

Northern Kentucky Views Presents

Latonia's Corneau & Sons Wineries.



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WINE-MAKING NEAR CINCINNATI, WITH PLANS OF A WINE-HOUSE AND MACHINERY.

[From the Western Horticultural Review.]

Our frontispiece for this month is a view of the wine-house of Messrs. Corneau & Son, located on their place, at Latonia, in Kentucky, about four miles from this city; it is probably one of the most complete establishments of the kind in the country. The great and increasing interest that is felt, not only here, but in all parts of the United States, in reference to the culture of the grape and the manufacture of wine, induces us to devote some space to this subject, particularly as the vintage season is about over, and our vignerons are now able to determine the result of their labors and skill. Improvements upon the methods and practice pursued during the earlier periods of the manufacture of wine from the Catawba grape, are being made every year, and the result is, that a very superior wine is now obtained from this grape, and one that bids fair to rival the most celebrated brands of the old country. The wines manufactured by the Messrs. Corneau, as well as by Messrs. Yeatman, Longworth, Buchanan, and others, will not suffer in comparison with those which are imported in large quantities from the Rhine countries; but, on the contrary, are frequently preferred by those who have been most accustomed to the use of the Rhenish wines. Its perfect purity and mild tonic properties render it an important addition to our materia medica; and its use as a gentle and nourishing stimulant is prescribed by some of the most distinguished of our medical faculty.

One important improvement which has been successfully introduced by the Messrs. Corneau, is the stemming of the grape, by a very simple and rapid process, and which also increases the peculiar aroma, or bouquet of the wine.

Many attempts have been made to accomplish this result heretofore, but they have either failed entirely, or have been found impracticable for large crops. The method of the Messrs. Corneau is remarkable for its rapidity; two men being able to stem, mash, and place in the press, near 80 bushels of grapes in about 3 hours. We understand that they intend introducing some further improvements during the next season, which will facilitate their operations to a greater extent than those which they now possess.

A sketch of the details of wine-making, as pursued at this establishment, may not be uninteresting to our readers, and which will be readily understood by a reference to the accompanying cuts of the plan and arrangement of the wine-house.

A. Door, opening to the vineyard, by which the grapes are brought into the wine-house.

B. Back-door of wine-house.

C. Front-door of wine-house.

D. Opening through which the stones are thrown from the machine.

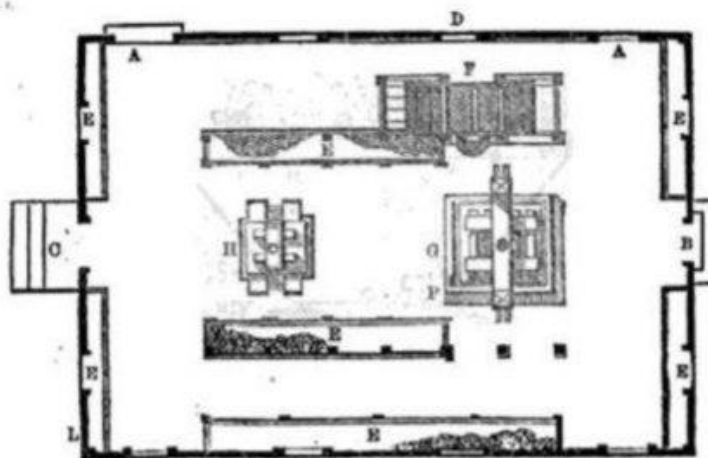
E. Tables for picking over and assorting the fruit previous to being stemmed.

F. Stemming and crushing apparatus.

G. Large press—capacity of 100 bushels.

H. Small press—capacity of 40 bushels.

L. Door opening into the basement.



Plan of a Wine-house.

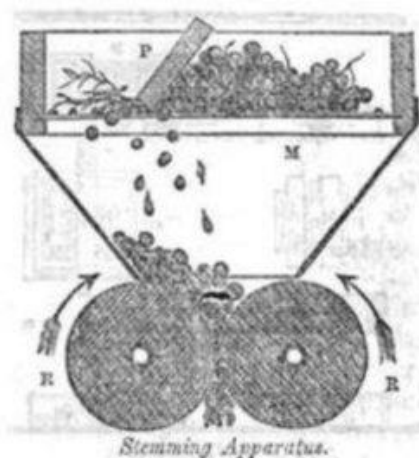
The following are the various operations of the manufacturing process, from the gathering of the grape to the bottling of the wine:

1. *Gathering.*—The grapes, when fully ripe, are gathered in baskets containing about a bushel, as well as in a sort of “pannier” of wood, made very light and strong, and which is supported by straps or thongs of willow, on the back of the picker, as represented in the frontispiece; they are brought from the vineyard in this manner and thrown upon the picking tables, where they are carefully assorted.

2. *Picking.*—This consists in removing by hand all green, shrivelled, or decayed grapes, which are thrown into tubs or barrels and pressed separately, to make a common wine or vinegar. The finest grapes are carried thence to the stemming apparatus, where they undergo another operation.

3. *Stemming.*—Beside the improvement in the quality of the wine which this process imparts, there is another material advantage derived from it, which consists in the diminution of the bulk or volume of any given quantity of grapes in bunches—the large press of the Messrs. Corneau being capable of containing upwards of 100 bushels after the stems are removed; from which about four hundred gallons of wine may be obtained. “Stemming” consists in separating the berries from the stem; it is done in F, (of the ground-plan,) by means of the apparatus, of which a wood-cut is appended.

The grapes are thrown on the wire sieve, M, which is open enough to allow the berries to pass, but retains the stems; a little plank, P, is held in an inclined position, to which a backward and forward movement is given by the operator, as shown in the next cut, so as to force the berries through the sieve, and to remove out of the way all the stems as they are stript: with the aid of this apparatus, two men can, in the course of 8 hours, if regularly supplied with grapes, stem from 70 to 80 bushels. Improvements might be made, by which the manual labor would be diminished; but this simple and cheap apparatus, which Mr. Corneau has introduced, is generally used by the wine-manufacturers of France.



4. *Mashing.*—After passing through the stemming process, the grapes fall into a wooden mill, consisting of two rollers ridged obliquely, to one of which is attached a set of screws, by which the distance from each other may be graduated to the proper degree; it being desirable that every grape should be crushed, but that the seed should not be broken.

The rollers are turned by hand: the above wood-cut exhibits, in R R, a section of these rollers, and that which follows shows two men, one stemming, the other mashing the grapes.



From the rollers, the grape (being entirely separated from the stem and thoroughly mashed) passes into the press, where the final operation of separating the juice is performed. The wine passes from the bed of the press, by means of a conductor, into the basement, from whence it is conveyed into casks containing 260 gallons each; these, though by no means of so large a size as those used by some of our wine-manufacturers, are of a very

convenient capacity for ordinary crops. The first fermentation takes place immediately, and, at the end of 6 or 8 weeks, the wine becomes clear—or, what is technically termed “fine;” a second fermentation takes place in the spring, about the period of the blooming of the grape. The wine should not be bottled until it is at least one year old, though it is frequently bottled for immediate use, just previous to the second fermentation: this may be done with safety if the bottles can be kept in a very cool place. There are many who think the Catawba wine is better at this period than ever afterwards.

Mr. R. Buchanan, of Clifton, whose beautiful vineyard has been so universally admired by all visitors, and whose wine is so excellent, has also introduced an apparatus for separating the stems from the mashed grapes, which is remarkable for its simplicity, being a large sieve, with meshes of about three-fourths of an inch aperture. The grapes are passed through this after being mashed, and thus separated from the stems.

Mr. Yeatman also uses the sieve to separate the stems from the mashed grapes, before he puts the pulp in the press.