

**UNFERMENTED WINE A FACT: A
REVIEW OF THE LATEST ATTEMPT
TO SHOW THAT THE EXISTENCE OF
UNFERMENTED WINE AMONG THE
ANCIENTS WAS IMPOSSIBLE**

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Unfermented Wine a Fact: a Review of the Latest Attempt to Show that the Existence of
Unfermented Wine Among the Ancients was Impossible by Norman Kerr

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NORMAN KERR

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A REVIEW OF THE LATEST ATTEMPT TO SHOW THAT
THE EXISTENCE OF UNFERMENTED WINE AMONG
THE ANCIENTS WAS IMPOSSIBLE.

NEW AND REVISED EDITION.

BY

NORMAN KERR, M.D., F.L.S.,
LONDON.

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P R E F A C E .

IN issuing a new Edition, which has been urgently called for, the Author has thankfully to acknowledge the candor with which the Press has very generally conceded that he has demonstrated both the possible and actual existence of Unfermented Wine among the Ancients. The main object of his labor has been achieved; the eminent philanthropist, to meet whose objections (founded on Mr. Wilson's book) the pamphlet was written, being now an ardent total ab-stainer. And several of the most distinguished scholars in the country have, after a critical examination, admitted to the Author their conviction of the soundness of the position contended for in the pamphlet.

NORMAN KERR.

42 GROVE ROAD, REGENT'S PARK,
LONDON, N. W.

January, 1879.

UNFERMENTED WINE A FACT.*

BY NORMAN KERR, M.D., F.L.S.

It has happened more than once that an intellectual and sober atheist has pointed out to me certain passages in the Sacred Scriptures where wine is spoken of with approval, and has triumphantly asked me, "Can a book be true, or can its asserted Inspirer be infallible, when in it liquids which you, a man of science and a medical practitioner, know to be artificial poisons, are explicitly commended and un-stintingly approved of?" My reply has ever been:

1. That believers in the Bible and in its Author, who are acquainted with the fact, a fact beyond dispute, that alcohol is a poison, and, therefore, that all alcoholic liquors are poisonous, are absolutely certain that the Inspired Volume can not possibly sanction the use of intoxicating beverages;
2. That wine is a generic name applied alike to fermented and unfermented, alcoholic and non-alcoholic, poisonous and innocuous, drinks, as is the word table—by which general description we may refer to loo tables, dining tables, card tables, work tables, or billiard tables, or

* Wines of the Bible—Rev. A. M. Wilson. London: Hamilton, Adams & Co.

- to tables made of such differing woods as deal, mahogany, rosewood, or walnut ;
3. That the Ancients indulged in both intoxicating and unintoxicating drinks ;
 4. That the wines mentioned in the Bible comprised both kinds ;
 5. And that the particular kind of wine referred to in any particular text must be determined by the context.

This has always, till recently, been accepted as a conclusive reply, and it does seem unanswerable.

(Note.—I purposely refrain from going beyond the accepted translation at present, as I have met with no similar argument drawn from the various Hebrew words rendered by the common name of wine in our English Bible).

A few months ago, however, I was met by the rejoinder, "Your reply is complete if only it were true. A dissenting minister has written a book, and two distinguished nonconformist divines have publicly declared he has demonstrated in that book, that it was quite impossible for the Ancients to have preserved wine unfermented and unintoxicating."

I could but reply that a dissenting minister might as well have written a book, and the two distinguished nonconformist divines might as well have declared he had demonstrated in that book, that no man-child had ever been born in England with a nose on his face. I knew that I was born with a nose, because I could see it and feel it, and I knew that wine could be preserved unfermented and unintoxicating, because I had it and drank it—in moderation.

I am happy to say that my skeptical friend both

saw and quaffed the generous and God-given un-intoxicating wine (vintage of 1873), and together we drank confusion to the three eccentric theologians who, to their own satisfaction, had proved that we could not possibly do so in any old unfermented blood of the grape.

Having little leisure, and knowing that no one could prove *faits accomplis* to be impossible, for—

"Facts are chieft that winna ding,
And downa be disputed,"

I thought no more of the book, or of the reverend demolishers of fact, till, not long since, I found an earnest and intelligent Christian philanthropist conscientiously objecting to total abstinence, on the ground that Mr. Wilson had proved the preservation of unfermented wine by the Ancients to be impossible, and, therefore, that the Bible sanctioned the use of intoxicating liquors.

In deference to my friend, and from finding since that this book had been extensively quoted by Christians against the tectotal movement, and by infidels against the Bible, I have read the whole volume with care and attention, and have found the entire argument based upon a misunderstanding of popular chemical deliverances, a misunderstanding which could never have arisen had the author been skilled in organic chemistry or practically acquainted with many Eastern and Southern wines, of whose existence he seems to have been quite unaware.