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The Vineyard.

HAMMONDSPORT.

Vine Culture and Wine Making in Western New York.

It is a remarkable fact that vine culture, in this country, has been pursued most successfully and energetically near the extreme northern limit of the grape zone. From the



A PLEASANT VALLEY MODEL VINEYARD.

banks of the Ohio River, its first firm foothold on this Continent, it advanced northward to the bleak shores of Lake Erie, and as it met a natural barrier opposing further progress in that direction, the culture spread eastward and westward, and took firm root in the few favoring localities of so high a latitude. In the State of New York the area of land is comparatively small upon which success in grape growing may be counted as certain. It is nearly embraced in the Lake Erie shore, some few points in Niagara and Monroe counties, and the immediate vicinity of the interior lakes. Perhaps the best success is promised in the region of the interior lakes; some are so deep and springy that they never freeze entirely over, and the water, doubtless, has a protecting influence on the adjoining grape lands. They are likewise free from fogs. The peculiar, porous, slaty soil; the warm, valleys; the sunny slopes; the perfect natural drainage, that characterize the grape regions around most of these lakes, are conditions which make the culture certain in localities even outside the climatic limits of the vine.

The products of the vine, grown in its northern zone, are superior in excellence. In Europe the wines which possess the highly prized "bouquet," or aroma, come from

from the north of France are superior to those from the south. Winter flavors the fruit, and summer needs but the power to perfect it. Northern wines are light, healthful and induce cheerfulness; from the South we get raisins and port, Madeira and Malaga wines, full of headaches and alcohol. In its southern limits the vine is not more certain than in its northern; its growth is continued through most of the year. Planted on the slopes of the Andes where the year is one continual spring, the fruit never arrives at

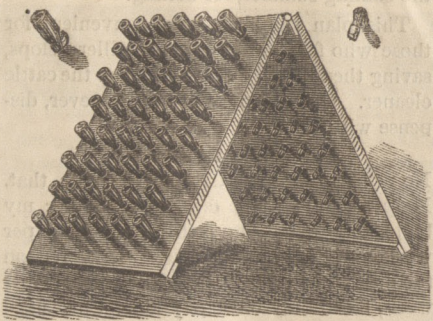
full maturity. Favorable northern localities are more exempt from frost in this country than those further south. Cotton is frost-bitten oftener than our northern corn. When we originate varieties of grapes equal in excellence to those of Europe, (which is a reasonable expectation,) the wine growers of these latitudes will produce a beverage not inferior to the best that flows from the famous vineyards on the banks of the Rhine.

The views of Hammondsport and vicinity herewith given, illustrate many of the chief points of interest in a locality where the vine is extensively and successfully cultivated. The capabilities of this region for profitable vine culture, may not exceed others in this State, but the foresight and energy of its people have pushed the business to a point far in advance of the rest. More vines are planted and more grapes grown around Crooked Lake than in any other locality in the State. The outlook of the main picture (see page 65) is from a point near the head of the lake, and across the valley from the village of Hammondsport. The lake extends from Hammondsport, at the head, to Penn Yan, at the foot—a distance of about twenty-two miles. Nearly half way down from the head is Bluff Point, where the lake forks, the west branch being the shorter, and terminating at Branchport. The widest part of

mondspout across the valley, and the range of vineyards down the west shore.

The direction of the lake is from northeast to southwest. Pleasant Valley, of which only the foot is seen, extends from the head of the lake southwest a distance of two or three miles. The bottom lands are level and fertile. The hills bounding the valley, as well as those along the lake, range from four hundred to a thousand feet in height. The slopes are cut through, at almost regular distances, by deep ravines, which afford excellent natural drainage. The soil on the slopes is disintegrated shale and sandstone, warm and porous to a great depth. For grass or grain crops it is very poor.

It is estimated that five thousand acres in this region are now planted with vines. The first vineyard in Pleasant Valley was set in 1855. The success was beyond expectation. Land, heretofore considered almost valueless, rose quickly in price to two and three hundred dollars per acre. Bearing vineyards were held at one thousand. It is a curious fact that as far back as 1843, Mr. HASTINGS, a merchant of the place, terraced his garden and planted a few vines, and on one occasion sold a barrel of grapes to New York to sell. His success was so good that the next year he took down two barrels. This quantity broke the market, one being as much as he could dispose of, and he abandoned the business.



SEDIMENT RACK.

The first vines planted were Isabellas and Catawbas, and they were trained to trellis. Other varieties were introduced, many succeeded well, but the Catawba took the lead. It ripened well, was free from disease, valuable for wine, and popular in the market. Grapes were shipped in large quantities to eastern markets, and the returns proved highly remunerative. At present the Iona is being planted largely, as it is superior to the Catawba for table use and for making wine, and where good vines have been set it proves to be a good bearer, and healthy. Delawares succeed on the richer soils. Concord and the coarser grapes are not largely cultivated. Under such favorable conditions the finer varieties of wine and the table are more profitable. One great need is a grape which will make a first-class still, red wine. Much is hoped from the Eumelan, but at present the Catawba colored varieties far excel the dark kinds which are required for red wine.

In the first stages of grape culture it was thought necessary to terrace the steep hillsides. This involved the expenditure of considerable capital. Now no vineyard is terraced unless so steep as to be absolutely necessary. It is preferable to run the rows up and down the slopes; it gives better exposure, better drainage for surface water, and is a much less expensive system. Neither is trenching or very deep plowing thought desirable. Trellises are built of wire and stakes, the rows generally eight feet apart. The low system of pruning is practiced, and the fruit grown as near the ground as practicable.

One of the views herewith given pictures a model vineyard on the west side of Pleasant Valley, nearly two miles above Hammondsport. It comprises sixty-five acres of vines of the leading sorts, which have just arrived at the bearing age. It is owned by

a stock company, and has been grown under the charge of Dr. VAN KEUREN. The condition of the vineyard is sufficient praise of the skill of the Superintendent. Forty thousand dollars are invested in it. The tillage is perfect; the soil is plowed with one horse often enough to keep it loose and clean. The last plowing throws the dirt to the stems of

edge, and extend their long lines far above. Below are level, rich flats, bounded by opposing hills, and away to the left a wide expanse of lake. The cellars below ground are made of massive masonry, with arched roofs, and the edifice above is of solid concrete. The office, press and storage rooms occupy the space above. The brandy still is



PLEASANT VALLEY WINE HOUSE.

the vines. Weak vines are manured to force them up to the average. Trimming and training have been done promptly, skillfully and in season, and the result is a model vineyard. It is worth going a long journey to see.

The rapid development of the grape business led to the establishment of wine cellars. That belonging to the Pleasant Valley Wine Company is the oldest of the three in this region, and does the largest business. It is in the hands of capable, enterprising and honest men, and the public have found its goods just what they are represented. The manufacture of sparkling and still wines and brandies is conducted by Messrs. J. D. and JULES MASSON, who acquired this experience in the wine cellars of the champagne districts of France. C. D. CHAMPLIN, Esq., Secretary and Treasurer, transacts the commercial business. We are indebted to him for information and many genial attentions.

The cellar was founded in 1860. It started moderately, with a capital of ten thousand dollars, using the first year but 76,000 pounds of grapes. At first still wines alone were made; then brandy and sparkling wines. Last year about 125,000 bottles of sparkling and over 30,000 gallons of still wines were made. The building is located on the west side of Pleasant Valley, a mile and a half

apart from this building.

The manufacture of desirable sparkling wine requires skill, experience and good material. The excellence of the popular brands "Paris Exposition" and "Carte Blanche" proves that these requisites are not wanting in this cellar. It takes a great deal of labor and capital to make sparkling wine. French bottles must be used, for our glass manufacturers cannot yet make a champagne bottle. Corks are imported from Spain, and they cost high on account of quality and size. The best of grapes are selected, and several varieties are necessary for it is well known that the choicest French champagnes are made, not from one, but from a combination of many kinds of grapes. Our makers have found also, that by a combination of varieties wines of more delicate flavor are produced, which compare favorably with those of France.

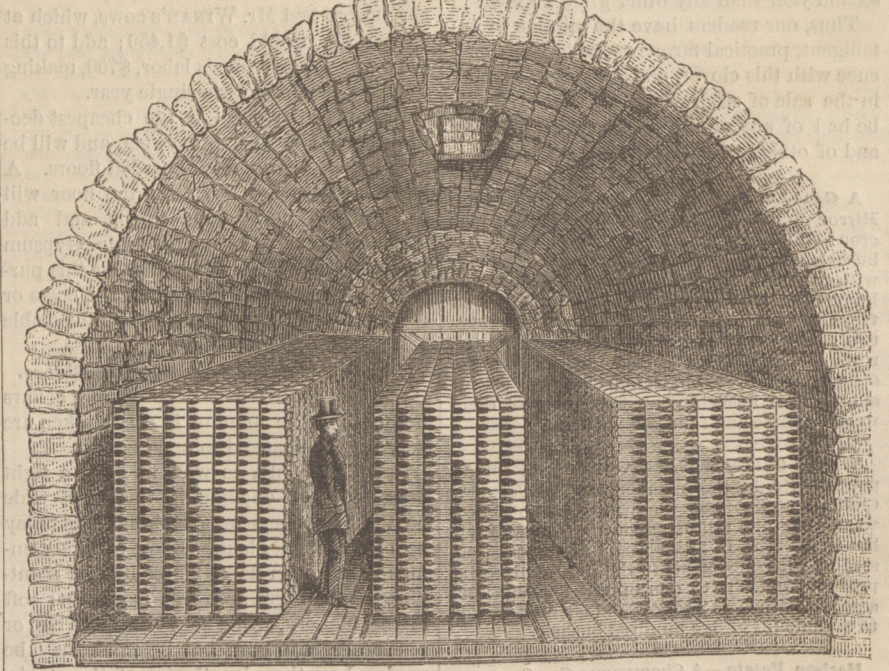
In making champagne the wine is first put into casks where it undergoes the first fermentation, and subsequent rackings. When nearly a year old it is hoisted from the cellar to an upper room, and by means of heat, and, if necessary, the addition of pure sugar, a slight fermentation again induced. Some wines have the quality of starting up on very slight provocation and these are natural sparklers. The wine is



PLEASANT VALLEY STILL WINE CELLAR.

regions well up in the North. Johannisberger and Tokay, are produced on the very northern verge of vine culture, and the wines

the lake is in front of Bluff Point, perhaps two miles. The view given shows Bluff Point in the distance, the village of Ham-



PLEASANT VALLEY SPARKLING WINE CELLAR.

from the village, on the main road to Bath. It overlooks a wide and beautiful prospect. The vineyards touch it with their lower

now bottled and kept in a room of high temperature until the fermentation has created a sufficiency of gas, which is indicated