

THE PLANTING OF THE VINE.

A RABBINICAL LEGEND.

AIR—*The Year that's awa'.*

WHEN Noah first planted the Vine,
 The Devil contrived to be there,
 For he saw pretty well that the Finding of Wine
 Was a very important affair.

Mankind had been sober before ;
 But had *not* been remarkably good ;
 And the cold-blooded crew had deserved all the more
 To be deluged and drenched by the Flood.

To assist us in mending our ways,
 And more safely our time to employ,
 It was kindly determined to shorten our days,
 And afford us some generous joy.

Then the grape came to gladden man's heart ;
And a bright dawn of bliss seemed to glow,
When the rainbow and wine-cup could tidings impart,
Of an end both to Water and Woe.

So to hallow the newly-found fruit,
Noah chose a white Lamb without spot ;
And he poured its young blood round the delicate root,
To preserve it from blemish and blot.

But the Devil, such bounty to clog,
And to substitute evil for good,
Slaughtered also a Lion, an Ape, and a Hog,
And manured the young plant with their blood.

The first gush of the Vine's precious balm
Shows its power in an innocent way :
Like the Lamb's gentle nature, our temper is calm,
While our spirits are playful and gay.

But on tasting more freely the cup,
Then its Leonine vices are found ;
With a combative ardour the heart is lit up,
And resentment and wrath hover round.

Next, the Ape, if still deeper we drink,
His grimaces and gambols will try;
Till at last, like the Hog, oversated we sink,
And contented lie down in the sty.

In avoiding these villainous beasts,
Let our sense of the blessing be shown :
Let the Lamb's playful spirit preside at our feasts,
Nor let even the Lion be known.

But I would not be ruthlessly told
From all temperate draughts to refrain;
Lest perhaps, like the sober transgressors of old,
We should bring down the Deluge again.