

## GRAPE CULTURE IN OREGON.

California has the advantage, not only of Oregon, but of every other state in the Union, in the cultivation of the grape. But it must be remembered that it is confined to wine-making from tropical grapes, such as would not grow in more than four other states in the Federal galaxy. And yet, as a rule, her wines are heavy in their alcoholic properties and, unless great changes are made in the process of vintage to destroy their heavy propensities, will never become favorites with wine-drinkers.

Oregon has the opportunity to become a wine-growing state if the proper kinds of wines are introduced. Her climate is so much at variance with that of California that it would be a sheer waste of time, labor and capital, to introduce the French and Italian varieties of grape or even the Mission grape brought from Spain to California by the pious adherents of Junipero Serra. A different variety of grape is needed, one better adapted to the temperate zone.

More than fifty years ago, a quaint and eccentric Jerseyman emigrated from the cider-barrel state to Ohio. Settling on the rolling hills near the now great city of Cincinnati, he began to plant the Catawba grape with the idea of making brandy. Just then along came a Frenchman who gave him the suggestion of champagne from American grapes. No sooner said than done. An hour later, NICHOLAS LONGWORTH was on his way to New Orleans to contract for bottles and other fixtures to be used in the manufacture of his sparkling Catawba wine. It was the best effervescent wine ever made in America, and Longworth died worth eight millions of dollars. But the growth of the city of Cincinnati made the vineyard so valuable for building purposes that it was cut up into lots and Catawba wine became a neglected if not forgotten industry.

Our own idea is that Oregon is the place where Catawba grapes can be grown with great profit, especially in the arid hillsides of Wasco and Umatilla counties where good grape lands can be had at government price. It is a proposition which has plenty of money in it, to our notion. The only manufactory of Catawba wine now in

successful operation at the east is on Canandaigua Lake in New York state; but the quality of wine so far produced has not equalled that produced by Longworth on the terraced hills where now stand the more fashionable residences of Porkopolis.

Up to date, the only wine made in our state has been produced in Jackson county by Raphael Morat, J. N. T. Miller, Peter Britt and others, to an aggregate of about four thousand gallons per year. The distillation of brandy from peaches and plums has proven more profitable in that section and wine-making will yet have to give way to it, at least in that locality.

The man who will take up a sloping hill with a southern exposure, in either Wasco or Umatilla, set out his Catawba grapes and make them into wine, will make a fortune. We import from California a million gallons a year of wine inferior to what we could make at home if a little pains were taken. Who will be the plucky man to take hold of what will enrich both himself and the state of his adoption?

## A HARD WINTER.

Well, it has been a little inclined to be severe on poor people, that's a fact. But let us look at the case through a pair of disinterested spectacles, as it were. Eastern Oregon loses a large valuation of sheep and horned cattle by continuous snow storms while the Willamette valley loses mites of fencing and other valuable improvements by two freshets. Let us look and see if ourselves, "the webfoot gentry," as they style us at the San Francisco hotels, are the only sufferers.

At Los Angeles, Cal., the garden city of America, they have had frosts and ice without cessation. The winter orange crop has been a total failure and this, remember, in that fair land of unbroken sunshine and unfading flowers, which realizes the ideal "Happy Valley" of Rasselas. When you consider that Los Angeles lies 945 miles south of Portland, and only 28 miles from the sea, you will wonder that ice of an inch thickness lay in the gutters of that city for four days in January. The orange crop is to that place what the wheat crop is to Weston or Eugene City, Or. When all is lost that people depend upon for sustenance, what difference does it make where you reside?

But the Willamette is so subject to overflow and carries away so much fencing, you say! Did you ever see a rise on the Sacramento river, Cal., or do you know what has happened there in this month? Do you know that the great valley which heads up at Redding and opens out at Collinsville, has been one vast inland sea for a distance of 345 miles? Ten years ago, the Central Pacific lords bought up all the steamboats on the upper Sacramento river to keep them from competing with their road. This winter their road has been washed away to such an extent as to compel them to put on boats once more, and the steamer *Dana* arrived at Red Bluff on the 14th, the first boat that had reached that point in eight years and her arrival was the first communication with the outer world they had enjoyed in ten days.

The line of railroad between Sacramento and Davisville, the direct line of communication between San Francisco and the East, is washed, out to such an extent that the superintending engineer of the C. P. R. R. advises its abandonment. This, too, after building that monster ferry boat across Caryunes straits, to ferry the eastern trains, at a cost of \$400,000. The line between Red Bluff and Redding has never paid two per cent. interest on its cost, and is likely to be abandoned. The damages to farms and improvements in the three counties of Tehama, Colusa and Butte, are estimated at a million of dollars. As the counties of San Joaquin, Sacramento, Yolo, Contra Costa, Yuba, Solano and Stanislaus, are nearer to the tide-level, they must have suffered in a still greater degree.

There are worse locations than Oregon, after all. You think you have too much water here, but if you go to Arizona, you will have about none at all. California is a great state, to be sure, but then she has her unsound land titles and her great monopolies which render it impossible for the poor man to make more than a bare existence. Oregon is the better state of the two, and if your experience had been the same as the writer's, you would coincide with him. In the past two years, several Oregon millionaires have pulled up stakes and settled in California. They will be glad to get back before they are many years older.