

HORTICULTURE

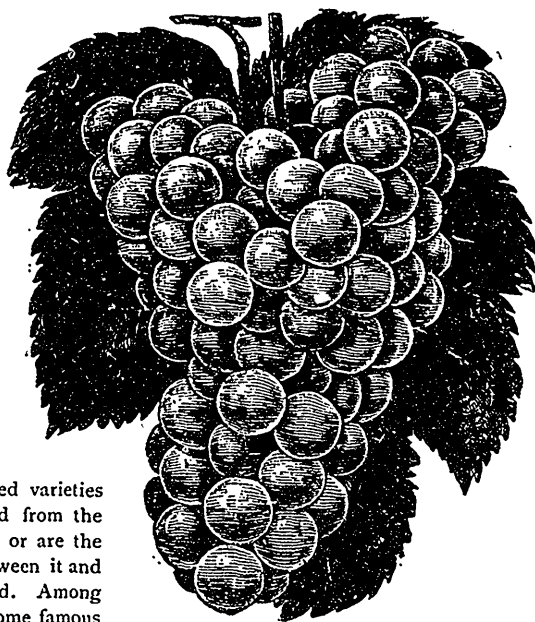
The Cultivation of the Grape.

The fruit of the vine has been known and enjoyed by the human race from time immemorial. The most ancient records contain references to it. It constituted one of the most important branches of production in Palestine, where, as the ancient parable tells, it vied for supremacy with the cedar, the olive, and the fig. It was the grapes of Eshcol that indicated to the encroaching Hebrews the wealth of the Promised Land. The Phœnicians introduced the vine into Greece, Italy, and Southern Gaul. Gradually it extended over the entire area of France, in which country it has long since been cultivated in its highest degree of perfection. In America the grapes of the old world do not flourish east of the Rocky Mountains. Our cultivated varieties are either developed from the native wild grape, or are the result of crosses between it and some European kind. Among those who have become famous in producing in this way new varieties suitable for growth in America the best known is Mr. Rogers, of Salem, Massachusetts.

A soil in good cultivation and of good fertility, sloping towards the south and east, is the best home for grapes. Every country schoolboy knows that one must look for wild grapes along the margin of the creeks, and the inference can easily be drawn that grapes require a good deal of moisture. But close observation will show that the roots are not in stagnant water. Drainage is as

essential to grapes as to any other fruit crop. The grapevine is a gross feeder. Blood and bones, old shoes, kitchen water, barnyard manure, ashes, may be freely applied to the vineyard. The roots should have ample room, for the great growth of foliage and fruit and new wood that the vine puts forth annually, requires an extensive root system. Eight feet apart in rows ten feet distant is the general rule followed in planting, though some varieties, of more dainty habits of growth than

others, such as the Delaware, may grow closer. After taking pains to have the spots where the vines are to be set marked with mathematical accuracy, care should be taken to spread the roots as much as possible in each hole. Well pulverized surface soil should be put next the roots, and the ground about should be made thoroughly firm. Cut the vine back to three buds when planting, and when growth begins preserve only the strongest shoots, pinching



Grapes.

the others off early.

Two-year-old vines are most usually planted, but if one is not so anxious about having fruit early a good one-year-old plant is more desirable to set. There is not so much loss of root, and the vines start into more vigorous growth.

Constant and thorough tillage is absolutely necessary in a vineyard, and if this is given there is no more certain crop in the orchard or garden. A hoed crop may be grown in the vineyard the