rest having to be purchased.

Under the new malthouse described, are wine bins, for it must be remembered that Messrs. Worthington have never abandoned this portion of their trade, and are wine-merchants and rectifiers, as well as brewers. All this portion of the business is confined to the east vard, and how important a branch it is, may be understood from the fact, that the port wine bins alone contain from 1500 to 2000 dozen bottles, worth from £4000 to £5000. Having seen these, Mr. Albert Worthington led the way to the very end of the yard, where a vacant plot of ground is destined to receive a new range of maltings and stores. Then, crossing the High-street, we proceeded to the stables, which, thanks to the locomotive we encountered on the way, with a long train of cars behind it, are of slight importance in a Burton brewery. Some eight or nine horses, of which one was a saddle-horse, and another a splendid specimen of a stout Flemish cob. were all that were required. The stables, however, were well ventilated and capitally arranged, like everything else in the establishment.

From the stables to the cooperage, one of the most important, and at the same time most interesting departments of the establishment. The cooperage is under the superintendence of Mr. Phillips, and gives employment to some sixty hands, of whom thirty-five are coopers proper. Here there are the washing-out yard, where returned casks are cleaned equal to new; the cobbling

shop, where repairs are effected; the cooperage proper, where the new casks are made; the branding-room in which every cask receives its distinguishing number, by which its history can be traced as long as it lasts. Readers may like to hear the process of cleaning out old casks, as it will set their minds at rest as to any danger of using them. When the casks are returned, any hops, etc., that may be in them are first brushed out; they are then run through with boiling water, with which they remain for two hours; they are then emptied and placed over pipes supplying hot air, for half-an-hour, the fan which supplies the hot air making 1200 revolutions a minute. All new casks are also subjected to a process of steaming for half-an-hour, to drive out any tannic acid there may be in the wood. The process of making new casks is, of course, the same everywhere, and is besides so well known as not to need repetition. Then come a long series of workshops. First a sawing-room, in which are a circular-saw and one of Creasey's patent vertical saws. Another room is devoted to the production of shives, or wooden bungs, for which a man is paid at the rate of sixpence a gross, and can turn out twelve gross a-day. Then there are gasfitter's shop, the joiner's, the wheelwright's, the blacksmith's, and the painter's - all perfectly appointed, and all bearing testimony to the wonderful manner in which a brewery is made, as it were, self-supporting and independent of the outside world, for everything but the absolute raw material of nature's growth. Rising above all these shops there is a water-tower rising some 120 feet from the ground, from the top of which there is a charming view of Burton and the surrounding country, and where there is a huge water tank with a capacity of 23,000 gallons. Descending again we enter the mess-room, provided for the use of those men who do not wish to go home for their meals, and these are frequently numerous. This room not unnaturally leads to conversation about the employés, of whom there are altogether over three hundred, all of them evidently, to judge from their appearance, are in the receipt of liberal wages, and with other advantages in the shape of kind and considerate treatment. Thus, in cases of illness, they receive half wages for two months, while wine and other necessaries are plentifully given to them. Brewing, it need not be said, and malting even more, are natural processes which cannot be arrested for twenty-four hours, but every endeavour is made to render the Sunday labour as light as possible, nothing being done that can possibly be left undone.

Now we are in the "general yard," which is surrounded by numerous buildings, among others by the back of a malting-house, in which are the bullet-marks left by the late Mr. William Worthington, and by Mr. William Bass, who as lads used to come into this vard and practise with their rifles: and a well-authenticated tradition tells. that the boys very frequently shot hares, and even coursed them in this yard, which is now in the very centre of the town. At the time, be it remembered, of all the tall chimneys now to be seen in Burton, not one existed. There were of course no railways, and the breweries of Burton were comparatively small undertakings. Here too is the new well, sunk by Messrs. Worthington, which contains 35,350 gallons, and the opening of which is thirty feet across. The digging of this well revealed a fact which is hardly pleasant to the Burton brewers. Years ago the water used to be within six feet of the surface, now it is only procured at a distance of sixteen or seventeen feet, and some fears have existed that this valuable supply is no more inexhaustible than that of coal. However, more economy is now practised, the water being used for nothing but absolute brewing, the Trent furnishing the large quantities required for all other purposes. The next place to be explored is the Hop and Malt Store, on entering which one is greeted with the somewhat overpowering but pleasant aromatic and bitter odour of the hop. Here are innumerable pockets of the finest Kentish and Bavarian hops, and malt bins all full as they can hold, and containing something like 3000 quarters. From this a short walk leads to the Large Store Room, where long rows after rows of hogsheads, butts, and barrels fade away into the dim twilight, defying any attempt for an unpractised eye to estimate the quantity of beer. A call for Chowler, however, brings to our side the storekeeper and manager of the ales, who presently supplies us with a small glass of ale, strong enough to take the roof off one's head, but withal so bright and clear, so soft and mellow, that Dawson Burns⁷ himself might be tempted to ask for another glass, although knowing perfectly well it would be more than was good for him. This is just the kind of beer that should accompany our gallant explorers in their forthcoming search for the North Pole. Small wonder the Russians liked it! But several hours have now been occupied in this journey, and Mr. A. Worthington suggests luncheon before looking at the actual process of brewing, and the writer, nothing loth, consents. On our way back to the office a weighing-machine is pointed out which registers accurately every load entering or

leaving the yard, and at the same point is the allowanceroom for hands, where Solloway, a faithful old servant of the firm, dispenses to the *employés* - hear it not, Wilfred - three barrels of ale per diem!

Returning to the east side reminds me that I omitted to mention the name of Mr. Wright, the manager of the wine-department, who succeeded his father in his present office, the two having served the firm for more than ninety years. Here, too, it may be fitly stated that the general indoor manager of the house is Mr. W.P. Manners, the cashier being Mr. Harris, both of whom are servants of long standing. Indeed, it seems to be a praiseworthy speciality of Messrs. Worthington's, when they find a good servant to keep him for life. For instance, during our luncheon, Joseph Watson, a garrulous old cellarman who had been fifty years in the service, was sent for to give some old time memories of Burton, which he was glad enough to do, and, had he been allowed, would, I verily believe, have found matter to occupy him till now. He did, as it was, say much that was interesting, the substance of which it is hoped is pretty well worked up in the foregoing columns. Even more interesting than his matter, however, was his manner. It was evident that the affection he displayed for his employers, whom of course he remembered from his babyhood, was genuine and real, while withal there was a dash of genial shrewdness in the way in which he qualified his gratitude for the payment of a recent doctor's bill, with the reminder that two or three bottles of medicine in fifty years wasn't much.

But there is the brewery still to see. Well! I have seen large ones, but I think I have never yet seen one better or more intelligently ordered. Mr. Brown, the head of this department, is evidently a gentleman of no mean acquirements, and it is indeed certain that to be a thoroughly good brewer it is necessary nowadays that a man should also be a good chemist. In olden times a considerable variation in flavour was of little consequence, provided the beer was sound in itself, but now the slightest change means disappointment and loss, and it is necessary that the brewer should be constantly testing the qualities of his water, of his malt, and of his hops. The first point here worthy of notice is the mashroom, where the malt and water are mixed in the mash tun, and after percolation pumped into the wort coppers above. The mash tuns here are equal to the mashing of from 150 and 180 quarters of malt at one operation, and

the wort coppers, of which there are four, will hold eighty-five barrels each, equal to a total of 12,240 gallons. On what may be called the entresol⁸ are furnaces corresponding to these coppers above, and after the wort is brought into these coppers, a fierce heat is applied and sustained for a longer or shorter time, according to the strength. Then the hops are added to the boiling mass. The wort is drawn off when the malt is thoroughly drained and run through a series of pipes into the coolers, which at Messrs. Worthington's are made on a most ingenious plan that causes the process of cooling to be indefinitely hastened. Already the reader has seen the original cooler of this firm. The present coolers consist of twenty-four squares covering the whole of a large floor, each of these squares holding sixty barrels, and these are filled at least three times a week. From the cooler the wort is run into the "rounds," where the yeast is added, and the process of fermentation taken to a certain point, after which the fermenting wort is run into the cleansing casks of the "Union Room," or rather rooms, for there are, in this instance, three of them, which, together, will contain at one time 3000 barrels, or 10,800 gallons of ale. A clever invention of a former brewer of this firm's, in the form of a worm-shaped tubing, considerably expedites the process of cleansing in the Union Rooms, and when the yeast has all risen, the ale is run into the racking squares from which the casks are filled to the bung, closed with wooden shives, and rolled away to the stores, really ready for use, though capable, probably, of improvement by keeping.

THE LONDON STORES

In addition to the extensive premises at Burton-on-Trent, Messrs. Worthington have also large stores in London, at St. Pancras and Moorfields, in connection with the Midland and North-Western Railways. The London offices are in Eldon-street, at the back of these, under the large arches of the North London Railway, and having an entrance from Sun-street, Bishopsgate, are the principal stores, under the control of Mr. Coulton, who, having been previously in the employ of the firm at Burton, came to London twenty-one years

ago, when they first established their warehouse and cellars in the metropolis. In these City stores can be stored some three or four thousand barrels of ale; and here may also be found samples of bitter ales and mild ales. At the present time there is perhaps a smaller quantity of beer in store than usual, as in consequence of the great increase in the London demand for Worthington's ale during the present year, it is with difficulty the supply can be made to keep pace with the demand. This, however, is a shortcoming on the right side, and one not likely to be complained of by the firm, at all events; while, as it is evidently caused by the high and everimproving quality of their brewings, their customers are as little likely to complain.

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Notes

- 1. James Joseph Allport (1811-1892), general manager of the Midland Railway for nearly 30 years.
- 2. From the song 'King Canute' by G. Macfarren.
- 3. Robert Plot (1640-1696), naturalist, first Professor of Chemistry at the University of Oxford, first keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, and author of *The Natural History of Staffordshire* (1686).
- 4. Stebbing Shaw (1762-1802), author of the two volume *History and Antiquities of Staffordshire* (1798 and 1801).
- 5. Stephen Glover (1794-1870), author of *History and Gazetteer of the County of Derby*. (1831 and 1833); John Alfred Langford (1823 1903), author of the four-volume *Staffordshire and Warwickshire Past and Present*,with C.S. Mackintosh and J.C. Tildesley; and William Molyneux (1824-1882), author of *Burton-on-Trent: its History, its Waters, and its Breweries* (1869).
- 6. Horace Tabberer Brown (1848 1925), a pioneer of brewing science who worked at the Worthington Brewery between 1866 and 1894. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1889.
- 7. Dawson Burns (1828-1909) a Baptist minister and temperance campaigner.
- 8. An intermediate floor between the main floors of a building.