

GRAFTING THE GRAPE VINE.



GRAFTING grape vines is quite essential in vineyards where old or worthless varieties have by accident been raised. In a very short time the worthless vines can be made to produce an abundance of superior grapes. Grafting yields many other results that must be considered by every owner of vines. In testing new varieties of grapes the easiest and quickest way to do it is to graft them on the old vines. The new scions can be made to fruit the first year, and by the second year a good crop can be obtained. Many varieties that cannot be produced very readily from cuttings, will grow rapidly and successfully when grafted on to old vines. When properly performed the grafter's art can be made to increase the fruitfulness of the vines. Finally, and not the least important of all the benefits derived from grafting, this has been found to be the only successful way of fighting the phylloxera in California.

The method of grafting grape vines should be about the same in all localities, but the time of year best suited for the work naturally differs. Usually the spring of the year, from the first of April to the first of May, is the most suitable period for this work. The sap of the vines should be in rapid motion at the grafting so that the union will be made at once. The best wood of last season's growth should be selected for the scions. The cuttings should be selected early in the season, and then be buried in bundles until needed for grafting. Frost will injure them, and they should be perfectly free from all exposure to it. The scions should be about the size of a lead pencil, short-jointed, firm and of well-ripened wood.

The grafting is usually done at or near the surface where the vigor of the old vines is the greatest. Cut the stock off square at about one inch and a half above the joint, or half way between two joints. If the stock is a large one make a slight split in it with the knife or chisel, press a wedge down to pry it open, and then insert a scion on each side. The scions must also be cut to a sloping point just below an eye. Push the scions down firmly, but be sure to make the bark of the scion and stock meet. When the wedge is withdrawn the bark of the two should meet firmly together, and if they do not the grafting is not a success.

If the grafting is properly done, and the union made perfect, no bandaging is necessary. This is only an excuse to cover up poor workmanship. Some light earth should be pressed firmly into the split, and all around where there is any opening. This dry earth will prevent the graft from drying out. If there is any doubt about the work, a bandage of cloth and dirt after the old style can

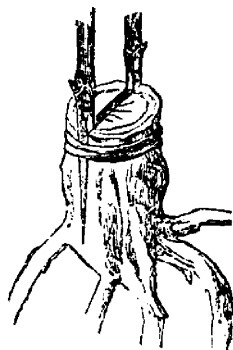


FIG. 746.
GRAFTED VINE.