

The practical vine-grower, then, must find it most interesting to investigate the consequences of the excessive inolemeny of the spring and summer. Many a valuable lesson will he deduce from his observations. He will see at once, that the vines which have escaped from the rigours of the year are, without doubt, hardy and worthy of confidence; while others, which have only partially suffered, may be tried again with care and on a small scale.

To have ocular demonstration of these things, I paid a visit to the College of Montreal, on the 13th of last September, where I closely inspected the splendid vineyard established there; and, subsequently, I spent a short time in the smaller plantation of the Oblat Fathers, Visitation street, Montreal.

The vineyard of the College, as regards its exposure, occupies a site almost unique. It is in the form of a horse-shoe, sloping to the south, and sheltered from all the winds which blow from the other points of the compass. Trees, scattered here and there on the slope, retain the snow. In summer, the plantation, from its situation, receives the full benefit of the sun's rays, and the air, rarely agitated by the wind, does not suffer from the sudden changes of temperature so characteristic of our fickle climate.

Terraces, about 6 feet wide, have been made on the slope, one under the other, and the vines are set at from 3 to 4 feet, from plant to plant, in a sort of niche, so that the ground, when the vines are covered in the autumn, is level, and does not present those hillocks so liable to be left bare of snow in the thaws of winter when the ordinary mode of cultivation is pursued: *v. cut.*

The vines are trained to a wooden trellis 6 feet high, with three horizontal bars.

The distance left between the plants will probably be considered too little. But it would be as well to say, at once, that the vines are principally of Italian origin, and much less luxuriant in growth than those of our continent. Still, in my opinion, the distance, even for foreign vines, is not sufficient, and better results would ensue if it were increased.

The space between the rows varies from 4 feet to 10 feet, according to the nationality of the plants. A row of currants has been placed, where there is room enough, between the rows of grapes. These are cultivated bush-fashion, in order to admit of the cultivation of the soil, and to compensate for the land lost by the wide extent of the alleys.

Of well established vines, from 2 years old to 6 years old, there are about 7,000, here; not above 4 of which were destroyed by the cold of last winter. Seventy-five varieties of grapes have been imported from the Italian Alps, 44 of which have been discarded as unsuited to our climate. After a severe trial, 31 varieties are proved to be able to stand the Canadian winter: a most important acquisition to American vine-growers.

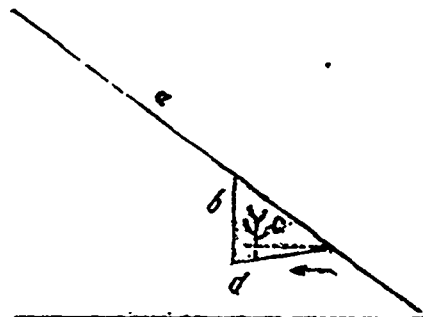
The most numerous of the imported black grapes is the *Teinturier* (*Dy*), a very vigorous grower for an Italian vine. Its leaves show a deep violet colour from the month of August. The skin is very thin, the stones excessively small, and the interior is all juice, which, if you squeeze the fruit, spurts out in your face, and nothing but a stone or two and the thinnest of skins remains. Excellent in quality and abundant in quantity, this grape furnishes the most wine of all those grown here; but it is not a good dessert fruit (1).

There is a black *Chasselas*, too, the earliest of all the grapes in the College vineyard. Many white *Chasselas* are grown, and a good dessert grape, called the *Judea* (*Pales-*

*line*?), the bunches of which are often more than a foot long. Its fruit is oblong, and loosely set.

From these details, it will be clear that the principal object of the College authorities is the acclimation of foreign vines. Still, they cultivate several American sorts, among which we saw the *Champion*, Salem, Brighton, and especially the Delaware. According to the Manager's idea, the *Champion* is absolutely worthless, being neither hardy nor fit for wine, and as a dessert grape he considers it utterly valueless. The Salem and the Brighton are good, but, still, he gives the preference, both for wine and for the table, to the Italian sorts. The best American grape, he thinks, is the Delaware: it is the only one of that nationality planted in any quantity in the vineyard (some hundreds); and much good is augured from a nameless black grape, the clusters of which are thick-set, the berries medium, and the juice abundant, from the garden of a Mr. Tait, in the neighbourhood of Montreal.

In addition to the 7,000 vines mentioned above, the College has started 50,000 cuttings. It is to be hoped that, when the question of acclimation is settled, the College will enable the public to benefit by the purchase of plants of the best varieties.



Experiments were made last season by sowing the seeds of the grapes grown in this vineyard, and the result is that there are now 30 plants of this origin. This is not the least interesting of the trials made here. Some of these plants must be hybrids of the European and American sorts, and, doubtless, among them will be found one or more new varieties, uniting the hardiness of our vines with the fine quality of the European vines.

It must be allowed, that if the grapes have not suffered much by the winter, the inolemeny of the spring has had the effect of greatly reducing the quantity of fruit they have borne. The dropping off of the grapes has been generally felt throughout the vineyard. I also observed that more than half the cuttings under two years old have perished. Still, on the whole, the vineyard has not much suffered.

During last season, the College made 250 gallons of red and white wine, both of which I tasted. The red wine made chiefly from the "*Teinturier*" grape, is not a high class wine, still it is good, with a little acidity, and rather resembles some qualities of clarets, St. Est  phe, for instance. It is pretty strong in alcohol. The white wine might be mistaken for Grave. These wines are only yearlings, and they may be expected to improve by keeping.

The peculiar position of the vineyard of the College of Montreal, it may be said with justice, eliminates it from all comparison with others situated in the same latitude; nevertheless, we ought to follow with great interest the experiments that are being made there. The west of the Province of Quebec, and the Province of Ontario will reap great benefit from the trials instituted by the College, and will acquire specimens of foreign varieties of grapes which will render possible the manufacture of good Canadian wines. But let it be well understood that I am speaking only of the

(1) As I have often stated in the Journal, it is useless to expect dessert fruit, whether grapes, apples, or pears, to make first-rate wine, cider, or perry. A. R. J. F.