

Cider Making.

The *Western Rural* says many would make cider each year if they understood the best plan for saving it. It gives the following:—

After grinding and pressing, the cider should be placed in clean, sweet casks. After the first fermentation is over, it should be filtered. To do this, saw off a barrel, say an empty whiskey barrel, just above the second tier of hoops from the top. In the bottom, place a false bottom three inches above the true bottom, with plenty of small holes to allow the liquid to pass freely. Cover this with several folds of coarse, porous cloth. Over this place six or eight inches of thoroughly washed bon-black of the size of hazel nuts; over this put about four inches of clean-washed, coarse sand; and above all another cloth, closely pressed about the sides. Below the bottom have a faucet, or other suitable way for drawing off the liquid, and the filter is ready for work. Keep a good supply of cider on top, allowing it to pass away often enough, so that the top cloth may be rinsed when it gets foul. Before the filter is set to work, clean water must be passed through it for at least fifteen minutes, or until it comes through perfectly clear. Then as fast as the cider filters let it be passed into clean barrels, adding from one-half to three-quarters of a pound of pure white sugar to each gallon of cider. It will now undergo a second and final fermentation, and if possible this should be accomplished—and may be if the barrels are strong—without contact with air.

If the gas prove very strong, the bung may be bored and a tube inserted, the other end of which may be pressed into a pail of water standing near. As soon as possible it should be bunged tight, and by the succeeding spring the cider will be found to be sound and fine. It will improve with age, at least for two or three years, if kept where the temperature is equable, summer and winter. If bottled, corked and tied, and the necks of the bottles be placed in sand, with the bottom of the bottles upwards, it may be kept for years, and is as good a tonic remedy for dyspepsia as we know.

If the cider is liked without much fermentation, or, as it is called, sweet, then, when the fermentation is active, dissolve a half pound of sugar to each gallon to be so treated, and add to the casks, roll them about to thoroughly mix, and when the fermentation has proceeded to that point where it suits the taste, mix, in one or two quarts of cider, sulphate—not sulphate—of lime, in proportion of an eighth to a quarter of an ounce to each gallon of cider; pour into the barrel, thoroughly rolling to mix all intimately. Bung tight, and after a few days it may either be bottled or used directly from the casks.

Hard cider is that which, from age, has converted the saccharine into alcohol. It at the same time acquires a distinct acid taste, and this increases with age. It is the true vinous fermentation, and is distinct from that which makes vinegar. The more strictly cider is kept from air, the more perfect will be the process. It cannot, however, be accomplished properly unless there be body enough of alcohol, from five to ten per cent of the mass. If alcohol is not present, the cider will be flat or turn quickly to vinegar. Hence the necessity of adding sugar in proportion to the weakness of the juice.

Ornamental Apple Trees.

During our recent visit to the grounds of Mr. N. B. White, of Norwood, our attention was called to a couple of apple trees of the Red Astracan variety standing in his lawn, which, for picturesqueness of effect, exceeded anything of the kind we ever saw in the shape of apple trees. While the trees were in their first year's growth from the graft or bud, the central shoot was pinched back to about a foot. This caused the buds from each leaf to push out side shoots which were allowed to grow almost close down to the root. These shoots have made strong limbs, standing out from the centre of the tree at angles varying from forty to forty-five degrees, and at the time of our visit they were well loaded with handsome fruit. Mr. White is so well pleased with this style of growing the apple that he would, if setting a new orchard, have all the trees treated as above described. They stand very firmly in the soil, are much less exposed to damage from winds or ice, are easily kept in proper form, and the fruit is mostly within reach by hand-picking from the ground or from a short step ladder.—*New England Farmer*.

SIXTY THOUSAND DOLLARS reward is offered by the French Minister of Agriculture "for the discovery of an efficacious and economical means of destroying the phylloxera or of preventing its ravages." This is the insect that is devastating the French vineyards.

THE FRUIT GARDEN.

Seasonable Notes:

STRAWBERRIES.—In the event of an exceptionally mild, open season, plants from rooted runners set out now may be found to have done very well, but the chances weigh so heavily in the opposite direction, that it is wiser to avoid all risk by postponing the work until spring. Give the old beds a mulching of straw, leaves or whatever light material of the sort happens to come handiest.

CURRENTS AND GOOSEBERRIES.—Prune freely as soon as the leaves have fallen, removing as much of the old wood as is necessary to the formation of a well-formed, open bush. Cuttings may be planted at distances of six or eight inches, in rows twenty to twenty-four inches apart. They may be sheltered from high winds until frozen in or rooted, but if firmly planted, this is unnecessary.

RASPBERRIES.—Assuming that the fruiting canes have been cut out as directed last month, all that is now required is to keep the new wood properly fastened to the trellises. The same remark will apply to blackberries. Cuttings of either should, when planted, be cut back to within about four inches of the ground and may be set, the former about five feet and the latter seven or eight feet apart in the plot or row.

GRAPES, whether for wine or dessert, should not be gathered until thoroughly ripe, otherwise they lose much of their flavor.

Recipe for Making Wine.

The following is furnished the *American Farmer* by a lady. It is the recipe of a gentleman of Baltimore county, whose wine has attained no little celebrity in this vicinity:

Gather the grapes on a dry day, when free from rain or dew.

Pick the berries from the stems, rejecting all that are green or decayed.

Mash them and place them in a vat, tank or other vessel to ferment, closing the top of the vat as tightly as possible with a blanket or wet cloth to exclude the air.

Let them remain in the vat from twenty-four hours to three or four days. If light wine is desired, for most grapes twenty-four hours is long enough. If deeply colored and astringent wine is desired, three or four days will not be too long.

Press the must and put the juice into kegs or barrels, first adding sugar, or sugar and water, as may be desired. It is very difficult to give directions for this, so much depends upon the character and ripeness of the grape and the dryness of the season. Sometimes I add no water, sometimes only one pound of sugar to the gallon, and sometimes two pounds. This year I shall make (of Concordis) some with pure juice with one pound of sugar, and some by adding, as recommended by Husmann, one gallon of water, in which have been dissolved two pounds of white sugar to each two gallons of juice. The Clintons I will probably make by adding one pound of sugar to each gallon of pure juice.

The kegs or barrels in which the wine is put should have bungs fitted with small tin tubes like an ox yoke, one end passing through the bung and the other descending into a vessel of water. This will permit the carbonic acid still to escape from the wine, and prevent the atmospheric air from getting into it. As soon as all the carbonic acid has escaped, as will be known by the air bubbles ceasing to rise in the water, fill the kegs as full as they will hold, and bung up tight.

About the last of December or early in January the wine should be transferred into clean barrels.

It must be remembered that my aim is to put into the grape juice only so much sugar as will be converted into alcohol, and to have no surplus in solution. Others who are fond of sweet wines should therefore add more sugar.

Let the grapes hang until perfectly ripe before picking. The riper the grape, the richer and sweeter the wine.

In filling up the casks use wine from another which has been fermented, &c., in the same manner and kept for the purpose.

I use 5 and 10 gallon kegs on account of the facility of handling.

Low Espalier Fruit Trees.

I have lately seen in a garden in the Isle of Wight some apple and pear trees trained as espaliers, in height scarcely exceeding 3 feet, most if not all of them having four tiers of branches. The low height at which they were trained did not appear to operate unfavorably upon their produce. A Marie Louise and a Bon Chrétien (Williams's) each carried quite as much fruit as any tree ought to be allowed to mature in one season, nor did any of the apple trees trained in the same manner equal either of these two pear trees in production. On the Marie Louise I noticed several pears on the lowest tier actually touching the ground. From their appearance I infer that they were planted about twenty-five or thirty years ago, and they exhibited evident traces of neglect or bad management in past years. The top branches, for the most part, instead of being the least, are the largest in circumference, and in some instances are covered with a hedge of spurs upwards of a foot in length, and it is only of late years that they have been taken in hand by an experienced gardener. I measured the trees carefully and cannot be mistaken as to their height. We often see in small kitchen gardens 5 and even 4 feet espaliers, where a greater height would be detrimental to the vegetable crops, by unnecessarily intercepting the sun's rays, and intercepting also the free circulation of air. My own experience leads me to think, and my view is supported by what I saw in the Isle of Wight, that height is not essential to the successful training even of the pear, if the following particulars are carefully attended to. During the first few years each lower branch should be kept well in advance of the one next above it, and when the tree has reached the limit of the distance allowed, it should be made to take a form that would admit of each lower branch remaining longer than the branch next above it, an example of which may be seen in the form called the *Palmette*. Another important matter to be attended to, especially in the case of tree growths on the pear stock, is the regulation of the parts whence the bearing shoots proceed. The distance from bud to bud along a last year's shoot varies from about 1 to 2 inches. In the following year most of these buds will be developed into either fruit-bearing or ordinary leaf shoots. If all of the latter were allowed to remain the tree would soon be overcrowded, therefore the thinning of these shoots from time to time becomes necessary. In the course of years, as the tree advances, bare spaces of 6 inches in length will not be too much to leave clear of shoots, and the sooner the branches are cleared to that distance the better. Then the branches that form the highest tier will, in about the third year of their growth, begin to give trouble unless they are repeatedly thinned and carefully attended to during the summer. For want of due attention in this direction many an espalier has been hopelessly deformed with what is called a *tête de saule*, interesting specimens of which may still be met with in old kitchen gardens. I say all means, therefore, begin with your top tier in good time, and if, as is often the case with twiggy sorts, like the Marie Louise, there is likely to be an overcrowding of shoots, cut several of them clean out with a penknife when they are about half grown. With regard to summer pruning with a view to fruit bearing follow whatever system appears to you to be best adapted to each particular sort, but at the winter pruning take care that your main branches are regulated in such a way as to leave each lower branch 8 or 10 inches longer than the branch immediately above it. Cut away, if necessary, from any one of them the whole of last year's growth, and even more than that if the form of your tree requires it. If, however, any one branch is deprived by an accident of a portion of its length, it may be made to overtake the others by allowing the shoot that springs from the ruptured part to take a gentle curve upwards, training it across the other branches till it reaches the top; in this position it may continue its growth vertically till it regains its proper length, when it may be straightened and laid in its proper position. For apple and pear trees in kitchen gardens, the espalier form is so very convenient that it is encouraging to find that even the pear can be grown with advantage at a height from the ground well within the reach of the operator's hand. In such a form, and at such a limited height, some sorts may not thrive as well as others; but the bare fact that two trees, neither of them so much as 4 feet high, should produce more than average crops, goes far to prove that height, however beneficial, is not essential to the successful cultivation of the pear.—*S. B. in The Garden*.