

[Account of a Method of Preparing a Spirituous Liquor]

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Publication Format

Print

Type

Drink

Ingredients

cocoa

maple sap

Places

Halifax

Goa

Batavia

East Indies

America

Source: Nova Scotia Chronicle and Weekly Advertiser

Institution: Nova Scotia Archives | **Source Origin:** Nova Scotia Newspapers on Microfilm | **Reference:** Microfilm Reel 8155

Description

This recipe includes both a spirit made of cocoa juice and one made of maple sap. The writer observed the former in Goa and claims to have invented the latter using the same method, upon observing the use of sugar maple sap in America. Vol. 9, No. 66.

Transcription

Account of a Method of preparing a Spirituous Liquor, of the Nature of ARRACK, from the Juice of some American Trees; discovered by a Gentleman who was several Years in the Service of the East-India Company, and afterwards came to reside in America.

THE finest Goa arrack is made of the juice of the cocoa-tree, in the following manner. The operator furnishes himself with a parcel of earthen vessels, with large bellies, and short but

wide necks. These he ties about his waste, neck, and legs, and, thus loaded, he climbs up into a cocoa tree. As soon as he is got up among the branches, he cuts off a knot, and immediately ties one of his earthen vessels to the wound, that the liquor may run into it. As soon as he fixed that, he cuts another knot to make

a wound for another, and so on till he has hung up all his store of vessels. Then he descends and prepares a large wooden vessel to receive the juice. The bottles are commonly hung on in the evening, because the tree bleeds more freely in the night; and the next morning the man climbs up again, and takes them off when they are nearly filled with the sap which ran from the wound. These are all emptied into the wooden vessel before prepared, and make a thin liquor, which soon begins to ferment of itself, and rises with a head to the top of the vessel. When the fermentation is over, the head goes off, and the liquor tastes weak and tartish: It is then thrown into a large still and worked off, so long as the runnings taste any thing spirituous. This liquor, distilled from the juice, is of the nature of our low wines, as the distillers call them. This is so poor that it would soon turn sower; but they immediately distill it again, and make it what they call by our name proof spirit. In this condition it is sent over to us: And though it seems as strong as our malt or molasses spirit, by the head it bears, it is really but of

one third or fourth part of the strength; for when rectified into spirit of Wine, these spirits are found to contain one half of that spirit; but the best Goa arrack commonly sold contains only one sixth or one eighth part.

Enquiring whether the cocoa tree was the only sort of whose juice they made arrack, I found they made it of the juices of several kinds, but that the cocoa juice was the most plentiful and easiest obtain'd

of any, and that therefore it is mostly used; and what was sent over into Europe both from Goa and Batavia, principally made of it.

On coming to reside in this part of the world, I found that there was a tree which they call the sugar maple, which they usually tap in the Spring, and let out its juices or sap by boring a hole in the trunk: they brew this with us into a sort of drink, and sometimes they boil it into sugar; but nobody, till my time, ever thought of making any other use of it. It immediately occurred to men, that it might be used in the same manner as the Indians use their cocoa juice. On tasting it I found that it tasted much the same, and I immediately went to work upon it. It fermented readily after standing twenty four hours; and after the whole fermentation was over, I distilled it, and rectified it, and have made a fine spirit of it, which every body here says is very good arrack. I am more used to arrack than they are; and, I must confess, that I don't think it exactly the same with that of Goa and Batavia; but it is exactly the same with that of many other parts of the East-Indies, and I think full as pleasant as any.

Account of a Method of Preparing a Spirituous Liquor recipe from Early Modern Maritime Recipes:
<https://emmr.lib.unb.ca/recipes/16>