

A HISTORY OF CHAMPAGNE

WITH NOTES ON THE

OTHER SPARKLING WINES FROM FRANCE

BY HENRY VIZETELLY



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A HISTORY

OF

CHAMPAGNE

WITH NOTES ON

THE OTHER SPARKLING WINES

OF FRANCE.

BY HENRY VIZETELLY,

CHEVALIER OF THE ORDER OF FRANZ-JOSEF, AUTHOR OF ‘THE WINES OF THE WORLD CHARACTERISED AND CLASSED,’ ‘FACTS ABOUT PORT AND MADEIRA,’ ‘FACTS ABOUT CHAMPAGNE AND OTHER SPARKLING WINES,’ ‘FACTS ABOUT SHERRY,’ ETC.



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Condensed Table of Contents

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PREFACE. iv

PART I.

I. Early Renown of the Champagne Wines 1

II. The Wines of the Champagne from the Fourteenth to the Seventeenth Century. 12

III. Invention and Development of Sparkling Champagne. 34

IV. The Battle of the Wines. 47
V. Progress and Popularity of Sparkling Champagne. 57
VI. Champagne in England. 83

PART II.

I. The Champagne Vinelands—The Vineyards of the River. 117
II. The Champagne Vinelands—The Vineyards of the Mountain. 130
III. The Vines of the Champagne and the System of Cultivation. 140
IV. The Vintage in the Champagne. 148
V. The Preparation of Champagne. 154
VI. Reims and its Champagne Establishments. 168
VII. Reims and its Champagne Establishments (*continued*). 179
VIII. Reims and its Champagne Establishments (*continued*). 188
IX. Epernay. 195
X. The Champagne Establishments of Epernay and Pierry. 205

XI. Some Champagne Establishments at Ay and Mareuil. 217

XII. Champagne Establishments at Avize and Rilly. 229

XIII. Sport in the Champagne. 235

PART III.

I. Sparkling Saumur and Sparkling Sauternes. 241

II. The Sparkling Wines of Burgundy, the Jura, and the South of France. 251

III. Facts and Notes Respecting Sparkling Wines. 258

APPENDIX. 265

Advertisements. 268

PREFACE.

The present is the first instance in which the history

of any wine has been traced with the same degree of minuteness as the history of the still and sparkling wines of the Champagne has been traced in the following pages. And not only have the author's investigations extended over a very wide range, as will be seen by the references contained in the footnotes to this volume, but during the past ten years he has paid frequent visits to the Champagne—to its vineyards and vendangeoirs, and to the establishments of the chief manufacturers of sparkling wine, the preparation of which he has witnessed in all its phases. Visits have, moreover, been made to various other localities where sparkling wines are produced, and more or less interesting information gathered regarding the latter. In the pursuit of his researches, the author's position as wine juror at the Vienna and Paris Exhibitions opened up to him many sources of information inaccessible to others less favourably circumstanced, and these his general knowledge of wine, acquired during many years' careful study, enabled him to turn to advantageous account.

The numerous illustrations scattered throughout the present volume have been derived from every available source that suggested itself. Ancient MSS., early-printed books, pictures and pieces of sculpture, engravings and caricatures, all of greater or less rarity, have been laid under contribution; and in addition, nearly two hundred original sketches have been made under the author's immediate superintendence, with the object of illustrating the principal localities and their more picturesque features, and depicting all matters of interest connected with the growth and manipulation of the various sparkling wines which are here described.

In the preparation of this work, and more particularly the historical portions of it, the author has been largely assisted by his nephew, Mr. Montague Vizetelly, to whom he tenders his warmest acknowledgments for the valuable services rendered by him.

It should be stated that portions of the volume, relating to the vintaging and manufacture of sparkling wines generally, have been previously published under the title of *Facts about Champagne and other Sparkling Wines*, but they have been subjected to considerable extension and revision before being permitted to reappear in their present form.

St. Leonards-on-Sea, February 1882.

CONTENTS.

PART I.

I.
EARLY RENOWN OF THE CHAMPAGNE WINES. PAGE

The vine in Gaul—Domitian's edict to uproot it—Plantation of vineyards under Probus—Early vineyards of the Champagne—Ravages by the Northern tribes repulsed for a time by the Consul Jovinus—St. Remi and the baptism of Clovis—St. Remi's vineyards—Simultaneous progress of Christianity and the cultivation of the vine—The vine a favourite subject of ornament in the churches of the Champagne—The culture of the vine interrupted, only to be renewed with increased ardour—Early distinction between 'Vins de la Rivière' and 'Vins de la Montagne'—A prelate's counsel respecting the proper wine to drink—The Champagne desolated by war—Pope Urban II., a former Canon of Reims Cathedral—His partiality for the wine of Ay—Bequests of vineyards to religious establishments—Critical ecclesiastical topers—The wine of the Champagne causes poets to sing and rejoice—'La Bataille des Vins'—Wines of Auviller and Espernai le Bacheler 1

II.
THE WINES OF THE CHAMPAGNE FROM THE FOURTEENTH TO THE SEVENTEETH CENTURY.

Coronations at Reims and their attendant banquets—Wine flows profusely at these entertainments—The wine-trade of Reims —Presents of wine from the Reims municipality—Cultivation of the vineyards abandoned after the battle of Poitiers—Octroi levied on wine at Reims—Coronation of Charles V.—Extension of the Champagne vineyards—Abundance of wine—Visit to Reims of the royal sot Wenceslaus of Bohemia—The Etape aux Vins at Reims—Increased consumption of beer during the English occupation of the city—The Maid of Orleans at Reims—The vineyards and wine-trade alike suffer—Louis XI. is crowned at Reims—Fresh taxes upon wine followed by the Mique-Maque revolt—The Rémois the victims of pillaging foes and extortionate defenders—The Champagne vineyards attacked by noxious insects—Coronation of Louis XII. —François Premier, the Emperor Charles V., Bluff King Hal, and Leo the Magnificent all partial to the wine of Ay—Mary Queen of Scots at Reims—State kept by the opulent and libertine Cardinal of Lorraine —Brusquet, the Court Fool—Decrease in the production of wine around Reims—Gifts of wine to newly-crowned monarchs —New restrictions on vine cultivation—The wine of the Champagne crowned at the same time as Louis XIII.—Regulation price for wine established at Reims—Imposts levied on the vineyards by the Frondeurs—The country ravaged around Reims—Sufferings of the peasantry— 12

Presents of wine to Marshal Turenne and Charles II. of England—Perfection of the Champagne wines during the reign of Louis XIV.—St. Evremond's high opinion of them—Other contemporary testimony in their favour—The Archbishop of Reims's niggardly gift to James II. of England—A poet killed by Champagne—Offerings by the Rémois to Louis XIV. on his visit to their city

III.
INVENTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SPARKLING CHAMPAGNE.

The ancients acquainted with sparkling wines—Tendency of Champagne wines to effervesce noted at an early period—Obscurity enveloping the discovery of what we now know as sparkling Champagne—The Royal Abbey of Hautvillers—Legend of its foundation by St. Nivard and St. Berchier—Its territorial possessions and vineyards—The monks the great viticulturists of the Middle Ages—Dom Perignon—He marries wines differing in character—His discovery of sparkling white wine—He is the first to use corks to bottles—His secret for clearing the wine revealed only to his successors Frère Philippe and Dom Grossart—Result of Dom Perignon's discoveries—The wine of Hautvillers sold at 1000 livres the queue—Dom Perignon's memorial in the Abbey-Church—Wine flavoured with peaches—The effervescence ascribed to drugs, to the period of the moon, and to the action of the sap in the vine—The fame of sparkling wine rapidly spreads—The Vin de Perignon makes its appearance at the Court of the Grand Monarque—Is welcomed by the young courtiers—It figures at the suppers of Anet and Chantilly, and at the orgies of the Temple and the Palais Royal—The rapturous strophes of Chaulieu and Rousseau—Frederick William I. and the Berlin Academicians—Augustus the Strong and the page who pilfered his Champagne—Horror of the old-fashioned *gourmets* at the innovation—Bertin du Rocheret and the 34

Marshal d’Artagnan—System of wine-making in the Champagne early in the eighteenth century—Bottling of the wine in flasks—Icing Champagne with the corks loosened

IV.
THE BATTLE OF THE WINES.

Temporary check to the popularity of sparkling Champagne—Doctors disagree—The champions of Champagne and Burgundy—Péna and his patient—A young Burgundian student attacks the wine of Reims—The Faculty of Reims in arms—A local Old Parr cited as an example in favour of the wines of the Champagne—Salins of Beaune and Le Pescheur of Reims engage warmly in the dispute—A pelting with pamphlets—Burgundy sounds a war-note—The Sapphics of Benigné Grenan—An asp beneath the flowers—The gauntlet picked up—Carols from a coffin—Champagne extolled as superior to all other wines—It inspires the heart and stirs the brain—The apotheosis of Champagne foam—Burgundy, an invalid, seeks a prescription—Impartially appreciative drinkers of both wines—Bold Burgundian and stout Rémois, each a jolly tippling fellow—Canon Maucroix's parallel between Burgundy and Demosthenes and Champagne and Cicero—Champagne a panacea for gout and stone—Final decision in favour of Champagne by the medical faculty of Paris—Pluche's opinion on the controversy—Champagne a lively wit and Burgundy a solid understanding—Champagne commands double the price of the best Burgundy—Zealots reconciled at table 47

V.
Progress and Popularity of Sparkling Champagne.

Sparkling Champagne intoxicates the Regent d'Orléans and the *roués* of the Palais Royal—It is drunk by Peter the Great at Reims—A horse trained on Champagne and biscuits—Decree of Louis XV. regarding the transport of Champagne —Wine for the *petits cabinets du Roi*—The *petits soupers* and Champagne orgies of the royal household—A bibulous royal mistress—The Well-Beloved at Reims—Frederick the Great, George II., Stanislas Leczinski, and Marshal Saxe all drink Champagne—Voltaire sings the praises of the effervescing wine of Ay—The Commander Descartes and Lebatteux extol the charms of sparkling Champagne—Bertin du Rocheret and his balsamic molecules—The Bacchanalian poet Panard chants the inspiring effects of the vintages of the Marne—Marmontel is jointly inspired by Mademoiselle de Navarre and the wine of Avenay—The Abbé de l'Attaignant and his fair hostesses—Breakages of bottles in the manufacturers' cellars—Attempts to obviate them—The early sparkling wines merely *crémant*—*Saute bouchon* and *demi-mousseux*—Prices of Champagne in the eighteenth century—Preference given to light acid wines for sparkling Champagne—Lingering relics of prejudice against *vin mousseux*—The secret addition of sugar—Originally the wine not cleared in bottle—Its transfer to other bottles necessary—Adoption of the present method of ridding the wine of its deposit—The vine-cultivators the last to profit by 57

the popularity of sparkling Champagne—Marie Antoinette welcomed to Reims—Reception and coronation of Louis XVI. at Reims—'The crown, it hurts me!'—Oppressive dues and tithes of the *ancien régime*—The Fermiers Généraux and their hôtel at Reims—Champagne under the Revolution—Napoleon at Epernay—Champagne included in the equipment of his satraps—The Allies in the Champagne—Drunkenness and pillaging—Appreciation of Champagne by the invading troops—The beneficial results which followed—Universal popularity of Champagne—The wine a favourite with kings and potentates—Its traces to be met with everywhere

VI.
CHAMPAGNE IN ENGLAND.

The strong and foaming wine of the Champagne forbidden his troops by Henry V.—The English carrying off wine when evacuating Reims on the approach of Jeanne Darc—A legend of the siege of Epernay—Henry VIII. and his vineyard at Ay—Louis XIV.'s present of Champagne to Charles II.—The courtiers of the Merry Monarch retain the taste for French wine acquired in exile—St. Evremond makes the Champagne flute the glass of fashion—Still Champagne quaffed by the beaux of the Mall and the rakes of the Mulberry Gardens—It inspires the poets and dramatists of the Restoration—Is drank by James II. and William III.—The advent of sparkling Champagne in England—Farquhar's *Love and a Bottle*—Mockmode the Country Squire and the witty liquor—Champagne the source of wit—Port-wine and war combine against it, but it helps Marlborough's downfall—Coffin's poetical invitation to the English on the return of peace—A fraternity of chemical operators who draw Champagne from an apple—The influence of Champagne in the Augustan age of English literature—Extolled by Gay and Prior—Shenstone's verses at an inn—Renders Vanbrugh's comedies lighter than his edifices—Swift preaches temperance in Champagne to Bolingbroke—Champagne the most fashionable wine of the eighteenth century—Bertin du Rocheret sends it in cask and bottle to the King's wine-merchant—Champagne at Vauxhall in Horace Walpole's day—Old Q. gets 83

Champagne from M. de Puissieux—Lady Mary's Champagne and chicken—Champagne plays its part at masquerades and bacchanalian suppers—Becomes the beverage of the ultra-fashionables above and below stairs—Figures in the comedies of Foote, Garrick, Coleman, and Holcroft—Champagne and real pain—Sir Edward Barry's learned remarks on Champagne—Pitt and Dundas drunk on Jenkinson's Champagne—Fox and the Champagne from Brooks's—Champagne smuggled from Jersey—Grown in England—Experiences of a traveller in the Champagne trade in England at the close of the century—Sillery the favourite wine—Nelson and the 'fair Emma' under the influence of Champagne—The Prince Regent's partiality for Champagne punch—Brummell's Champagne blacking—The Duke of Clarence overcome by Champagne—Curran and Canning on the wine—Henderson's praise of Sillery—Tom Moore's summer fête inspired by Pink Champagne—Scott's Muse dips her wing in Champagne—Byron's sparkling metaphors—A joint-stock poem in praise of Pink Champagne—The wheels of social life in England oiled by Champagne—It flows at public banquets and inaugurations—Plays its part in the City, on the Turf, and in the theatrical world—Imparts a charm to the dinners of Belgravia and the suppers of Bohemia—Champagne the ladies' wine *par excellence*—Its influence as a matrimonial agent—'O the wildfire wine of France!'

PART II.

I.
THE CHAMPAGNE VINELANDS—THE VINEYARDS OF THE RIVER.

The vinelands in the neighbourhood of Epernay—Viticultural area of the Champagne—A visit to the vineyards of ‘golden plants’—The Dizy vineyards—Antiquity of the Ay vineyards—St. Tresain and the wine-growers of Ay—The Ay vintage of 1871—The Mareuil vineyards and their produce—Avernay; its vineyards, wines, and ancient abbey—The vineyards of Mutigny and Cumières—Damery and ‘la belle hôtesse’ of Henri Quatre—Adrienne Lecouvreur and the Maréchal de Saxe’s matrimonial schemes—Pilgrimage to Hautvillers—Remains of the Royal Abbey of St. Peter—The ancient church—Its quaint decorations and monuments—The view from the heights of Hautvillers—The abbey vineyards and wine-cellars in the days of Dom Perignon—The vinelands of the Côte d’Epernay—Pierry and its vineyard cellars—The Moussy, Vinay, and Ablois St. Martin vineyards—The Côte d’Avize—Chavot, Monthelon, Grauves, and Cuis—The vineyards of Cramant and Avize, and their light delicate white wines—The Oger and Le Mesnil vineyards—Vertus and its picturesque ancient remains—Its vineyards planted with Burgundy grapes from Beaune—The red wine of Vertus a favourite beverage of William III. of England 117

II.
THE CHAMPAGNE VINELANDS—THE VINEYARDS OF THE MOUNTAIN.

The wine of Sillery—Origin of its renown —The Maréchale d'Estrées a successful Marchande de Vin—The Marquis de Sillery the greatest wine-farmer in the Champagne —Cossack appreciation of the Sillery produce—The route from Reims to Sillery —Henri Quatre and the Taissy wines— Failure of the Jacquesson system of vine cultivation—Château of Sillery—Wine-making at M. Fortel's—Sillery sec—The vintage at Verzenay and the vendangeoirs —Renown of the Verzenay wine—The Verzy vineyards—Edward III. at the Abbey of St. Basle—Excursion from Reims to Bouzy—The herring procession at St. Remi —Rilly, Chigny, and Ludes—The Knights Templars' 'pot' of wine—Mailly and the view over the Champagne plains—Wine-making at Mailly—The village in the wood —Château and park of Louvois, Louis le Grand's War Minister—The vineyards of Bouzy—Its church-steeple, and the lottery of the great gold ingot—Pressing grapes at the Werlé vendangeoir—Still red Bouzy— Ambonnay—A pattern peasant vine-proprietor—The Ambonnay vintage—The vineyards of Ville-Dommange and Sacy, Hermonville and St. Thierry—The still red wine of the latter 130

III.
THE VINES OF THE CHAMPAGNE AND THE SYSTEM OF CULTIVATION.

A combination of circumstances essential to the production of good Champagne—Varieties of vines cultivated in the Champagne vineyards—Different classes of vine-proprietors—Cost of cultivation—The soil of the vineyards—Period and system of planting the vines—The operation of ‘provenage’—The ‘taille’ or pruning, the ‘bêchage’ or digging—Fixing the vine-stakes—Great cost of the latter—Manuring and shortening back the vines—The summer hoeing around the plants—Removal of the stakes after the vintage—Precautions adopted against spring frosts—The Guyot system of roofing the vines with matting—Forms a shelter from rain, hail, and frost, and aids the ripening of the grapes—Various pests that prey upon the Champagne vines—Destruction caused by the Eumolpe, the Chabot, the Bêche, the Cochylus, and the Pyrale—Attempts made to check the ravages of the latter with the electric light 140

IV.
THE VINTAGE IN THE CHAMPAGNE.

Period of the Champagne vintage—Vintagers summoned by beat of drum—Early morning the best time for plucking the grapes—Excitement in the neighbouring villages at vintage-time—Vintagers at work—Mules employed to convey the gathered grapes down the steeper slopes—The fruit carefully examined before being taken to the wine-press—Arrival of the grapes at the vendangeoir—They are subjected to three squeezes, and then to the ‘rébêche’—The must is pumped into casks and left to ferment—Only a few of the vine-proprietors in the Champagne press their own grapes—The prices the grapes command—Air of jollity throughout the district during the vintage—Every one is interested in it, and profits by it—Vintagers’ fête on St. Vincent’s-day—Endless philandering between the sturdy sons of toil and the sunburnt daughters of labour 148

V.
THE PREPARATION OF CHAMPAGNE.

The treatment of Champagne after it comes from the wine-press—The racking and blending of the wine—The proportions of red and white vintages composing the ‘cuvée’—Deficiency and excess of effervescence—Strength and form of Champagne bottles—The ‘tirage’ or bottling of the wine—The process of gas-making commences—Details of the origin and development of the effervescent properties of Champagne—The inevitable breakage of bottles which ensues—This remedied by transferring the wine to a lower temperature—The wine stacked in piles—Formation of sediment—Bottles placed ‘sur pointe’ and daily shaken to detach the deposit—Effect of this occupation on those incessantly engaged in it—The present system originated by a workman of Madame Clicquot’s—‘Claws’ and ‘masks’—Champagne cellars—Their construction and aspect—Raw recruits for the ‘Regiment de Champagne’—Transforming the ‘vin brut’ into Champagne—Disgorging and liqueuring the wine—The composition of the liqueur—Variation in the quantity added to suit diverse national tastes—The corking, stringing, wiring, and amalgamating—The wine’s agitated existence comes to an end—The bottles have their toilettes made—Champagne sets out on its beneficial pilgrimage round the world 154

VI.
REIMS AND ITS CHAMPAGNE ESTABLISHMENTS.

The city of Reims—Its historical associations—The Cathedral—Its western front one of the most splendid conceptions of the thirteenth century—The sovereigns crowned within its walls—Present aspect of the ancient archiepiscopal city—The woollen manufactures and other industries of Reims—The city undermined with the cellars of the great Champagne firms—Reims hotels—Gothic house in the Rue du Bourg St. Denis—Renaissance house in the Rue de Vesle—Church of St. Jacques: its gateway and quaint weathercock—The Rue des Tapissiers and the Chapter Court—The long tapers used at religious processions—The Place des Marchés and its ancient houses—The Hôtel de Ville—Statue of Louis XIII.—The Rues de la Prison and du Temple—Messrs. Werlé & Co., successors to the Veuve Clicquot-Ponsardin—Their offices and cellars on the site of a former Commanderie of the Templars—Origin of the celebrity of Madame Clicquot's wines—M. Werlé and his son—Remains of the Commanderie—The forty-five cellars of the Clicquot-Werlé establishment—Our tour of inspection through them—Ingenious dosing machine—An explosion and its consequences—M. Werlé's gallery of paintings—Madame Clicquot's Renaissance house and its picturesque bas-reliefs—The Werlé vineyards and vendangeoirs 168

VII.
REIMS AND ITS CHAMPAGNE ESTABLISHMENTS
(continued).

The house of Louis Roederer founded by a plodding German named Schreider—The central and other establishments of the firm—Ancient house in the Rue des Elus—The gloomy-looking Rue des Deux Anges and prison-like aspect of its houses—Inside their courts the scene changes—Handsome Renaissance house and garden, a former abode of the canons of the Cathedral—The Place Royale—The Hôtel des Fermes and the statue of the ‘wise, virtuous, and magnanimous Louis XV.’—Birthplace of Colbert in the Rue de Cérès—Quaint Adam and Eve gateway in the Rue de l’Arbalète—Heidsieck & Co.’s central establishment in the Rue de Sedan—Their famous ‘Monopole’ brand—The firm founded in the last century—Their extensive cellars inside and outside Reims—The matured wines shipped by them—The Boulevard du Temple—M. Ernest Irroy’s cellars, vineyards, and vendangeoirs—Recognition by the Reims Agricultural Association of his plantations of vines—His wines and their popularity at the best London clubs—Various Champagne firms located in this quarter of Reims—The Rue du Tambour and the famous House of the Musicians—The Counts de la Marck assumed former occupants of the latter—The Brotherhood of Minstrels of Reims—Périnet & Fils’ establishment in the Rue St. Hilaire—Their cellars of three stories in solid masonry—Their soft, light, and delicate wines—A rare still Verzenay—The firm’s high-class Extra Sec 179

VIII.
REIMS AND ITS CHAMPAGNE ESTABLISHMENTS
(continued).

La Prison de Bonne Semaine—Mary Queen of Scots at Reims—Messrs. Pommery & Greno's offices—A fine collection of faïence—The Rue des Anglais a former refuge of English Catholics—Remains of the old University of Reims—Ancient tower and grotto—The handsome castellated Pommery establishment—The spacious cellier and huge carved cuvée tuns—The descent to the cellars—Their great extent—These lofty subterranean chambers originally quarries, and subsequently places of refuge of the early Christians and the Protestants—Madame Pommery's splendid cuvées of 1868 and 1874—Messrs. de St. Marceaux & Co.'s new establishment in the Avenue de Sillery —Its garden-court and circular shaft—Animated scene in the large packing hall—Lowering bottled wine to the cellars—Great depth and extent of these cellars—Messrs. de St. Marceaux & Co.'s various wines—The establishment of Veuve Morelle & Co., successors to Max Sutaine—The latter's 'Essai sur le Vin de Champagne'—The Sutaine family formerly of some note at Reims—Morelle & Co.'s cellars well adapted to the development of sparkling wines—The various brands of the house—The Porte Dieu-Lumière 188

IX.
EPERNAY.

The connection of Epernay with the production of wine of remote date—The town repeatedly burnt and plundered—Hugh the Great carries off all the wine of the neighbourhood—Vineyards belonging to the Abbey of St. Martin in the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries—Abbot Gilles orders the demolition of a wine-press which infringes the abbey's feudal rights—Bequests of vineyards in the fifteenth century—Francis I. bestows Epernay on Claude Duke of Guise in 1544—The Eschevins send a present of wine to their new seigneur—Wine levied for the king's camp at Rethel and the strongholds of the province by the Duc de Longueville—Epernay sacked and fired on the approach of Charles V.—The Charles-Fontaine vendangeoir at Avenay—Destruction of the immense pressoirs of the Abbey of St. Martin—The handsome Renaissance entrance to the church of Epernay—Plantation of the 'terre de siége' with vines in 1550—Money and wine levied on Epernay by Condé and the Duke of Guise—Henri Quatre lays siege to Epernay—Death of Maréchal Biron—Desperate battle amongst the vineyards—Triple talent of the 'bon Roy Henri' for drinking, fighting, and love-making—Verses addressed by him to his 'belle hôtesse' Anne du Puy—The Epernay Town Council make gifts of wine to various functionaries to secure their good-will—Presents of wine to Turenne at the coronation of Louis XIV.—Petition to

195

Louvois to withdraw the Epernay garrison that the vintage may be gathered in—The Duke and Duchess of Orleans at Epernay—Louis XIV. partakes of the local vintage at the maison abbatiale on his way to the army of the Rhine—Increased reputation of the wine of Epernay at the end of the seventeenth century—Numerous offerings of it to the Marquis de Puisieux, Governor of the town—The Old Pretender presented at Epernay with twenty-four bottles of the best—Sparkling wine sent to the Marquis de Puisieux at Sillery, and also to his nephew—Further gifts to the Prince de Turenne—The vintage destroyed by frost in 1740—The Epernay slopes at this epoch said to produce the most delicious wine in Europe—Vines planted where houses had formerly stood—The development of the trade in sparkling wine—A 'tirage' of fifty thousand bottles in 1787—Arthur Young drinks Champagne at Epernay at forty sous the bottle—It is surmised that Louis XVI., on his return from Varennes, is inspired by Champagne at Epernay—Napoleon and his family enjoy the hospitality of Jean Remi Moët—King Jerome of Westphalia's true prophecy with regard to the Russians and Champagne—Disgraceful conduct of the Prussians and Russians at Epernay in 1814—The Mayor offers them the free run of his cellars—Charles X., Louis Philippe, and Napoleon III. accept the 'vin d'honneur' at Epernay—The town occupied by German troops during the war of 1870–1

X.
The CHAMPAGNE ESTABLISHMENTS OF EPERNAY AND PIERRY.

Early records of the Moët family at Reims and Epernay—Jean Remi Moët, the founder of the commerce in Champagne wines—Extracts from old account-books of the Moëts—Jean Remi Moët receives the Emperor Napoleon, the Empress Josephine, and the King of Westphalia—The firm of Moët & Chandon constituted—Their establishment in the Rue du Commerce—The delivery and washing of new bottles—The numerous vineyards and vendangeoirs of the firm—Their cuvée made in vats of 12,000 gallons—The bottling of the wine—A subterranean city, with miles of streets, cross-roads, open spaces, tramways, and stations—The ancient entrance to these vaults—Tablet commemorative of the visit of Napoleon I.—The original vaults known as Siberia—Scene in the packing-hall—Messrs. Moët & Chandon's large and complete staff—The famous 'Star' brand of the firm—Perrier-Jouët's château, offices, and cellars—Classification of the wine of the house—The establishment of Messrs. Pol Roger & Co.—Their large stock of the fine 1874 vintage—The preparations for the tirage—Their vast fireproof cellier and its temperature—Their lofty and capacious cellars—Pierry becomes a wine-growing district consequent upon Dom Perignon's discovery—Esteem in which the growths of the Clos St. Pierre were held—Cazotte, author of *Le Diable Amoureux*, and guillotined for planning the escape of Louis XVI. from France, a resident at Pierry—His contest with the Abbot of Hautvillers with 205

reference to the abbey tithes of wine—The Château of Pierry—Its owner demands to have it searched to prove that he is not a forestaller of corn—The vineyards and Champagne establishment of Gé-Dufaut & Co.—The reserves of old wines in the cellars of this firm—Honours secured by them at Vienna and Paris

XI.
SOME CHAMPAGNE ESTABLISHMENTS AT AY AND MAREUIL.

The *bourgade* of Ay and its eighteenth-century château—Gambling propensities of a former owner, Balthazar Constance Dangé-Dorçay— Appreciation of the Ay vintage by Sigismund of Bohemia, Leo X., Charles V., Francis I., and Henry VIII.—Bertin du Rocheret celebrates this partiality in triolets—Estimation of the Ay wine in the reigns of Charles IX. and Henri III.—Is a favoured drink with the leaders of the League, and with Henri IV., Catherine de Medicis, and the courtiers of that epoch —The 'Vendangeoir d'Henri Quatre' at Ay —The King's pride in his title of Seigneur d'Ay and Gonesse—Dominicus Baudius punningly suggests that the 'Vin d'Ay' should be called 'Vinum Dei'—The merits of the wine sung by poets and extolled by wits—The Ay wine in its palmy days evidently not sparkling—Arthur Young's visit to Ay in 1787—The establishment of Deutz & Geldermann—Drawing off the cuvée there—Mode of excavating cellars in the Champagne—The firm's new cellars, vineyards, and vendangeoir—M. Duminy's cellars and wines—The house founded in 1814—The new model Duminy establishment—Picturesque old house at Ay—Messrs. Pfungst Frères & Co.'s cellars —Their finely-matured dry Champagnes— The old church of Ay and its numerous decorations of grapes and vine-leaves—The sculptured figure above the Renaissance doorway—The Montebello establishment at Mareuil—The château formerly the property of the Dukes of Orleans—A titled

217

Champagne firm—The brilliant career of Marshal Lannes—A promenade through the Montebello establishment—The press-house, the cuvée-vat, the packing-room, the offices, and the cellars—Portraits and relics at the château—The establishment of Bruch-Foucher & Co.—The handsome carved gigantic cuvée-tun—The cellars and their lofty shafts—The wines of the firm

XII.
CHAMPAGNE ESTABLISHMENTS AT AVIZE AND RILLY.

Avize the centre of the white grape district —Its situation and aspect—The establishment of Giesler & Co.—The tirage and the cuvée—Vin Brut in racks and on tables—The packing-hall, the extensive cellars, and the disgorging cellier—Bottle stores and bottle-washing machines—Messrs. Giesler's wine-presses at Avize and vendangeoir at Bouzy—Their vineyards and their purchases of grapes—Reputation of the Giesler brand—The establishment of M. Charles de Cazanove—A tame young boar—Boar-hunting in the Champagne—M. de Cazanove's commodious cellars and carefully-selected wines—Vineyards owned by him and his family—Reputation of his wines in Paris and their growing popularity in England—Interesting view of the Avize and Cramant vineyards from M. de Cazanove's terraced garden—The vintaging of the white grapes in the Champagne—Roper Frères' establishment at Rilly-la-Montagne—Their cellars penetrated by roots of trees—Some samples of fine old Champagnes—The principal Châlons establishments—Poem on Champagne by M. Amaury de Cazanove 229

XIII.
SPORT IN THE CHAMPAGNE.

The Champagne forests the resort of the wild-boar—Departure of a hunting-party in the early morning to a boar-hunt—Rousing the boar from his lair—Commencement of the attack—Chasing the boar—His course is checked by a bullet—The dogs rush on in full pursuit—The boar turns and stands at bay—A skilful marksman advances and gives him the *coup de grâce*—Hunting the wild-boar on horseback in the Champagne—An exciting day's sport with M. d'Honnincton's boar-hounds—The 'sonnerie du sanglier' and the 'vue'—The horns sound in chorus 'The boar has taken soil'—The boar leaves the stream, and a spirited chase ensues—Brought to bay, he seeks the water again—Deathly struggle between the boar and a full pack of hounds—The fatal shot is at length fired, and the 'hallali' is sounded—As many as fifteen wild-boars sometimes killed at a single meet—The vagaries of some tame young boars—Hounds of all kinds used for hunting the wild-boar in the Champagne—Damage done by boars to the vineyards and the crops—Varieties of game common to the Champagne 235

PART III.

I.
SPARKLING SAUMUR AND SPARKLING SAUTERNES.

The sparkling wines of the Loire often palmed off as Champagne—The finer qualities improve with age—Anjou the cradle of the Plantagenet kings—Saumur and its dominating feudal Château and antique Hôtel de Ville—Its sinister Rue des Payens and steep tortuous Grande Rue—The vineyards of the Coteau of Saumur—Abandoned stone-quarries converted into dwellings—The vintage in progress—Old-fashioned pressoirs—The making of the wine—Touraine the favourite residence of the earlier French monarchs—After a night's carouse at the epoch of the Renaissance—The Vouvray vineyards—Balzac's picture of La Vallée Coquette—The village of Vouvray and the Château of Moncontour—Vernou, with its reminiscences of Sully and Pépin-le-Bref—The vineyards around Saumur—Remarkable ancient Dolmens—Ackerman-Laurance's establishment at Saint-Florent—Their extensive cellars, ancient and modern—Treatment of the newly-vintaged wine—The cuvée—Proportions of wine from black and white grapes—The bottling and disgorging of the wine and finishing operations—The Château of Varrains and the establishment of M. Louis Duvau aîné—His cellars a succession of gloomy galleries—The disgorging of the wine accomplished in a melodramatic-looking cave—M. Duvau's vineyard—His sparkling Saumur of various ages—Marked superiority of the more matured samples—M. E. Normandin's sparkling Sauternes

241

manufactory at Châteauneuf—Angoulême and its ancient fortifications—Vin de Colombar—M. Normandin's sparkling Sauternes cuvée—His cellars near Châteauneuf—Recognition accorded to the wine at the Concours Régional d'Angoulême

II.
THE SPARKLING WINES OF BURGUNDY, THE JURA, AND THE SOUTH OF FRANCE.

Sparkling wines of the Côte d'Or at the Paris Exhibition of 1878—Chambertin, Romanée, and Vougeot—Burgundy wines and vines formerly presents from princes—Vintaging sparkling Burgundies—Their after-treatment in the cellars—Excess of breakage—Similarity of proceeding to that followed in the Champagne—Principal manufacturers of sparkling Burgundies—Sparkling wines of Tonnerre, the birthplace of the Chevalier d'Eon—The Vin d'Arbanne of Bar-sur-Aube—Death there of the Bastard de Bourbon—Madame de la Motte's ostentatious display and arrest there—Sparkling wines of the Beaujolais—The Mont-Brouilly vineyards—Ancient reputation of the wines of the Jura—The Vin Jaune of Arbois beloved of Henri Quatre—Rhymes by him in its honour—Lons-le-Saulnier—Vineyards yielding the sparkling Jura wines—Their vintaging and subsequent treatment—Their high alcoholic strength and general drawbacks—Sparkling wines of Auvergne, Guienne, Dauphiné, and Languedoc—Sparkling Saint-Péray the Champagne of the South—Valence, with its reminiscences of Pius VI. and Napoleon I.—The 'Horns of Crussol' on the banks of the Rhône—Vintage scene at Saint-Péray—The vines and vineyards producing sparkling wine—Manipulation of sparkling Saint-Péray—Its abundance of natural sugar—The cellars of M. de Saint-Prix, and samples of his wines—Sparkling Côte-Rotie, Château-Grillé, and Hermitage—Annual production and principal

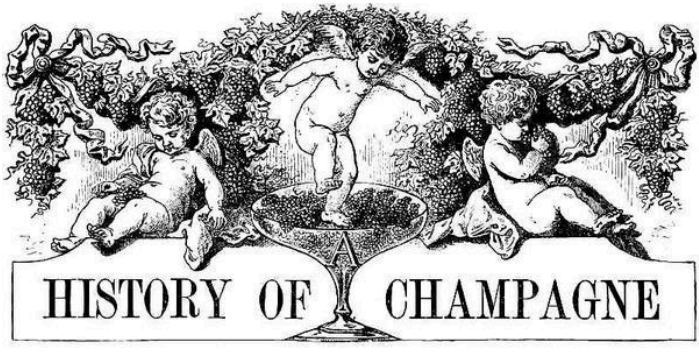
251

markets of sparkling Saint-Péray—Clairette de Die—The Porte Rouge of Die Cathedral—How the Die wine is made—The sparkling white and rose-coloured muscatels of Die—Sparkling wines of Vercheny and Lagrasse—Barnave and the royal flight to Varennes—Narbonne formerly a miniature Rome, now noted merely for its wine and honey—Fête of the Black Virgin at Limoux—Preference given to the new wine over the miraculous water—Blanquette of Limoux, and how it is made—Characteristics of this overrated wine

III.
FACTS AND NOTES RESPECTING SPARKLING WINES.

Dry and sweet Champagnes—Their sparkling properties—Form of Champagne glasses—Style of sparkling wines consumed in different countries—The colour and alcoholic strength of Champagne—Champagne approved of by the faculty—Its use in nervous derangements—The icing of Champagne—Scarcity of grand vintages in the Champagne—The quality of the wine has little influence on the price—Prices realised by the Ay and Verzenay crus in grand years—Suggestions for laying down Champagnes of grand vintages—The improvement they develop after a few years—The wine of 1874—The proper kind of cellar in which to lay down Champagne—Advantages of Burrow's patent slider wine-bins—Increase in the consumption of Champagne—Tabular statement of stocks, exports, and home consumption from 1844–5 to 1877–8—When to serve Champagne at a dinner-party—Charles Dickens's dictum that its proper place is at a ball—Advantageous effect of Champagne at an ordinary British dinner-party 258





WITH NOTES ON

OTHER SPARKLING WINES.

PART I.

I.
EARLY RENOWN OF THE CHAMPAGNE WINES.

The vine in Gaul—Domitian's edict to uproot it—Plantation of vineyards under Probus—Early vineyards of the Champagne—Ravages by the Northern tribes repulsed for a time by the Consul Jovinus—St. Remi and the baptism of Clovis—St. Remi's vineyards—Simultaneous progress of Christianity and the cultivation of the vine—The vine a favourite subject of ornament in the churches of the Champagne—The culture of the vine interrupted, only to be renewed with increased ardour—Early distinction between 'Vins de la Rivière' and 'Vins de la Montagne'—A prelate's counsel respecting the proper wine to drink—The Champagne desolated by war—Pope Urban II., a former Canon of Reims Cathedral—His partiality for the wine of Ay—Bequests of vineyards to religious establishments—Critical ecclesiastical topers—The wine of the Champagne causes poets to sing and rejoice—'La Bataille des Vins'—Wines of Auviller and Espernai le Bacheler.



ALTHOUGH the date of the introduction of the vine into France is lost in the mists of antiquity, and though the wines of Marseilles, Narbonne, and Vienne were celebrated by Roman writers prior to the Christian era, many centuries elapsed before a vintage was gathered within the limits of the ancient province of Champagne. Whilst the vine and olive throve in the sunny soil of the Narbonnese Gaul, the frigid climate of the as yet uncultivated North forbade the production of either wine or oil.[1] The 'forest of the Marne,' now renowned for the vintage it yields, was then indeed a dark and gloomy wood, the haunt of the wolf and wild boar, the stag and the auroch; and the tall barbarians of Gallia Comata, who manned the walls of Reims on the approach of Cæsar, were fain to quaff defiance to the Roman

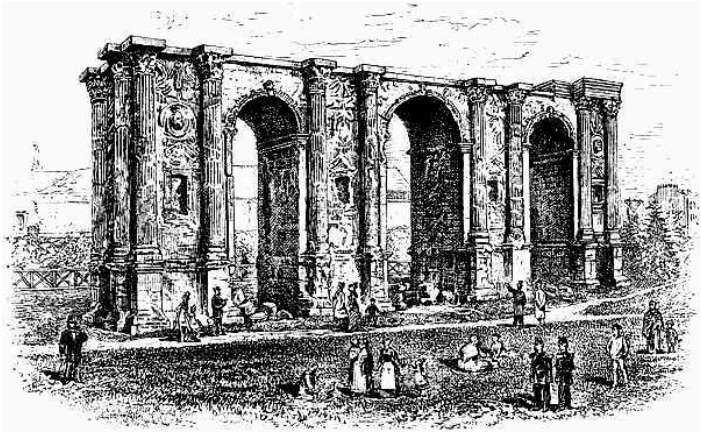
power in mead and ale.[2] Though Reims became under the Roman dominion one of the capitals of Belgic Gaul, and acquired an importance to which numerous relics in the shape of temples, triumphal arches, baths, arenas, military roads, &c., amply testify; and though the Gauls were especially distinguished by their quick adoption of Roman customs, it appears certain that during the sway of the twelve Cæsars the inhabitants of the present Champagne district were forced to draw the wine, with which their amphoræ were filled and their pateræ replenished, from extraneous sources. The vintages of which Pliny and Columella have written were confined to Gallia Narboniensis, though the culture of the vine had doubtless made some progress in Aquitaine and on the banks of the Saône, when the stern edict of the fly-catching madman Domitian, issued on the plea that the plant of Bacchus usurped space which would be better filled by that of Ceres, led (A.D. 92) to its total uprooting throughout the Gallic territory.



For nearly two hundred years this strange edict remained in force, during which period all the wine consumed in the Gallo-Roman dominions was imported from abroad. Six generations of men, to whom the cheerful toil of the vine-dresser was but an hereditary tale, and the joys of the vintage a half-forgotten tradition, had passed away when, in 282, the Emperor Probus, a gardener's son, once more granted permission to cultivate the vine, and even exercised his legions in the laying-out and planting of vineyards in Gaul.[3] The culture was eagerly resumed, and, as with the advancement of agriculture and the clearance of forests the climate had gradually improved, the inhabitants of the more northern regions sought to emulate their southern neighbours in the production of wine. This concession of Probus was hailed with rejoicing; and some antiquaries maintain that the triumphal arch at Reims, known as the Gate of Mars, was erected during his reign as a token of gratitude for this permission to replant the vine.[4]



By the fourth century the banks of the Marne and the Moselle were clothed with vineyards, which became objects of envy and desire to the yellow-haired tribes of Germany,[5] and led in no small degree to the predatory incursions into the territory of Reims so severely repulsed by Julian the Apostate and the Consul Jovinus, who had aided Julian to ascend the throne of the Cæsars, and had combatted for him against the Persians. Julian assembled his forces at Reims in 356, before advancing against the Alemanni, who had established themselves in Alsace and Lorraine; and ten years later the Consul Jovinus, after surprising some of the same nation bathing their large limbs, combing their long and flaxen hair, and 'swallowing huge draughts of rich and delicious wine,'[6] on the banks of the Moselle, fought a desperate and successful battle, lasting an entire summer's day, on the Catalaunian plains near Châlons, with their comrades, whom the prospect of similar indulgence had tempted to enter the Champagne. Valerian came to Reims in 367 to congratulate Jovinus; and the Emperor and the Consul (whose tomb is to-day preserved in Reims Cathedral) fought their battles o'er again over their cups in the palace reared by the latter on the spot occupied in later years by the church of St. Nicaise.



THE GATE OF MARS AT REIMS.

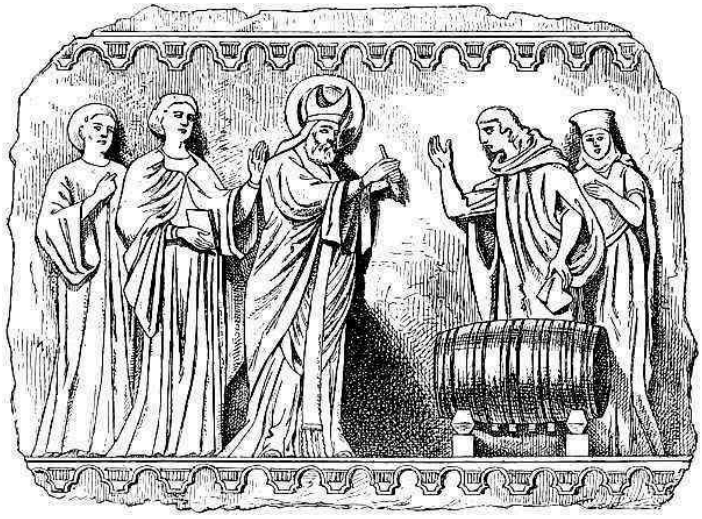
The check administered by Jovinus was but temporary, while the attraction continued permanent. For nearly half a century, it is true, the vineyards of the Champagne throve amidst an era of quiet and prosperity such as had seldom blessed the frontier provinces of Gaul.[7] But when, in 406, the Vandals spread the flame of war from the banks of the Rhine to the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the ocean, Reims was sacked, its fields ravaged, its bishop cut down at the altar, and its inhabitants slain or made captive; and the same scene of desolation was repeated when the hostile myriads of Attila swept across north-western France in 451.



TOMB OF THE CONSUL JOVINUS, PRESERVED IN REIMS CATHEDRAL.

Happier times were, however, in store for Reims and its bishops and its vineyards, the connection between the two last being far more intimate than might be supposed. When Clovis and his Frankish host passed through Reims by the road still known as the Grande Barberie, on his way to attack Syagrius in 486, there was no doubt a little pillaging, and the famous golden vase which one of the monarch's followers carried off from the episcopal residence was not left unfilled by its new owner. But after Syagrius had been crushed at Soissons, and the theft avenged by a blow from the king's battle-axe, Clovis not only restored the stolen vase, and made a treaty with the bishop St. Remi or Remigius, son of Emilius, Count of Laon, but eventually became a convert to Christianity, and accepted baptism at his hands. Secular history has celebrated the fight of Tolbiac—the invocation addressed by the despairing Frank to the God of the Christians; the sudden rallying of his fainting troops, and the last desperate charge which swept away for ever the power of the Alemanni as a

nation. Saintly legends have enlarged upon the piety of Queen Clotilda; the ability of St. Remi; the pomp and ceremony which marked the baptism of Clovis at Reims in December 496; the memorable injunction of the bishop to his royal convert to adore the cross he had burnt, and burn the idols he had hitherto adored; and the miracle of the Sainte Ampoule, a vial of holy oil said to have been brought direct from heaven by a snow-white dove in honour of the occasion. A pigeon, however, has always been a favourite item in the conjuror's paraphernalia from the days of Apolonius of Tyana and Mahomet down to those of Houdin and Dr. Lynn; and modern scepticism has suggested that the celestial regions were none other than the episcopal dovecot. Whether or not the oil was holy, we may be certain that the wine which flowed freely in honour of the Frankish monarch's conversion was ambrosial; that the fierce warriors who had conquered at Soissons and Tolbiac wetted their long moustaches in the choicest growths that had ripened on the surrounding hills; and that the Counts and Leudes, and, judging from national habits, the King himself, got royally drunk upon a *cuvée réservée* from the vineyard which St. Remi had planted with his own hands on his hereditary estate near Laon, or the one which the slave Melanius cultivated for him just without the walls of Reims.





For the saint was not only a converter of kings, but,

what is of more moment to us, a cultivator of vineyards and an appreciator of their produce. Amongst the many miracles which monkish chroniclers have ascribed to him is one commemorated by a bas-relief on the north doorway of Reims Cathedral, representing him in the house of one of his relatives, named Celia, making the sign of the cross over an empty cask, which, as a matter of course, immediately became filled with wine. That St. Remi possessed such an ample stock of wine of his own as to have been under no necessity to repeat this miracle in the episcopal palace is evident from the will penned by him during his last illness in 530, as this shows his viticultural and other possessions to have been sufficiently extensive to have contented a bishop even of the most pluralistic proclivities.[8]

It is curious to note the connection between the spread of viticulture and that of Christianity—a connection apparently incongruous, and yet evident enough, when it is remembered that wine is necessary for the celebration of the most solemn sacrament of the Church. Christianity became the established religion of the Roman Empire about the first decade of the fourth century, and Paganism was prohibited by Theodosius at its close; and it is during this period that we find the culture of the grape spreading throughout Gaul, and St. Martin of Tours preaching the Gospel and planting a vineyard coevally. Chapters and religious houses especially applied themselves to the cultivation of the vine, and hence the origin of many famous vineyards, not only of the Champagne but of France. The old monkish architects, too, showed their appreciation of the vine by continually introducing sculptured festoons of vine-leaves, intermingled with massy clusters of grapes, into the decorations of the churches built by

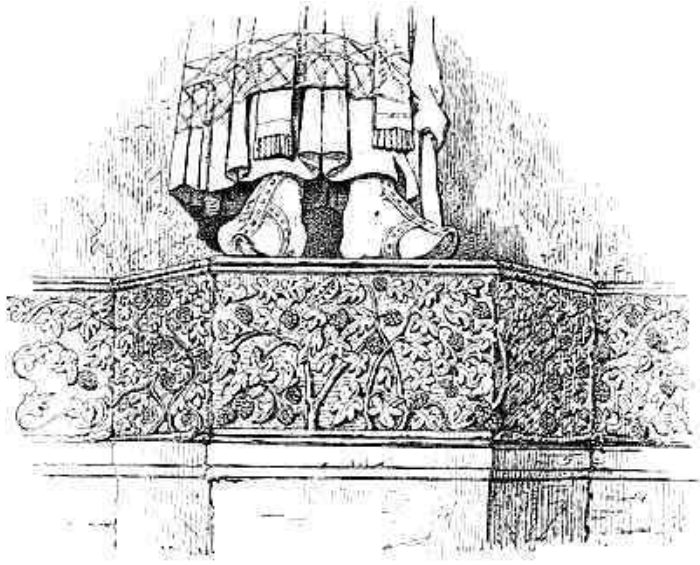
them. The church of St. Remi, for instance, commenced in the middle of the seventh century, and touched up by succeeding builders till it has been compared to a school of progressive architecture, furnishes an example of this in the mouldings of its principal doorway; and Reims Cathedral offers several instances of a similar character.



FROM THE NORTH DOORWAY OF REIMS CATHEDRAL.

Amidst the anarchy and confusion which marked the

feeble sway of the long-haired Merovingian kings, whom the warlike Franks were wont to hoist upon their bucklers when investing them with the sovereign power, we find France relapsing into a state of barbarism; and though the Salic law enacted severe penalties for pulling up a vine-stock, the prospect of being liable at any moment to a writ of ejectment, enforced by the aid of a battle-axe, must have gone far to damp spontaneous ardour as regards experimental viticulture. The tenants of the Church, in which category the bulk of the vine-growers of Reims and Epernay were to be classed, were best off; but neither the threats of bishops nor the vengeance of saints could restrain acts of sacrilege and pillage. During the latter half of the sixth century Reims, Epernay, and the surrounding district were ravaged several times by the contending armies of Austrasia and Neustria; and Chilperic of Soissons, on capturing the latter town in 562, put such heavy taxes on the vines and the serfs that in three years the inhabitants had deserted the country. Matters improved, however, during the more peaceful days of the ensuing century, which witnessed the foundation of numerous abbeys, including those of Epernay, Hautvillers, and Avenay; and the planting of fresh vineyards in the ecclesiastical domains by Bishop Romulfe and his successor St. Sonnace, the latter, who died in 637, bequeathing to the church of St. Remi a vineyard at Villers, and to the monastery of St. Pierre les Dames one situate at Germaine, in the Mountain of Reims. [9] The sculptured saint on the exterior of Reims Cathedral, with his feet resting upon a pedestal wreathed with vine-leaves and bunches of grapes, may possibly have been intended for one of these numerous wine-growing prelates.



FROM THE NORTH DOORWAY OF REIMS CATHEDRAL.

The mighty figure of Charlemagne, overshadowing the whole of Europe at the commencement of the ninth century, appears in connection with Reims, where, begirt with paladins and peers, he entertained the ill-used Pope Leo III. right royally during the ‘festes de Noel’ of 805. The monarch who is said to have clothed the steep heights of Rudesheim with vines was not indifferent to good wine; and the vintages of the Champagne doubtless mantled in the magic goblet of Huon de Bordeaux, and brimmed the horns which Roland, Oliver, Doolin de Mayence, Renaud of Montauban, and Ogier the Dane, drained before girding on their swords and starting on their deeds of high emprise—the slaughter of Saracens, the rescue of captive damsels, and the discomfiture of felon knights—told in the fables of Turpin and the ‘chansons de geste.’ That the cultivation of the grape, and above all the making of wine, had been steadily

progressing, is clear from the fact that the distinction between the ‘Vins de la Rivière de Marne’ and the ‘Vins de la Montagne de Reims’ dates from the ninth century.[10]

This era is, moreover, marked by the inauguration of that long series of coronations which helped to spread the popularity of the Champagne wines throughout France by the agency of the nobles and prelates taking part in the ceremony. Sumptuous festivities marked the coronation of Charlemagne’s son Louis in 816; and the officiating Archbishop Ebbon may have helped to furnish the feast with some of the produce from the vineyard he had planted at Mont Ebbon, generally identified with the existing Montebon, near Mardeuil. It is of this vineyard that Pardulus, Bishop of Laon, speaks in a letter addressed by him to Ebbon’s successor, the virtuous Hincmar, who assumed the crozier in 845, proffering him counsels as to the best method of sustaining his failing health. After telling him to avoid eating fish on the same day that it is caught, insisting that salted meat is more wholesome than fresh, and recommending bacon and beans cooked in fat as an excellent digestive, he proceeds: ‘You must make use of a wine which is neither too strong nor too weak—prefer, to those produced on the summit of the mountain or the bottom of the valley, one that is grown on the slopes of the hills, as towards Epernay, at Mont Ebbon; towards Chaumuzy, at Rouvesy; towards Reims, at Mersy and Chaumery.’ The Champagne vineyards suffered grievously from the internal convulsions which marked the period when the sceptre of France was swayed by the feeble hands of the dregs of the Carlovingian race. The Normans, who threatened Reims and sacked Epernay in 882, swept over them like devouring locusts; and

their annals during the following century are written in letters of blood and flame.

Times were indeed bad for the peaceful vine-dressers in the tenth century, when castles were springing up in every direction; when might made right, and the rule of the strong hand alone prevailed; and when the firm belief that the end of the world was to come in the year 1000 led men to live only for the present, and seek to get as much out of their fellow-creatures as they possibly could. Such natural calamities as that of 919, when the wine-crop entirely failed in the neighbourhood of Reims, were bad enough; but the continual incursions of the Hungarians, whose arrows struck down the peasant at the plough and the priest at the altar, and the memory of whose pitiless deeds yet survives in the term ‘ogre;’ the desperate contest waged for ten years by Heribert of Vermandois to secure the bishopric of Reims for his infant son, during which hardly a foot of the disputed territory remained unstained by blood; the repeated invasions of Otho of Germany; and the struggle between Hugh Capet and Charles of Lorraine for the titular crown of France,—left traces harder to be effaced. Reims underwent four sieges in about sixty years; and Epernay, that most hapless of towns, was sacked at least half a score of times, and twice burnt, one of the most conscientiously executed pillagings being that performed in 947 by Hugh the Great, who, as it was vintage-time, completely ravaged the whole country, and carried off all the wine.[11]

Under the rule of the Capetian race matters improved as regarded foreign foes, though the archbishops had in the early part of the eleventh century to abandon Epernay, Vertus, Fismes, and

their dependencies to the family of Robert of Vermandois, who had assumed the title of Counts of Champagne, to be held by them as fiefs. The fame of the schools of Reims, where future popes and embryo emperors met as class-mates; the festive gatherings which marked the coronation of Henry I. and Philip I.; the great ecclesiastical council held by Leo IX., which procured for the city the nickname of 'little Rome;' and the growing importance of the Champagne fairs, the great meeting-places throughout the Middle Ages of the merchants of Spain, Italy, and the Low Countries,—favoured the prosperity of the district and the production of its wine. Urban II., a native of Châtillon, who wore the triple crown from 1088 to the close of the century, was, prior to his elevation to the chair of St. Peter, a canon of Reims, under the name of Eudes or Odo, and, tippling there in company with his fellow-clerics, acquired a taste for the wine of Ay, which he preferred to all others in the world.[12] Pilgrims to Rome found penance light and pardon easily obtained when they bore with them across the Alps, in addition to staff and scrip, a huge 'leathern bottel' of that beloved vintage which warmed the pontiff's heart and whetted his wit for the delivery of those soul-stirring orations at Placentia and Clermont, wherein he appealed to the chivalry of Western Europe to hasten to the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the infidel.



VINE-DRESSERS—THIRTEENTH CENTURY
(From a window of Chartres Cathedral).

The result of these appeals was felt by the vine-cultivators of the Champagne in more ways than one, and their case recalls that of the petard-hoisted engineer. The virtuous, the speculative, and the enthusiastic who followed Peter the Hermit and Walter the Penniless to the plains of Asia Minor suffered at the hands of the vicious, the prudent, and the practical, who remained at home and passed their time in pillaging the estates of their absent neighbours. The abbatial vineyards suffered like the others; and the monks of St. Thierry, in making peace with Gerard de la Roche and Alberic Malet in 1138, complained bitterly of wine violently extorted during two years from growers on the ecclesiastical estate and of a levy made upon their vineyard.[13]

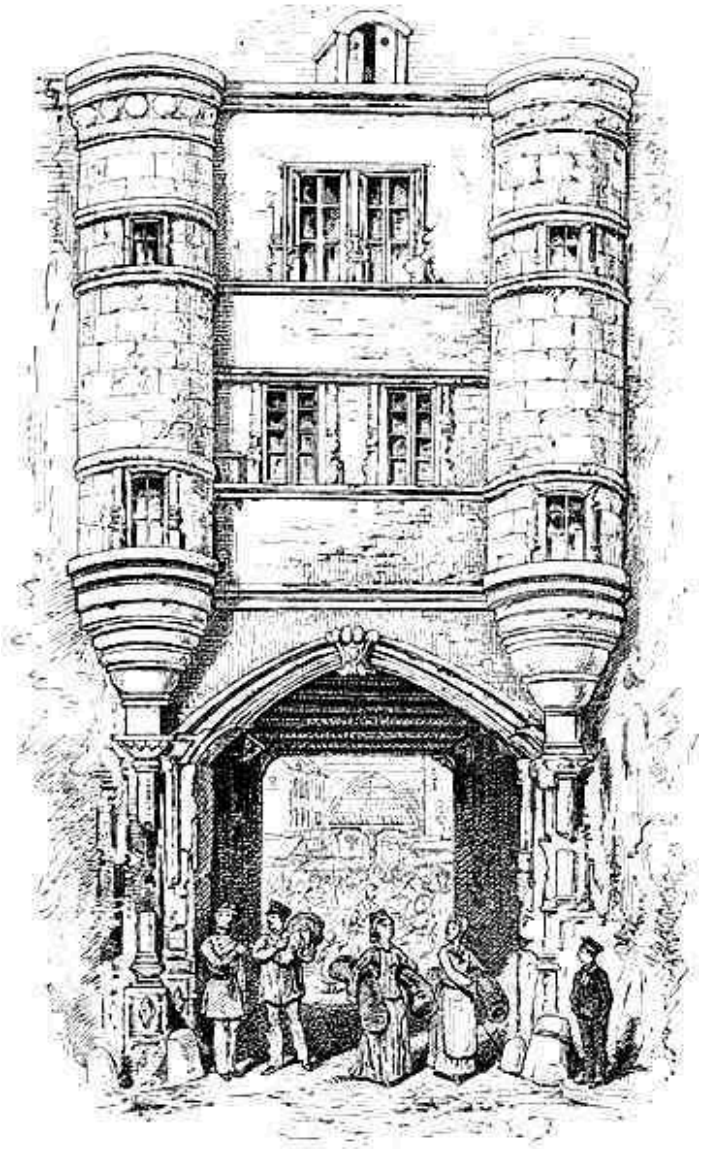
The efforts of Henry of France, a warlike prelate, who built fortresses and attacked those of the robber-nobles, and of Louis VII., who avenged the wrongs of

the church of Reims on the Counts of Roucy, served to improve matters; and we may be sure that whenever the monks did get hold of a repentant or dying sinner, they made him pay pretty dearly for peace with them and Heaven. Colin Musset, the early Champenois poet, thought that the best use to which money could be put was to spend it in good wine.[14] Churchmen, however, managed to secure the desired commodity without any such outlay, for numerous charters of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries show lords, sick or about starting for the crusades, making large gifts to abbeys and monasteries; and many a strip of fair and fertile vineland was thus added, thanks to a judicious pressure on the conscience, to the already extensive possessions of the two great monasteries of Reims, St. Remi and St. Nicaise, and also to that of St. Thierry. The Templars, too, whose reputation as wine-bibbers was only inferior to that of the monks, if we may credit the adage which runs,

‘Boire en templier, c’est boire à plein gosier;
Boire en cordelier, c’est vuider le cellier,’

and who, prior to the catastrophe of 1313, had a commandery at Reims, possessed either vineyards, or *droits de vinage*, at numerous spots, including Epernay, Hermonville, Ludes, and Verzy; while the separate community of these ‘Red Monks’ installed at Orilly had estates at Ay, Damery, and Mareuil. The hospital of St. Mary at Reims also reckoned amongst its possessions vineyards at Moussy, bequeathed by Canon Pontius and Tebaldus Papelenticus. The wine, which in 1215 the treasurer of the chapter of Reims Cathedral obtained from that body an acknowledgment of his right to on the anniversaries of the deaths of Bishops Ebalus and Radulf, and that to which the sub-treasurer and carpenter were

severally entitled, was no doubt in part derived from the vineyard planted in 1206 by Canon Giles at the Porte Mars and bequeathed by him to the chapter, and the one which Canon John de Brie had purchased at Mareuil and had similarly bequeathed. [15] Although papal bulls and archiepiscopal warrants had forbidden the levying of the *droit de vinage* on wine vintaged by religious communities, in 1252 Pope Innocent IV. had to reprove the barons for interfering with the monastic vintages in the neighbourhood of Reims, and to threaten them with excommunication if they repeated their offence.[16]



GATEWAY OF THE CHAPTER COURT AT REIMS.

These ecclesiastical topers, as a rule, were

sufficiently critical of the quality of the liquor meted out to them, and an agreement respecting the dietary of the Abbey of St. Remi, at Reims, drawn up in 1218 between the Abbot Peter and a deputation of six monks representing the rest of the brethren, provides that the wine procured for the latter should be improved by two-thirds of the produce of the Clos de Marigny being set apart for their exclusive use. Ten years later, to put a stop to further complaints on the part of these worthy rivals of Rabelais' Frère Jean des Entonnoirs, Abbot Peter was fain to agree that two hundred hogsheads of wine should be annually brought from Marigny to the abbey to quench the thirst of his droughty flock, and that if the spot in question failed to yield the required amount the deficiency should be made up from his own private and particular vineyards at Sacy, Villers-Aleran, Chigny, and Hermonville.[17]

We can readily picture these

'jolly fat friars
Sitting round the great roaring fires
With their strong wines;'

or the cellarer quietly chuckling to himself as he loosened the spiggot of the choicest casks—

'Between this cask and the abbot's lips
Many have been the sips and slips;
Many have been the draughts of wine,
On their way to his, that have stopped at mine.'

The monks were in the habit of throwing open their monasteries to all comers, under pretext of letting them taste the wine they had for sale, until, in 1233, an ecclesiastical council at Beziers prohibited this

practice on account of the scandal it created. Petrarch has accused the popes of his day of persisting in staying at Avignon when they could have returned to Rome, simply on account of the goodness of the wines they found there. Some similar reasons may have led to the selection of Reims, during the twelfth century, as a place for holding great ecclesiastical councils presided over by the sovereign pontiff in person; and no doubt 'Bibimus papaliter' was the motto of Calixtus, Innocent, and Eugenius when the labours of the day were done, and they and their cardinals could chorus, *apropos* of those of the morrow,

'Bonum vinum acuit ingenium
Venite potemus.'



The kings of France may have preferred the wines of the Orleanais and the Isle of France, and the

monarchs of England have been content to vary the vintages of their patrimony of Guienne with an occasional draught of Rhenish; but the wines of the river Marne certainly found favour at Troyes, where the Counts of Champagne, to whom Epernay had been ceded as a fief, held a court little inferior in state to that of a sovereign prince. The native vintage mantled in the goblets and beakers that graced the board where they sat at meat amidst their knights and barons, whilst minstrels sang and jongleurs tumbled and glee-maidens danced at the lower end of the hall. It fired the fancy of the poet Count Thibault, to whom tradition has ascribed the introduction of the Cyprus grape into France on his return from the Crusades,[18] and helped the flow of the amorous strains which he addressed to Blanche of Castille. Nor was he the only versifier of the time who could exclaim, with his compatriot Colin Musset, that 'good wine caused him to sing and rejoice.'[19] Other local songsters, such as Doete de Troyes, Eustache le Noble, and Guillaume de Machault, sought inspiration at their native Helicon, and were equally ready with Colin Musset to appreciate a gift of

'barrelled wine,
Cold, strong, and fine,
To drink in hot weather,' [20]

in return for their rhymes. It was this wine that the gigantic John Lord of Joinville, Seneschal of Champagne under Thibault, and chronicler of the Seventh Crusade, was in the habit of consuming warm and undiluted, by the advice of his physicians, on account, as he himself mentions, of his 'large head and cold stomach;' a practice which seems to have scandalised that pious and ascetic monarch St. Louis,

who was careful to temper his own potations with water. The king was most likely not unacquainted with the wine, as a roll of the expenses incurred at his coronation at Reims, in 1226, shows that 991 livres were spent in wine on that occasion, when, in consequence of the vacancy of the archiepiscopal see, the crown was placed upon his head by Jacques de Bazoche, Bishop of Soissons.



Henry of Andelys, a compatriot of the engineer Brunel, who flourished, if a poet can be said to flourish, in the latter half of the thirteenth century, has extolled the wines of Epernay and Hautvillers, and mentioned that of Reims, in his poem entitled the 'Bataille des Vins.' He informs us at the outset that 'the great King Philip Augustus,' whom state records prove to have had a score of vineyards in different parts of France,[21] was very fond of 'good white wine.' Anxious to make a choice of the best, he issued invitations to all the most renowned *crûs*, French and foreign, and forty-six different vintages responded to this appeal; amongst them Hautvillers and Epernay, described as 'vin d'Auviler' and 'vin d'Espernai le Bacheler.' The king's chaplain, an English priest, makes a preliminary examination, resulting in the summary rejection of many competitors, till at length, as Argenteuil—'clear as oil'—and Pierrefitte are disputing as to their respective merits, Epernay and Hautvillers simultaneously exclaim, 'Argenteuil, thou wishest to degrade all the wines at this table. By God, thou playest too much the part of constable. We excel Châlons and Reims, remove gout from the loins, and support all kings.'[22] But lo, up jumps the 'vin d'Ausois,' the 'Osey' of so many of our English mediæval poets, with the reproach, 'Epernay, thou art too disloyal; thou hast not the right of speaking in court;'[23] and enumerates the blessings which he and his demoiselle 'la Mosele' confer upon the Germans.[24] La Rochelle in turn reproves Ausois, and extols the strength of his own wines, and those of Angoulême, Bordeaux, Saintes, and Poitou, and boasts of the welcome accorded to them in the northern states of Europe, including England, to which the districts he mentions then belonged.[25]



VINTAGERS OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY
(From a MS. of the Dialogues de St. Grégoire).

The vintages of the then little kingdom of France put in a counter-claim for finesse and flavour as opposed to strength, and maintain that they do not harm those who drink them. The dispute becomes general, and the wines, heated with argument, exhale a perfume of 'balsam and amber,' till the hall where they are met resembles a terrestial paradise. The chaplain, after conscientiously tasting the whole of them, formally excommunicated with bell, book, and candle all the beer brewed in England and Flanders, and then went incontinently to bed, and slept for three days and three nights without intermission. The king thereupon made an examination himself, and named the wine of Cyprus pope, and that of Aquilat[26] cardinal, and created of the remainder

three kings, five counts, and twelve peers, the names of which, unfortunately, have not been preserved.



II.
THE WINES OF THE CHAMPAGNE FROM THE FOURTEENTH TO THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

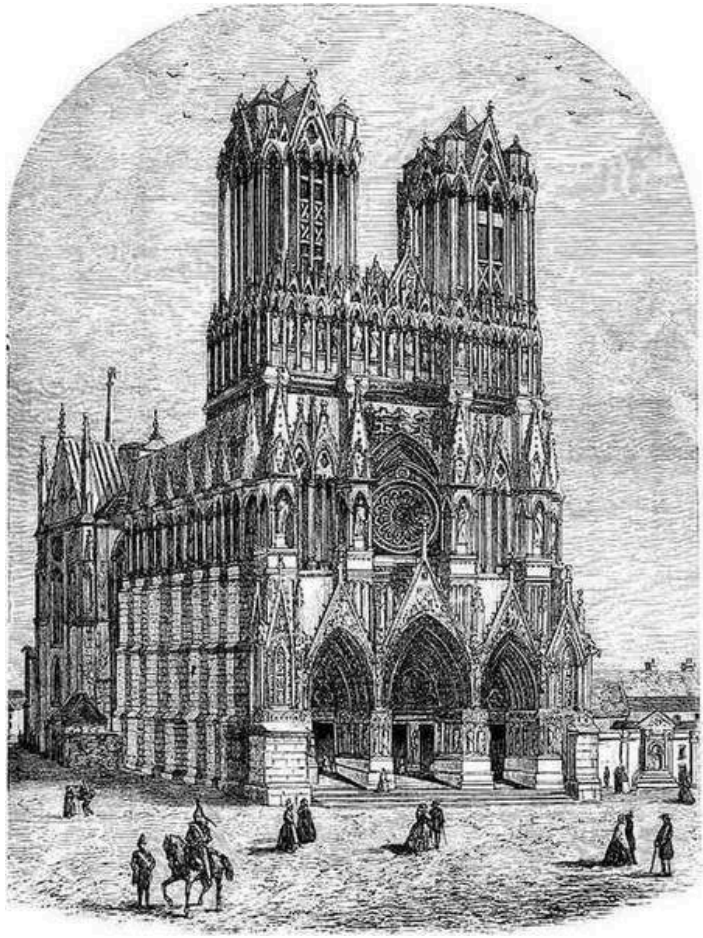
Coronations at Reims and their attendant banquets—Wine flows profusely at these entertainments—The wine-trade of Reims—Presents of wine from the Reims municipality—Cultivation of the vineyards abandoned after the battle of Poitiers—Octroi levied on wine at Reims—Coronation of Charles V.—Extension of the Champagne vineyards—Abundance of wine—Visit to Reims of the royal sot Wenceslaus of Bohemia—The Etape aux Vins at Reims—Increased consumption of beer during the English occupation of the city—The Maid of Orleans at

Reims—The vineyards and wine-trade alike suffer —Louis XI. is crowned at Reims—Fresh taxes upon wine followed by the Mique-Maque revolt— The Rémois the victims of pillaging foes and extortionate defenders—The Champagne vineyards attacked by noxious insects— Coronation of Louis XII.—François Premier, the Emperor Charles V., Bluff King Hal, and Leo the Magnificent all partial to the wine of Ay—Mary Queen of Scots at Reims—State kept by the opulent and libertine Cardinal of Lorraine— Brusquet, the Court Fool—Decrease in the production of wine around Reims—Gifts of wine to newly-crowned monarchs—New restrictions on vine cultivation—The wine of the Champagne crowned at the same time as Louis XIII.— Regulation price for wine established at Reims— Imposts levied on the vineyards by the Frondeurs —The country ravaged around Reims—Sufferings of the peasantry—Presents of wine to Marshal Turenne and Charles II. of England—Perfection of the Champagne wines during the reign of Louis XIV.—St. Evremond's high opinion of them— Other contemporary testimony in their favour— The Archbishop of Reims's niggardly gift to James II. of England—A poet killed by Champagne—Offerings by the Rémois to Louis XIV. on his visit to their city.



THE coronations at Reims served, as already remarked, to attract within the walls of the old episcopal city all that was great, magnificent, and noble in France. The newly-crowned king, with that extensive retinue which marked the monarch of the Middle Ages; the great vassals of the crown scarcely less profusely attended; the constable, the secular and ecclesiastical peers, and the host of knights and nobles who assisted on the occasion, were wont at the conclusion of the ceremony to hold high revelry in the spacious temporary banqueting-hall reared near the cathedral. It is to be regretted that the *menus* of these banquets have not been handed down to us in their entirety; but a few fragmentary excerpts show that from a comparatively early period there was no lack of wine, at any rate. A remonstrance addressed to Philip the Fair, after his coronation in 1286, by the archbishop and burghers, asks that they may be relieved of a certain

proportion of the sum levied on them for the cost of the ceremony, on the ground that there still remained over for the king's use no less than seven score tuns of wine from the banquet. Some idea may be formed of the quantity of wine brought regularly into the city from the circumstance of the king having Reims surrounded by walls in 1294, and levying a duty on the wine imported to pay for them, and by the value attached to the 'rouage'[27] of the Mairie St. Martin, claimed by the chapter of Reims Cathedral in 1300.



REIMS CATHEDRAL, WEST FRONT.

At the coronation of Charles IV., in 1322, wine flowed in rivers. Amongst the unconsumed provisions returned by the king's pantler, Pelvau dou Val, to the burghers, 'vin de Biaune et de Rivière'—that is, of Beaune and of the Marne—figures for a value of 384 livres 5 sols 2 deniers.[28] The arrangements of the coronation had been intrusted to

the minister of finances, Pierre Remi, who certainly played the part of the unjust steward. In the first place, he made the cost of the ceremony amount to 21,000 livres, whereas none of his predecessors had spent more than 7,000 livres. His opening move had been to seize upon the greater part of the corn and all the ovens in Reims 'for the king's use,' and to sell bread to the townsfolk and visitors at his own price for a fortnight prior to the coronation. After the ceremony he appropriated in like manner all the plate and napery, and all the cooking utensils and kitchen furniture, together with whatever had been left over, in the shape of wine, wax, fish, bullocks, pigs, and similar trifles. The wine thus taken was estimated at 1500 livres, part of which he sold to two bourgeois of Reims, and kept the rest, together with forty-four out of the fifty muids, or hogsheads, of salt provided.[29] Retributive justice overtook him, for the chronicler of his ill-doings chuckles over the fact that he was hanged as high as Haman on a gibbet he had himself erected at Paris. Things went off better at the coronation of King Philip, in 1328, when the total amount expended in the three hundred poinçons of the wine of Beaune, St. Pourçain, and the Marne consumed was 1675 livres 2 sols 3 deniers.[30] Part of this flowed through the mouth of the great bronze stag before which criminals condemned by the archiepiscopal court used to be exposed, but which at coronation times was placed in the Parvis Notre Dame, and spouted forth the 'claré dou cerf,' for the preparation of which the town records show that the grocer O. la Lale received 16 livres.[31]



The importance of the wine-trade of Reims at the commencement of the fourteenth century is evidenced by the fact of there being at this epoch *courtiers de vin*, or wine-brokers, the right of appointing whom rested with the eschevins—a right which, vainly assailed by the archbishop in 1323, was confirmed to the municipal power by several royal decrees.[32] The burghers of Reims were fully cognisant of the merits of their wine, and certainly spared no trouble to make others acquainted with them. When the eschevins dined with the archbishop in August 1340 they contributed thirty-two pots of wine as their share of the repast, in addition to sundry partridges, capons, and rabbits. All visitors to the town on business, and all persons of distinction passing through it, were regaled with an offering of from two to four gallons from the cellars of Jehan de la Lobe, or Petit Jehannin, or Raulin d'Escry, or Baudouin le Boutellier, or Remi Cauchois, the principal tavern-keepers. The provost of Laon, the bailli and the receveur of Vermandois, the eschevins

of Châlons, the Bishop of Coustances, Monseigneur Thibaut de Bar, Monseigneur Jacques la Vache (the queen's physician), the Archdeacon of Reims, and the 'two lords of the parliament deputed by the king to examine the walls,' were a few of the recipients of this hospitality, which was also extended to such inferior personages as a varlet of Verdun and the varlet of the eschevins of Abbeville.

Two 'flasks,' purchased for threepence-halfpenny from Petit Jehannin, served to warm the eloquence of Maistre Baudouin de Loingnis when he pleaded for the town on the subject of the fortifications in 1345; and when, in 1340, the Archbishop of Narbonne, the Bishop of Poitiers, and sundry other dignitaries passed through Reims with heavy hearts on their way to St. Omer, to negotiate a truce with Edward of England after the fatal battle of Sluys, the municipality expended five shillings and threepence in a poinçon of wine to cheer them on their way. There was probably plenty to spare, since on the outbreak of hostilities with England the town-crier had received one penny for making proclamation that no one should remove any wine from the town during the continuance of the contest. The advent of a messenger of Monseigneur Guillaume Pinson, who brought 'closed letters' to the eschevins informing them of the invasion of King Edward, does not seem to have spoilt the digestion of those worthy gentlemen, since they partook of their annual gift of wine and their presentation lamb at Easter 1346; but there were sore hearts in the old city when one Jenvier returned from Amiens with the tidings that their best and bravest had fallen under the banner of John de Vienne, their warlike prelate, on the field of Crécy. Perhaps to the state of depression that followed is due the fact that there are no records of

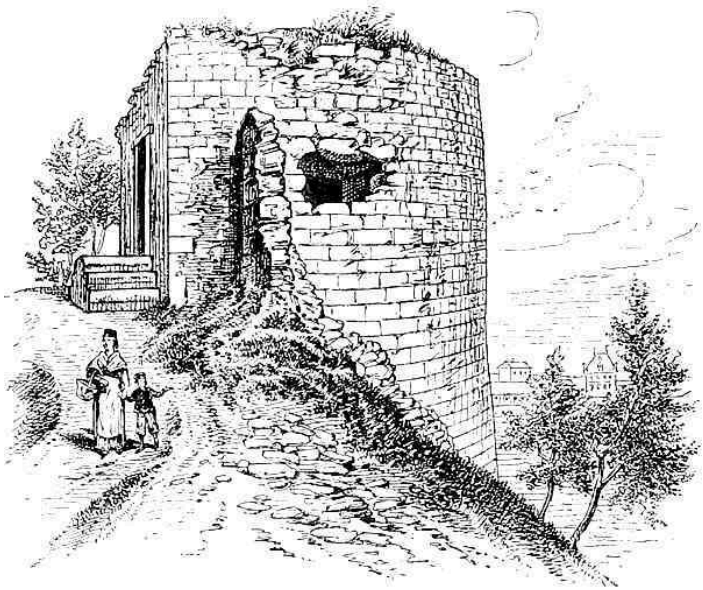
festivities at the coronation of King John the Good in 1350, though we find the citizens seeking two years later to propitiate the evil genius of France, Charles the Bad of Navarre, by the gift of a queue of wine costing five crowns.



THE BATTLE OF CRÉCY
(From a MS. of Froissart's Chronicles).

During the frightful anarchy prevailing after the battle of Poitiers, when the victorious English and the disbanded forces of France made common cause against the hapless peasants, the fields and vineyards of Reims remained uncultivated for three years,[33] and the people of the archbishopric would have perished of hunger had they not been able to get food and wine from Hainault. Despite the prohibitions of the regent, the nobles pillaged the country around Reims and ravaged the vineyards

from June to August 1358, and the havoc they wrought exceeded even that accomplished during the Jacquerie. Nor were matters improved by the advent of the English king, Edward III., when, on the wet St. Andrew's-day of 1359, he sat down before the town with his host, which starved and shivered throughout the bitter and tempestuous winter, despite the comfort derived from the 'three thousand vessels of wine' captured by Eustace Dabreticourt in 'the town of Achery, on the river of Esne.'[34] But the Rémois stood firm behind the fortifications reared by Gaucher de Châtillon till the following spring, when the victor of Crécy drew off his baffled forces, consoling them with the promise of bringing them back during the ensuing vintage, and made a reluctant peace at Bretigny.[35]

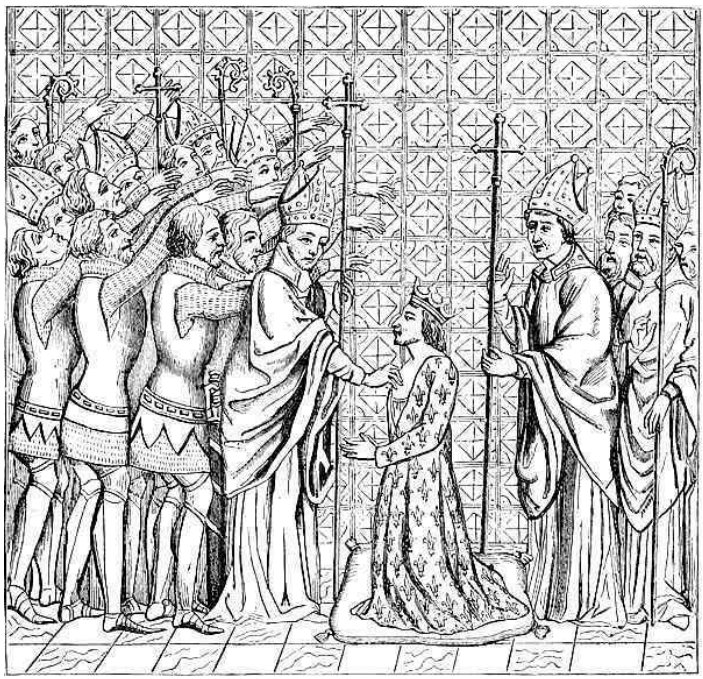


ANCIENT TOWER BELONGING TO THE FORTIFICATIONS OF REIMS.

Yet, though plague and famine in turn almost depopulated the city, the importance of its vineyards augmented from this time forward. In 1361 the citizens, who had already been in the habit of granting ‘aides’ to the king out of the dues levied on the wine sold in the town, obtained leave to impose an *octroi* on wine, in order to maintain their fortifications. Henceforward the connection between the wines and the walls of Reims became permanent. The *octroi* was from time to time renewed or modified in various ways by different monarchs; but their decrees always commenced with a preliminary flourish concerning the necessity of keeping the walls of so important a city in good order, and the admirable opportunity afforded of so doing by the ever-increasing prosperity of the trade in wine. Conspicuous amongst the few existing fragments of the circuit of walls and towers with which Reims was formerly begirt is the tower of which a view is here given.[36]

The Rémois, although willing enough to tax themselves for the defence of their city, submitted the reverse of cheerfully to the preliminary levies of provisions, wines, meats, and other things necessary, made by the king’s ‘maistres d’hôtel’ for the coronation of Charles V., which took place on the 19th May 1364, at a cost to the town of 7712 livres 15 sols 5 deniers parisis.[37] The citizens had, however, something to gaze at for their money, if that were any consolation. The king and his queen (Jeanne de Bourbon) were accompanied by King Peter of Cyprus; Wenceslaus, King of Bohemia and Duke of Brabant; the Dukes of Burgundy and Anjou; the Counts of Eu, Dampmartin, Tancarville, and Vaudemont, and many other prelates and lords, who did full justice to the good cheer provided for the

great feasts and solemnities taking place during the five days of the royal sojourn.[38] The crown, borne by Philip of Burgundy, the king's youngest brother, having been placed upon Charles's head by the Archbishop Jean de Craon, that prelate proceeded to smear the royal breast and brow with what the irreverent Republicans of the eighteenth century designated 'sacred pomatum,' from the Sainte Ampoule presented to him by the Bishop of Laon, amidst the enthusiastic applause of nobles and prelates.[39]

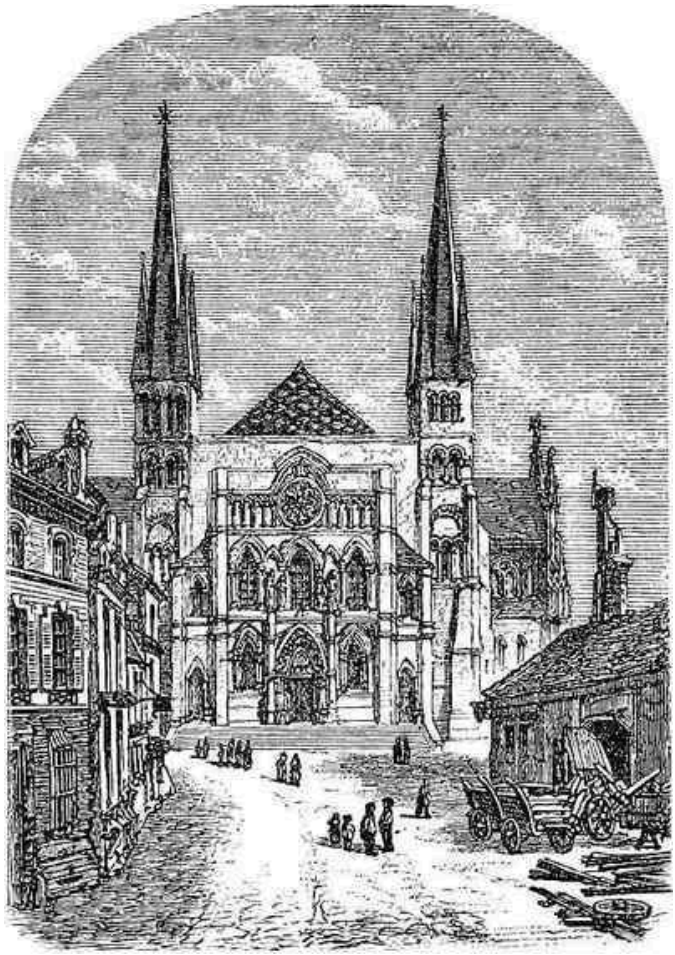


CORONATION OF CHARLES V. AT REIMS
(From a MS. Histoire de Charles V.).

The great planting of vines in the Champagne district plainly dates from the last quarter of the fourteenth

century, at which epoch large exports of wine to the provinces of Hainault and Flanders, and especially to the ports of Sluys, are noted. In a list of the revenues of the archbishopric of Reims, drawn up by Richard Pique towards 1375, are included patches of vineland and annual payments of wine from almost every village and hamlet within twenty miles of Reims; though it is only fair to mention that many of the places enumerated produce to-day wines of very ordinary character, which, although they have a local habitation, have certainly failed to secure themselves a name.[40] A general return of church property made to the Bailli of Vermandois, the king's representative in 1384, at a time when Charles VI. was busily engaged in confiscating whatever he could lay hands on, shows that the religious establishments of Reims were equally well endowed with vineyards. These were mostly situate to the north-east and south-west of Reims, or in the immediate vicinity of the city; and according to their owners, whose object was of course to offer as few temptations as possible to the monarch, they frequently cost more to dress than they brought in. [41] In the return furnished by the archbishop in the following year, he complains that, owing to the great plantation of vines throughout the district, the right of licensing the brewing of ale and beer had failed to bring him in any revenue for the past three years. This prelate, by the way, seems to have loved his liquor like many of his predecessors, judging from the inventory made after his death, in 1389, of the contents of his cellars.[42] All this abundance of wine was not without its fruits; and we find the clerk of Troyes asserting that liars swarm in Picardy as drunkards do in Champagne, where a man not worth a rap will drink wine every day;[43] and a boast in

the chanson of the Comte de Brie to the effect that the province abounded in wheat, wine, fodder, and litter.[44]



CHURCH OF ST. REMI, REIMS.

Under these circumstances it is not at all surprising that that renowned vinous soaker, King Wenceslaus (surnamed the Drunkard) of Bohemia, found ample

opportunities for self-indulgence when he visited Reims to confer with Charles VI. on the subject of the schism of the popes of Avignon, then desolating the Church—certainly a very fit subject for a drunkard and a madman to put their heads together about. No sooner had the illustrious visitor alighted at the Abbey of St. Remi—to-day the Hôtel Dieu—where quarters had been assigned him, than he expressed a wish to taste the wine of the district, with the quality of which he had long been acquainted. The wine was brought, and tasted again and again in such conscientious style that when the Dukes of Bourbon and Berri came to escort him to dinner with the king they found him dead-drunk and utterly unfit to treat of affairs of State, still less those of the Church. The same kind of thing went on daily—the 'same old drunk,' as the nigger expressed it, lasting week after week; and the French monarch, who must have surely had a lucid interval, resolved to profit by his guest's weakness. Accordingly he gave special orders to the cup-bearers, at a grand banquet at which matters were to be finally settled, to be particularly attentive in filling the Bohemian king's goblet. This they did so frequently that the royal sot, overcome by wine, yielded during the discussion following the repast whatever was asked of him; whilst his host probably returned special thanks to St. Archideclin, the supposed bridegroom of the marriage of Cana, whom the piety of the Middle Ages had transformed into a saint and created the especial patron of all appertaining to the cellar. This triumph of wine over diplomacy occurred in 1397.[45]

A charter of Charles VI., dated July 1412, which gave the municipal authorities of Reims the sole right of appointing sworn wine-brokers, expressly mentions that the trade of the town was chiefly

based upon the wine grown in the environs.[46] The wine, the charter states, when stored in the cellars of the town, was customarily sold by brokers, who of their own authority were in the habit of levying a commission of twopence, and even more, per piece, selling it to the person who offered them most, and taking money from both buyer and seller. To remedy this state of things, from which it was asserted the trade had begun to suffer, it was decreed that every broker should take an oath, before the Captain of Reims and the eschevins, to act honestly and without favour, and not to receive more than one penny commission. In the case of his receiving more, both he and the seller of the wine were to forfeit two-pence-halfpenny to the town.

The sales of wine mainly took place at the Etape aux Vins, where most of the wine-merchants were established, the busiest time being during the three great annual fairs, when no duties were levied. The old Etape aux Vins is now the Rue de l'Etape, jocularly styled the Rue de Rivoli of Reims, on account of the arcades formed by the projecting upper floors of its fifteenth-and sixteenth-century houses, which rest upon wooden and stone pillars. To-day the casino and the principal restaurants of the city are installed here; still the locality retains much the same aspect as it presented in the days when Remi Cauchois and Huet Hurtaut stood here and chaffered with the peasants who had brought their casks of wine on creaking wains into the city; when S. de Laval glided in search of a customer among the long-gowned fur-capped merchants of the Low Countries; when bargains were closed by a God's-penny and wetted with a stoup of Petit Jehannin's best; and when files of wine-laden wagons rolled forth from the northern gates of the city to gladden

the thirsty souls of Hainault and Flanders.



RUE DE L'ETAPE, REIMS.

Some of the wine had, however, a nobler destination. An order of payment addressed by the town council to the receiver, and dated March 23, 1419, commands him to pay Jacques le Vigneron the sum of 78 livres 12 sols for six queues of 'vin blanc et clairet,' presented to the fierce Duke of Burgundy, Jean sans Peur, at the high price of about 11 *s.* each. [47] Nor did his son Philip, the self-styled 'Prince of the best wines in Christendom,' disdain to draw bridle in order to receive eleven poinçons of 'vin claret' when hastening,

'Bloody with spurring, fiery red with speed,'



through Reims to avenge his father's murder at the Bridge of Montereau.[48] The devastating results of the terrible struggle for supremacy waged between the Armagnacs and Burgundians, and of the invasion of Henry V. of England, are evidenced in the facts that when, in fear and trembling, the Reims council resolved to allow Duke Philip to enter the town in 1425, at the head of four thousand horse, they could only offer him one queue of Beaune, one queue of red, and one queue of white wine; and to the duchess the following year one queue of Beaune and one of French wine; and that wine sent to l'Isle Adam, at the siege of Nesle, cost as much as 19 livres, or nearly 16 *s.*, the queue.

Reims had passed under the sway of England by the

Treaty of Troyes in 1420, the Earl of Salisbury becoming governor of the Champagne. The scarcity of wine, and the liking of the new possessors for their national beverage, is shown by a prohibition issued by the town council in 1427 against using wheat for making beer; and a statement of Gobin Persin, that he had sold more treacle—a famous medicinal remedy in the Middle Ages—during the past half year than in the four years previous, owing to people complaining that they were swollen up from drinking malt liquor. The English, however, at their abrupt departure from the city on the arrival of Charles and the Maid of Orleans, proved their partiality for the wine of Reims by carrying off as many wagonloads of it as they could manage to lay their hands on.

The gallant knights and patriot nobles who followed the Maid of Orleans to Reims, and witnessed the coronation of Charles VII. in 1429, despised, of course, the drink of their island foes, and moistened throats grown hoarse with shouting ‘Vive le roi’ with the choice vintage of the neighbouring slopes, freely drawn forth from the most secret recesses of the cellars of the town in honour of the glorious day. And no doubt Dame Alice, widow of Raulin Marieu, and hostess of the Asne royé (the Striped Ass), put a pot of the very best before the father of ‘Jehane la Pucelle,’ and did not forget, either, to score it down in the little bill of twenty-four livres which she was paid out of the *deniers communs* for the old fellow’s entertainment.[49] For the next ten years, however, the note of war resounded through the country, the hill-sides bristled with lances in lieu of vine-stakes, and instead of money spent for wine for presentation to guests of a pacific disposition, the archives of the town display a long list of sums expended in the

purchase of arms, artillery, and ammunition, for the especial accommodation of less pleasant visitors, in repairing fortifications, and in payments to men charged with watching day and night for the coming of the foe.



JEANNE DARC'S FIRST INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES VII. (From a tapestry of the fifteenth century).

The excesses of the licentious followers of Potton de Xaintrailles and Lahire were worse than those of the English and Burgundians, spite of the four hundred and five livres which had been paid to men-at-arms and archers from the neighbouring garrisons, 'engaged by the city of Reims to guard the surrounding country, in order that the wine might be vintaged and brought into the said city and the vineyards dressed,'[50] and bitter were the complaints addressed in 1433 to the king on the falling off of the wine trade which had resulted therefrom. The ravages of the terrible 'Escorcheurs'

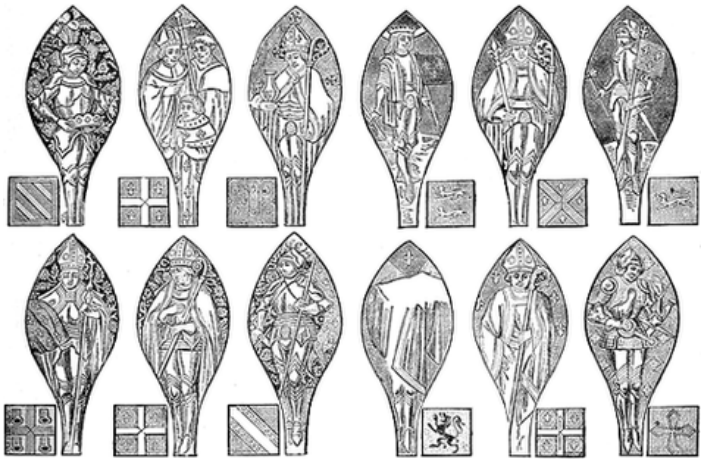
led, in 1436, to fresh complaints and to an additional duty on each queue of ‘wine of Beaune, of the Marne, and of other foreign districts’ sold wholesale at Reims, the receipts to be spent in warlike preparations and on the fortifications. Some of this went to Lahire as a recompense for defending the district from ‘the great routs and companies’ that sought to invade it, he having, presumably on the principle of setting a thief to catch a thief, been made Bailli of Vermandois. In troublous times like these it was necessary to secure the good will of men in power and authority, and hence the town records comprise numerous offerings of money, fine linen cloths, and wine given to various nobles ‘out of grace and courtesy’ for their good will and ‘good and agreeable services, pleasures, and love.’ Madame Katherine de France (the widow of Henry V.), the Chancellor of France, the Constable Richemont, Lahire (Bailli of Vermandois), the bastard Dunois, the Archbishop of Narbonne, the Count de Vendôme, and many other nobles and dignitaries, were in turn recipients of such gifts; and the visit of King Charles the Victorious, in 1440, was celebrated by their profuse distribution.[51]



CULTIVATION OF THE VINE AND VINTAGING IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY
(From a MS. of the Propriétaire des Choses).

Despite the complete expulsion of the English from France, a depression in trade still continued; and in 1451 the lieutenant of the town was sent to court to complain that, owing to the exactions of the farmers of the revenue, merchants would no longer come to Reims to buy wine. Louis XI., who was crowned at

Reims on 15th August 1461, entered the city in great pomp, accompanied by Philip, Duke of Burgundy, and his son the Count of Charolais, afterwards Charles the Bold; the Duke of Bourbon, the Duke of Cleves, and his brother the Lord of Ravenstein, all three nephews of Duke Philip; the Counts of St. Pol, Angoulême, Eu, Vendôme, Nassau, and Grandpré; Messire Philip of Savoy, and many others,—'all so richly dressed that it was a noble sight to see,' remarks Enguerrand de Monstrelet. Prior to being crowned, the king handed his sword to Duke Philip, and requested the latter to bestow upon him the honour of knighthood, which the duke did, and afterwards gave the accolade to several other persons of distinction. The coronation, with its accompaniment of 'many beautiful mysteries and ceremonies,' was performed by Archbishop Jean Juvénal des Ursins, assisted by the Cardinal of Constance, the Patriarch of Antioch, a papal legate, four archbishops, seventeen bishops, and six abbots. At its close the twelve peers of France[52] dined at the king's table; and after the table was cleared the Duke of Burgundy knelt and did homage for Burgundy, Flanders, and Artois, other lords following his example.



THE PEERS OF FRANCE PRESENT AT THE CORONATION OF LOUIS XI. AT REIMS
(From painted-glass windows in Evreux Cathedral).

Louis XI., on his accession, found himself in presence of an exhausted treasury, and cast about for an expedient to fill it. The wine he drunk at his coronation at Reims may have suggested the dues which, only a month afterwards, he decreed should be levied on this commodity, in conjunction with an impost on salt. The inhabitants of the archiepiscopal city found it impossible to believe in such a return for their wonted hospitality, and the vine-growers assailed the collectors furiously. The affair resulted in a general outbreak, known as the Mique-Maque, and in the final hanging, branding, mutilating, and banishing of a number of individuals, half of whom, it may fairly be presumed, were innocent. The wars between France and Burgundy were also severely felt by the Rémois, whose territory was ravaged by the followers of Charles the Bold after Montlhery, and who suffered almost as much at the hands of their friends as at those of their foes. The garrison put into

the town shared amongst themselves the country for a circuit of eight leagues, the meanest archer having a couple of villages, whence he exacted, at pleasure, corn, wood, provisions, and wine, the latter in such profusion that the surplus was sold in the streets, the smallest allowance for each lance being a queue, valued at ten livres, monthly. In 1470 and the following years large subsidies of wine were, moreover, despatched from time to time to the king's army in the field; a cartload being judiciously sent to General Gaillard, 'as he is well disposed towards us, and it is necessary to cultivate such people.' Complaints made in 1489 set forth that in consequence of the *octroi* of the river Aisne, which had been established six years previously, the merchants of Liège, Mezières, and Rethel, instead of coming to Reims to buy wine, were obtaining their supplies from Orleans. The landing of Henry VII. of England, in 1495, spread new alarms throughout the Champagne, and orders were given for all the vine-stakes within a radius of two leagues of Reims to be pulled up, so that the enemy might be prevented from cooking provisions or filling up the moats of the fortifications with them.

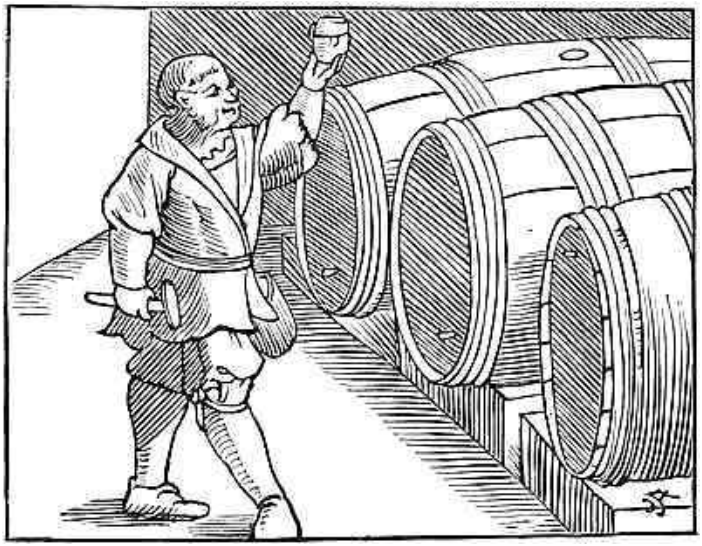




CULTURE OF THE VINE—SIXTEENTH CENTURY (From a MS. Calendar).

TREADING GRAPES—SIXTE CENTURY (From a MS. Calendar)

Pillaging foes and extortionate defenders were bad enough, but the vine-growers had yet other enemies, to wit, certain noxious little insects, which were in the habit of feeding on the young buds, though there is no record that they were ever so troublesome at Reims as they were in other parts of the Champagne, notably at Troyes, where on the Friday after Pentecost 1516 they were formally and solemnly enjoined by Maître Jean Milon to depart within six days from the vineyards of Villenauxe, under pain of anathema and malediction.[53] A century and a half later these insects renewed their ravages, and were exorcised anew by the rural dean of Sézanne, on the order of the Bishop of Troyes.



BUTLER OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY (Facsimile of a woodcut in the Cosmographie Universelle, 1549).

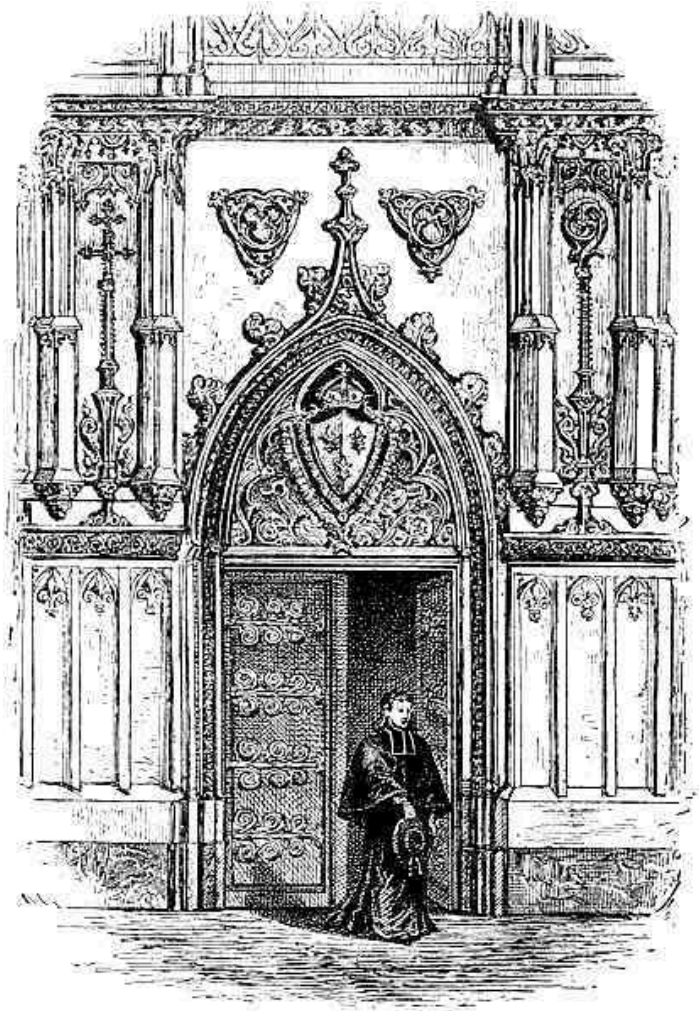
The close of the fifteenth century witnessed another coronation, that of the so-styled ‘Father of his People,’ Louis XII., celebrated with all due splendour in May 1498. The six ecclesiastical peers—principal among whom was the Cardinal Archbishop of Reims, Guillaume Briconnet, in rochet and stole, mitre and crozier; and the six representatives of the secular peerages, Burgundy, Normandy, Aquitaine, Flanders, Toulouse, and Champagne—solemnly invested their sovereign with sword, spurs, ring, orb, sceptre, crown, and all the other outward symbols of royalty; whilst the vaulted roof rang with the acclamations of the people assembled in the nave, and the triumphant peals from the heralds’ silver trumpets, on the banneroles of which was emblazoned the monarch’s favourite badge, the hedgehog. Trumpet-blowing and shouting being both provocative of thirst, peers and people did ample justice to the wine freely provided for all comers on this occasion.



CORONATION OF LOUIS XII. AT REIMS
(From a painting on wood of the fifteenth century).

Francis I. was crowned at Reims in January 1515; and on the occasion of his visiting the city sixteen years afterwards, twenty poinçons of wine were offered to him and sixty to his suite, so that this bibulous monarch had a good opportunity of comparing various growths of the Mountain and the River with the wine from his own vineyards at Ay; and possibly the Emperor Charles V. did his best to institute similar comparisons on his self-invited incursion into the district in 1544. For not only did these two great rivals, but also our own Bluff King Harry and the magnificent Leo X., have each their special commissioner stationed at Ay to secure for them the finest vintages of that favoured spot, the renown of which thenceforward has never paled. The wine despatched for their consumption was most likely sent direct from the vineyards in carefully-sealed casks; but the bulk of the river growths came to Reims for sale, and helped to swell the importance of the town as an emporium of the wine-trade. When Mary Queen of Scots came to Reims, a mere child, in 1550, four poinçons of good wine, with a dozen peacocks and as many turkeys, were presented to her. There are no records, however, of any further offerings to her when, as the widowed queen of Francis II., she visited Reims at Eastertide in 1561, and again during the summer of the same year, shortly before her final departure from France. On these occasions she was the guest, by turns, of her aunt Renée de Lorraine, at the convent of St. Pierre les Dames,—to-day a woollen factory,—and of her uncle, the ‘opulent and libertine’ Charles de Lorraine, Cardinal and Archbishop of Reims, at the handsome archiepiscopal palace, where this powerful prelate resided in unwonted state. As the rhyme goes—

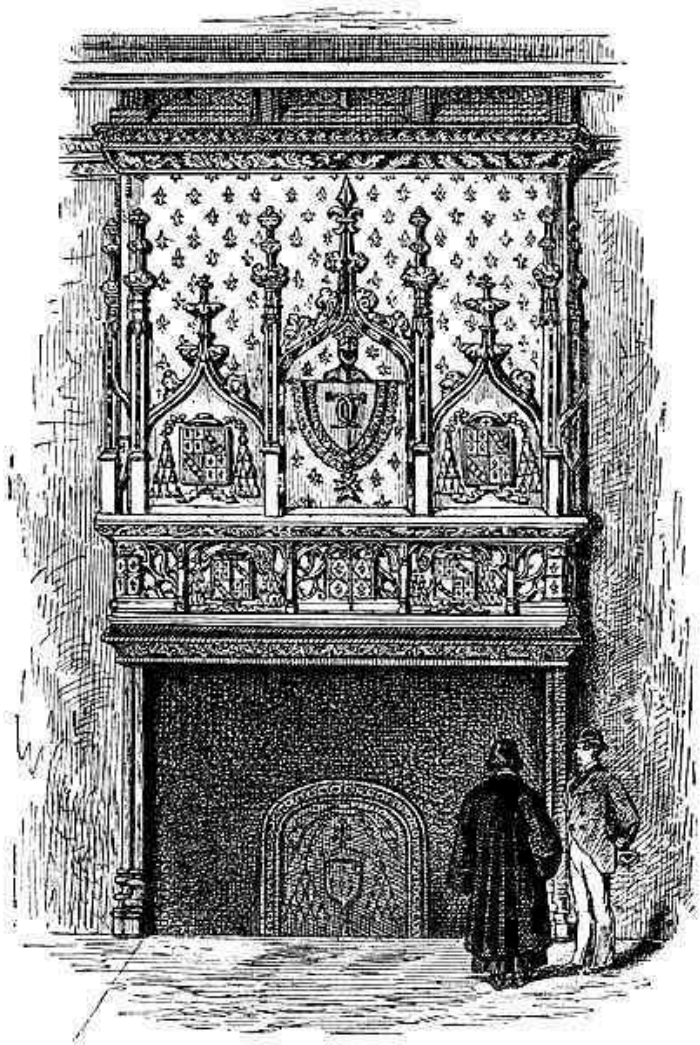
‘Bishop and abbot and prior were there,
Many a monk and many a friar,
Many a knight and many a squire,
With a great many more of lesser degree
Who served the Lord Primate on bended knee.
Never, I ween,
Was a prouder seen,
Read of in books, or dreamt of in dreams,
Than the Cardinal Lord Archbishop of Reims.’



DOORWAY IN THE ARCHIEPISCOPAL PALACE AT REIMS.

Brusquet, the court fool of Henry II., Francis II., and Charles IX., was a great favourite with this princely prelate, and accompanied him several times on his embassies to foreign states. Brusquet's wit was much appreciated by the cardinal, and has been highly

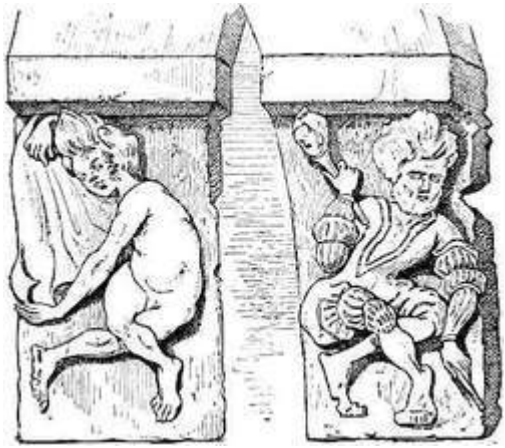
extolled by Brantome; but most of the specimens handed down to us will not bear repetition, much less translation, from their coarseness. When the cardinal was at Brussels in 1559, negotiating the peace of Cateau Cambresis with Philip II., Brusquet one day at dessert jumped on to the table, and rolled along the whole length, wrapping himself up like a mummy in the cloth, with all the knives, forks, and spoons, as he went, and rolling over at the further end. The emperor, Charles V., who was the host, was so delighted that he told him to keep the plate himself. Brusquet had great dread of being drowned, and objected one day to go in a boat with the cardinal. 'Do you think any harm can happen to you with me, the pope's best friend?' said the latter. 'I know that the pope has power over earth, heaven, and purgatory,' said Brusquet; 'but I never heard that his dominion extended over water.' It is not unlikely that the effigy forming one of the corbels beneath the chapter court gateway, and representing a fool in the puffed and slashed shoes and bombasted hose of the Renaissance, with his bauble in his hand, may be intended for Brusquet; for in the Middle Ages the ecclesiastical councils had forbidden dignitaries of the Church to have fools of their own.[54]



CHIMNEYPIECE IN THE BANQUETING HALL OF THE ARCHIEPISCOPAL PALACE AT REIMS.

It was in the grand hall of the archiepiscopal palace of Reims—an apartment which is very little changed from the days when Charles Cardinal de Lorraine

entertained Henry II., Francis II., and Charles IX. in succession—that the coronation banquets at this epoch used to take place. Of the richness and beauty of the internal decorations of this interesting edifice some idea may be gained from the accompanying illustrations.



CORBELS, FROM THE CHAPTER COURT GATEWAY, REIMS.

The stock of wine at Reims at the period of Mary's first visit must have been very low, owing to the continued requisitions of it for armies in the field, for 'German reiters at Attigny,' and 'Italian lansquenets at Voulzy;' and no doubt its production subsequently decreased to some extent from the orders issued to the surrounding villagers to destroy all their ladders and vats lest they should fall into the hands of the enemy, at the epoch of the threatened approach of the German Emperor in 1552.

At the coronation of Francis II. in 1559, and at that of Charles IX. (the future instigator of the massacre of St. Bartholomew) two years later, the citizens of

Reims presented the newly-crowned monarchs with the customary gifts of Burgundy and Champagne wines.[55] In the latter instance, however, the gift met with an unexpected return, inasmuch as the king, after the fashion of Domitian, issued an edict in 1566, ordering that vines should only occupy one-third of the area of a canton, and that the remaining two-thirds should be arable and pasture land. When the forehead of Henry III., the last of the treacherous race of Valois, was touched with the holy oil by the Cardinal de Guise, the wine of Reims for the first time was alone used to furnish forth the attendant banquet, and the appreciative king modified his brother's edict to a simple recommendation to the governors of provinces to see that the planting of vines did not lead to a neglect of other labours. During this reign the wine of Ay reached the acme of renown, and came to be described as 'the ordinary drink of kings and princes.'[56]

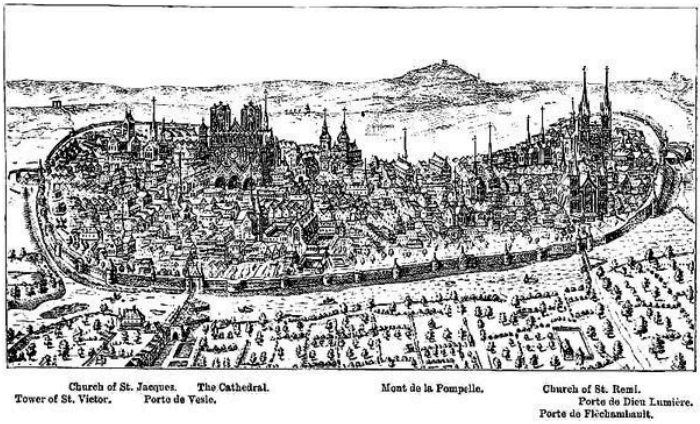


VIGNERON OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY
(Facsimile of a woodcut of the period).

In the troubles which followed the death of Henry III., when the east of France was laid desolate in turn by Huguenots and Leaguers, Germans and Spaniards; when Reims became a chief stronghold of the Catholics, who formed a kind of Republic there, and the remaining towns and villages of the district changed masters almost daily, the foragers of the party of Henry of Navarre and that of the League caused great tribulation amongst the vine-dressers and husbandmen of the Montagne and of the Marne. In 1589 very little wine could be vintaged around Reims 'through the affluence of enemies,' dolefully remarks a local analist.[57] After the battle of Ivry, Reims submitted to the king, but many of the

surrounding districts, Epernay among the number, still sided with his opponents. Epernay fell, however, in 1592, after a cruel siege; and in the autumn of the same year the leaders of the respective parties met at the church of St. Tresain, at Avenay, and agreed to a truce during the ensuing harvest, in order that the crops of corn and wine might be gathered in—a truce known as the Trève des Moissons. The yield turned out to be of very good quality, the new wine fetching from 40 to 70 livres the queue.[58]

The system of cultivation prevailing in the French vineyards at this epoch must have been peculiar, since the staple agricultural authority of the day states that, to have an abundant crop and good wine, all that was necessary was for the vine-dresser to wear a garland of ivy, and for crushed acorns and ground vetches to be put in the hole at the time of planting the vine-shoots; that, moreover, grapes without stones could be obtained by taking out the pith of the young plant, and wrapping the end in wet paper, or sticking it in an onion when planting; that to get grapes in spring a vine-shoot should be grafted on a cherry-tree; and that wine could be made purgative by watering the roots of the vine with a laxative, or inserting some in a cleft branch.[59]



THE CITY OF REIMS IN 1635
(From an engraving of the period).

In the seventeenth century the still wine of the province of Champagne was destined, like the setting sun, to gleam with well-nigh unparalleled radiance up to the moment of its almost total eclipse. Continual care and untiring industry had resulted in the production of a wine which seems to have been renowned beyond all others for a delicate yet well-developed flavour peculiarly its own, but of which the wonderful revolution effected by the invention of sparkling wine has left but few traces. In 1604 the yield was so abundant that the vintagers were at their wits' end for vessels to contain their wine; but three years later so poor a vintage took place as had not been known within the memory of man. During the winter the cold was so intense that wine froze not only in the cellars, but at table close to the fire, and by the ensuing spring it had grown so scarce that the veriest rubbish fetched 80 livres the queue at Reims.[60] In 1610, at the banquet following the coronation of Louis XIII., the only wine served was that of Reims, at 175 livres, or about 7*l.*, the queue;

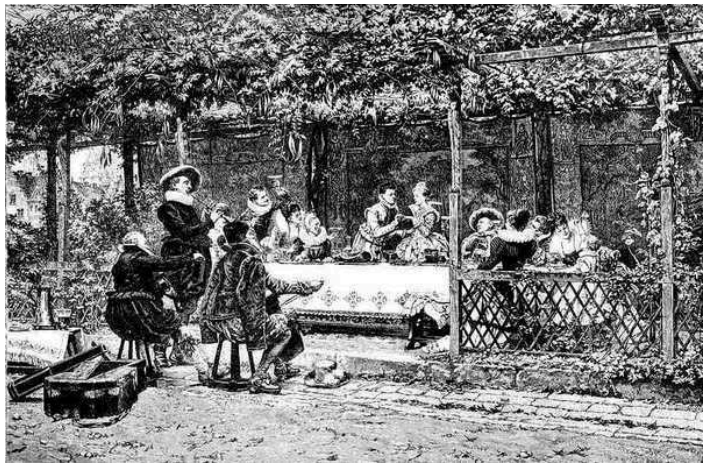
and the future *raffinés* of the Place Royale who assisted at that ceremony were by no means the men to forget or neglect an approved vintage after once tasting it. Champagne, it has been said, was crowned at the same time with the king, and of the two made a better monarch. Five years later a complaint, addressed to the king on the subject of the *fermiers des aides* trying to levy duties on goods sold at the fairs, asserted it was notorious that the chief commerce of Reims consisted of wines. According to the police ordinances of 1627, the price of these was fixed three times a year, namely, at Martinmas, Mid-Lent, and Midsummer; and tavern-keepers were bound to have a tablet inscribed with the regulation price fixed outside their houses, and were not allowed to sell at a higher rate, under a penalty of 12 livres for the first, and 24 livres for the second offence. Moreover, to encourage the production of the locality, they were strictly forbidden to sell in their taverns any other wine than that of the 'cru du pays et de huit lieues es environs,' under pain of confiscation and a fine, the amount of which was arbitrary. The vine-dressers too, in the same ordinances, were enjoined to kill and burn all vine-slugs and other vermin, which during 1621 and the two succeeding years had caused much damage.[61]





This rule must have been perforce relaxed during the troubles of the Fronde, when for two years the troops of the Marshal du Plessis Praslin lived as in a conquered country, indulging in drinking carousals in the wine-shops of the towns, or marching in

detachments from village to village throughout the district, in order to prevent all those who neglected to pay the contributions imposed from working in their vineyards; when their leader, on the refusal of the Rémois to supply him with money, ravaged the vineyards of the plains of les Moineaux and Sacy; and when Erlach's foreigners at Verzy sacked the whole of the Montagne from March until July 1650. As a consequence, people in the following year were existing on herbs, roots, snails, blood, bread made of bran, cats, dogs, &c., or dying by hundreds through eating bread made of unripe wheat harvested in June; the ruin of the citizens being completed, according to an eyewitness, at the epoch of dressing the vines, owing to the lack of men to do the work. [62] A contemporary writer, however, asserts that the vineyards still continued 'to cover the mountains and to encircle the town of Reims like a crown of verdure;' and that their produce not only supplied all local wants, but, transported beyond the frontier, caused the gold of the Indies to flow in return into the town, and spread its reputation afar.[63]



A BETROTHAL BANQUET IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

Such was the repute of the Champagne wines when Louis XIV. was crowned at Reims in 1654, that all the great lords present on the occasion were exceedingly anxious to partake of them, and no doubt regarded with envious eyes the huge basket containing a hundred bottles of the best which the deputies from Epernay had brought with them as a present to the gallant Turenne. He at least was no stranger to the merits of the wine, for the records of Epernay show that many a caque had found its way to his tent during the two preceding years, when he was defending the Champagne against Condé and his Spanish allies. In the same year (1654), the Procureur de l'Echevinage speaks of the chief trade of Reims as consisting in the sale of wine, of which the inhabitants collect large quantities, both from the Montagne de Reims and the Rivière de Marne, through the merchants who make this their special trade—a trade sorely interrupted by the incursions of Montal and his Spaniards in 1657 and 1658. Guy Patin too, writing in 1666, mentions the fact of Louis XIV. making a present to Charles II. of England of two hundred pièces of excellent wine—Champagne, Burgundy, and Hermitage; and three years later is fain himself to exclaim, 'Vive le pain de Gonesse, vive le bon vin de Paris, de Bourgogne, de Champagne!' whilst Tavernier the traveller did his best to spread the fame of the Champagne wine by presenting specimens to all the sovereigns whom he had the honour of saluting during his journeyings abroad.[64]

It was about the eighth decade of this century, when the renown of the Grand Monarque was yet at its apogee, and when for many years the soil of the province had not been profaned by the foot of an invader, that the still wine of the Champagne

attained its final point of perfection. The Roi Soleil himself, we are assured by St. Simon, never drank any other wine in his life till about 1692, when his physician, the austere Fagon, condemned his debilitated stomach to well-watered Burgundy, so old that it was almost tasteless, and the king consoled himself with laughing at the wry faces pulled by foreign nobles who sought and obtained the honour of tasting his especial tipple.[65] An anonymous Mémoire[66] written early in the ensuing century (1718) states that, although their red wine had long before been made with greater care and cleanliness than any other wine in the kingdom, the Champenois had only studied to produce a *gray*, and indeed almost white, wine, within the preceding fifty years. This would place about 1670 the first introduction of the new colourless wine, obtained by gathering grapes of the black variety with the utmost care at early dawn, and ceasing the vintage at nine or ten in the morning, unless the day were cloudy. Despite these precautions a rosy tinge—compared to that lent by a dying sunset to the waters of a clear stream—was often communicated to the wine, and led to the term 'partridge's eye' being applied to it. St. Evremond, the epicurean Frenchman—who emigrated to the gay court of Charles II. at Whitehall to escape the gloomy cell designed for him in the Bastille—and the mentor of the Count de Grammont, writing from London about 1674, to his brother 'profès dans l'ordre des coteaux,'[67] the Count d'Olonne, then undergoing on his part a species of exile at Orleans for having suffered his tongue to wag a little too freely at court, says: 'Do not spare any expense to get Champagne wines, even if you are at two hundred leagues from Paris. Those of Burgundy have lost their credit amongst men of

taste, and barely retain a remnant of their former reputation amongst dealers. There is no province which furnishes excellent wines for all seasons but Champagne. It supplies us with the wines of Ay, Avenay, and Hautvillers, up to the spring; Taissy, Sillery, Verzenai, for the rest of the year.'[68] 'The wines of the Champagne,' elsewhere remarks this renowned *gourmet*, 'are the best. Do not keep those of Ay too long; do not begin those of Reims too soon. Cold weather preserves the spirit of the River wines, hot removes the *goût de terroir* from those of the Mountain.' Writing also in 1701, he alludes to the care with which the Sillery wines were made forty years before.

Such a distinction of seasons would imply that wine, instead of being kept, was drunk within a few months of its manufacture; though this, except in the case of wine made as 'tocane,' which could not be kept, would appear to be a matter rather of taste than necessity. This custom of drinking it before fermentation was achieved, and also the natural tendency of the wine of this particular region to effervesce—a tendency since taken such signal advantage of by the manufacturers of sparkling Champagne—are treated of in a work of the period, [69] the author of which, after noting the excellence of certain growths of Burgundy, goes on to say that, 'If the vintage in the Champagne is a successful one, it is thither that the shrewd and dainty hasten. There is not,' continues he, 'in the world a drink more noble and more delicious; and it is now become so highly fashionable that, with the exception of those growths drawn from that fertile and agreeable district which we call in general parlance that of Reims, and particularly from St. Thierry, Verzenay, Ay, and different spots of the Mountain, all others

are looked upon by the dainty as little better than poor stuff and trash, which they will not even hear spoken of.' He extols the admirable *sève* of the Reims wine, its delicious flavour, and its perfume, which with ludicrous hyperbole he pronounces capable of bringing the dead to life. Burgundy and Champagne, he says, are both good, but the first rank belongs to the latter, 'when it has not that tartness which some debauchees esteem so highly, when it clears itself promptly, and only works as much as the natural strength of the wine allows; for it does not do to trust so much to that kind of wine which is always in a fury, and boils without intermission in its vessel.'

Such wine, he maintains, is quite done for by the time Easter is over, and only retains of its former fire a crude tartness very unpleasant and very indigestible, which is apt to affect the chest of those who drink it. He recommends that Champagne should be drunk at least six months after the end of the year, and that the grayest wines should always be chosen as going down more smoothly and clogging the stomach less, since, however good the red wine may be as regards body, from its longer *cuvaison*, it is never so delicate, nor does it digest so promptly, as the others. He concludes, therefore, that it is better to drink old wine, or at any rate what then passed as old wine, as long as one can, in order not to have to turn too soon to the new ones, 'which are veritable head-splitters, and from their potency capable of deranging the strongest constitutions.' Above all, he urges abstinence from such 'artificial mummeries' as the use of ice, 'the most pernicious of all inventions' and the enemy of wine, though at that time, he admits, very fashionable, especially amongst certain 'obstreperous voluptuaries,' 'who maintain that the wine of Reims is never more delicious than

when it is drunk with ice, and that this admirable beverage derives especial charms from this fatal novelty.' Ice, he holds, not only dispels the spirit and diminishes the flavour, *sève*, and colour of the wine, but is most pernicious and deadly to the drinker, causing 'colics, shiverings, horrible convulsions, and sudden weakness, so that frequently death has crowned the most magnificent debauches, and turned a place of joy and mirth into a sepulchre.' Wherefore let all drinkers of Champagne *frappé* beware.

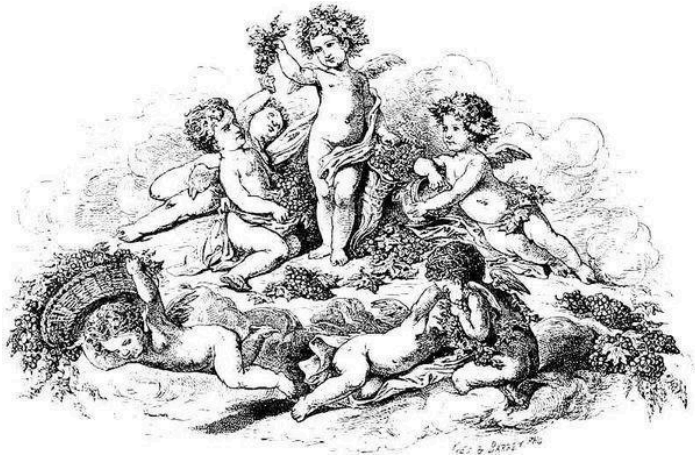
Here we have ample proof of the popularity of the wines of the Champagne, a popularity erroneously said to be due in some measure to the fact that both the Chancellor le Tellier, father of Louvois, and Colbert, the energetic comptroller-general of the state finances, and son of a wool-merchant of Reims, possessed large vineyards in the province.[70] Lafontaine, who was born in the neighbourhood, declared his preference for Reims above all cities, on account of the Sainte Ampoule, its good wine, and the abundance of other charming objects;[71] and Boileau, writing in 1674, depicts an ignorant churchman, whose library consisted of a score of well-filled hogsheads, as being fully aware of the particular vineyard at Reims over which the community he belonged to held a mortgage.[72] James II. of England was particularly partial to the wine of the Champagne. When the quinquennial assembly of the clergy was held in 1700, at the Château of St. Germain-en-Laye, where he was residing, Charles Maurice le Tellier, brother to Louvois and Archbishop of Reims, who presided, 'kept a grand table, and had some Champagne wine that was highly praised. The King of England, who

rarely drank any other, heard of it, and sent to ask some of the archbishop, who sent him six bottles. Some time afterwards the king, who found the wine very good, sent to beg him to send some more. The archbishop, more avaricious of his wine than of his money, answered curtly that his wine was not mad, and therefore did not run about the streets, and did not send him any.'[73] Du Chesne, who, when Fagon became medical attendant to Louis XIV., succeeded him as physician to the 'fils de France,' and who died at Versailles in 1707, aged ninety-one, in perfect health, ascribed his longevity to his habit of eating a salad every night at supper, and drinking only Champagne, a *régime* which he recommended to all. [74]

The wine was nevertheless the indirect cause of the death of the poet Santeuil, who, although a canon of St. Victor, was very much fonder of Champagne and of sundry other good things than he ought to have been. A wit and a *bon vivant*, he was a great favourite of the Duc de Bourbon, son of the Prince de Condé, whom he accompanied in the summer of 1697 to Dijon. 'One evening at supper the duke amused himself with plying Santeuil with Champagne, and going on from joke to joke, he thought it funny to empty his snuff-box into a goblet of wine, and make Santeuil drink it, in order to see what would happen. He was pretty soon enlightened. Vomiting and fever ensued, and within forty-eight hours the unhappy wretch died in the torments of the damned, but filled with the sentiments of great penitence, with which he received the sacraments and edified the company, who, though little given to be edified, disapproved of *such a cruel experiment*.'[75] Of course nothing was done, or even said, to the duke.

'Sire,' said the president of a deputation bringing

specimens of the various productions of Reims to the Grand Monarque when he visited the city in 1666, ‘we offer you our wine, our pears, our gingerbread, our biscuits, and our hearts;’ and Louis, who was a noted lover of the good things of this life, answered, turning to his suite, ‘There, gentlemen, that is just the kind of speech I like.’ To this day Reims manufactures by the myriad the crisp finger-shaped sponge-cakes called ‘biscuits de Reims,’ which the French delight to dip in their wine; juvenile France still eagerly devours its *pain d’épice*, and the city sends forth far and wide the baked pears which have obtained so enviable a reputation. But the production of such wine as that offered to the king has long since almost ceased, while its fame has been eclipsed tenfold by wine of a far more delicious kind, the origin and rise of which has now to be recounted. This is the sparkling wine of Champagne, which has been fitly compared to one of those younger sons of good family, who, after a brilliant and rapid career, achieve a position far eclipsing that of their elder brethren, whose fame becomes merged in theirs.[76]



III.
Invention and Development of Sparkling Champagne.

The ancients acquainted with sparkling wines—Tendency of Champagne wines to effervesce noted at an early period—Obscurity enveloping the discovery of what we now know as sparkling Champagne—The Royal Abbey of Hautvillers—Legend of its foundation by St. Nivard and St. Berchier—Its territorial possessions and vineyards—The monks the great viticulturists of the Middle Ages—Dom Perignon—He marries wines differing in character—His discovery of sparkling white wine—He is the first to use corks to bottles—His secret for clearing the wine revealed only to his successors Frère Philippe and Dom Grossart—Result of Dom Perignon's discoveries—The wine of Hautvillers sold at 1000 livres the queue—Dom Perignon's memorial in the Abbey-Church—Wine flavoured with peaches—The

effervescence ascribed to drugs, to the period of the moon, and to the action of the sap in the vine —The fame of sparkling wine rapidly spreads—The Vin de Perignon makes its appearance at the Court of the Grand Monarque—Is welcomed by the young courtiers—It figures at the suppers of Anet and Chantilly, and at the orgies of the Temple and the Palais Royal—The rapturous strophes of Chaulieu and Rousseau—Frederick William I. and the Berlin Academicians—Augustus the Strong and the page who pilfered his Champagne—Horror of the old-fashioned *gourmets* at the innovation—Bertin du Rocheret and the Marshal d'Artagnan—System of wine-making in the Champagne early in the eighteenth century—Bottling of the wine in flasks—Icing Champagne with the corks loosened.



A SYBARITE of our day has remarked that the life of the ancient Greeks would have approached the perfection of earthly existence had they only been acquainted with sparkling Champagne. As, however, amongst the nations of antiquity the newly-made

wine was sometimes allowed to continue its fermentation in close vessels, it may be conceived that when freshly drawn it occasionally possessed a certain degree of briskness from the retained carbonic acid gas. [77] Virgil's expression,

'Ille impiger hausit
Spumantem pateram,'[78]

demonstrates that the Romans—whose *patera*, by the way, closely resembled the modern champagne-glass—were familiar with frothy and sparkling wines, although they do not seem to have intentionally sought the means of preserving them in this condition.[79]

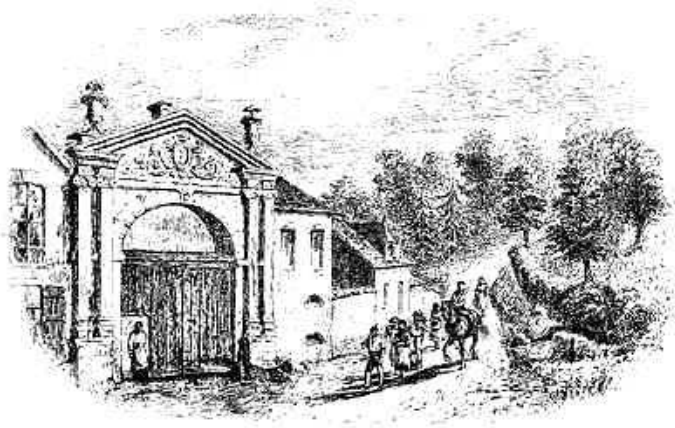


The early vintagers of the Champagne can hardly have helped noting the natural tendency of their wine to effervesce, the difficulty of entirely overcoming which is exemplified in the precautions invariably taken for the production of Sillery sec; indeed tradition claims for certain growths of the Marne, from a period of remote antiquity, a disposition to froth and sparkle.[80] Local writers profess to recognise in the property ascribed by Henry of Andelys to the wine of Chalons, of causing both the stomach and the heels to swell,[81] a

reference to this peculiarity.[82] The learned Baccius, physician to Pope Sixtus V., writing at the close of the sixteenth century of the wines of France, mentions those 'which bubble out of the glass, and which flatter the smell as much as the taste,'[83] though he does not refer to any wine of the Champagne by name. An anonymous author, some eighty years later,[84] condemns the growing partiality for the 'great *vert* which certain debauchees esteem so highly' in Champagne wines, and denounces 'that kind of wine which is always in a fury, and which boils without ceasing in its vessel.' Still he seems to refer to wine in casks, which lost these tumultuous properties after Easter. Necessity being the mother of invention, the inhabitants of the province had in the sixteenth century already devised and put in practice a method of allaying fermentation, and obtaining a settled wine within four-and-twenty hours, by filling a vessel with 'small chips of the wood called in French *sayette*,' and pouring the wine over them.[85]

With all this, a conscientious writer candidly acknowledges that, despite minute and painstaking researches, he cannot tell when what is now known as sparkling Champagne first made its appearance. The most ancient references to it of a positive character that he could discover are contained in the poems of Grenan and Coffin, printed in 1711 and 1712; yet its invention certainly dates prior to that epoch,[86] and earlier poets have also praised it. It seems most probable that the tendency to effervescence already noted became even more marked in the strong-bodied gray and 'partridge-eye' wines, first made from red grapes about 1670, than in the yellowish wine previously produced, like that of Ay, from white grapes,[87] and recommended,

from its deficiency in body, to be drunk off within the year.[88] These new wines, when in a quasi-effervescent state prior to the month of March, offered a novel attraction to palates dulled by the potent vintages of Burgundy and Southern France; [89] and their reputation quickly spread, though some old *gourmets* might have complained, with St. Evremond, of the taste introduced by *faux delicats*. [90] They must have been merely *cremant* wines—for glass-bottle making was in its infancy, and corks as yet unknown[91]—and doubtless resembled the present wines of Condrieu, which sparkle in the glass on being poured out, during their first and second years, but with age acquire the characteristics of a full-bodied still wine. The difficulty of regulating their effervescence in those pre-scientific days must have led to frequent and serious disappointments. The hour, however, came, and with it the man.



GATEWAY OF THE ABBEY OF HAUTVILLERS.



THE CHURCH OF HAUTVILLERS, WITH THE REMAINS OF THE ABBEY.

In the year 1670, among the sunny vineyard slopes rising from the poplar-fringed Marne, there stood in all its pride the famous royal Abbey of St. Peter at Hautvillers. Its foundation, of remote antiquity, was hallowed by saintly legend. Tradition said that about the middle of the seventh century St. Nivard, Bishop of Reims, and his godson, St. Berchier, were seeking a suitable spot for the erection of a monastery on the banks of the river. The way was long, the day was warm, and the saints but mortal. Weary and faint, they sat down to rest at a spot identified by tradition with a vineyard at Dizy, to-day belonging to Messrs. Bollinger, but at that time forming part of the forest of the Marne. St. Nivard fell asleep, with his head in St. Berchier's lap, when the one in a dream, and the other with waking eyes, saw a snow-white dove—the same, firm believers in miracles suggested, which had brought down the holy oil for the anointment of Clovis at his coronation at Reims—flutter through the wood, and finally alight afar off on the stump of

a tree. Such an omen could no more be neglected by a seventh-century saint than a slate full of scribble by a nineteenth-century spiritualist, and accordingly the site thus miraculously indicated was forthwith decided upon. Plans for the edifice were duly drawn out and approved of, and the abbey rose in stately majesty, the high altar at which St. Berchier was solemnly invested with the symbols of abbatial dignity being erected upon the precise spot occupied by the tree on which the snow-white dove had alighted.[92] As time rolled on and pious donations poured in, the abbey waxed in importance, although it was sacked by the Normans when they ravaged the Champagne, and was twice destroyed by fire—once in 1098, and again in 1440—when each time it rose phœnix-like from its ashes.





In 1670 the abbey was, as we have said, in all its glory. True, it had been somewhat damaged a century previously by the Huguenots, who had fired the church, driven out the monks, sacked the wine-cellars, burnt the archives, and committed sundry other depredations inherent to civil and religious warfare; but the liberal contributions of the faithful, including Queen Marie de Medicis, had helped to efface all traces of their visit. The abbey boasted many precious relics rescued from the Reformers' fury, the most important being the body of St. Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, which had been in its possession since 844, and attracted numerous pilgrims. The hierarchical status of the abbey was high; for no less than nine archbishops had passed forth through its stately portal to the see of Reims, and twenty-two abbots, including the venerable Peter of Cluny, to various distinguished

monasteries. Its territorial possessions were extensive; for its abbot was lord of Hautvillers, Cumières, Cormoyeux, Bomery, and Dizy la Rivière, and had all manner of rights of *fourmage*, and *huchage*, *vinage*, and *pressoir banal*, and the like,[93] to the benefit of the monks and the misfortune of their numerous dependents. Its revenues were ample, and no small portion was derived from the tithes of fair and fertile vinelands extending for miles around, and from the vineyards which the monks themselves cultivated in the immediate neighbourhood of the abbey.



It should be remembered that for a lengthy period—

not only in France, but in other countries—the choicest wines were those produced in vineyards belonging to the Church, and that the *vinum theologium* was justly held superior to all others. The rich chapters and monasteries were more studious of the quality than of the quantity of their vintages; their land was tilled with particular care, and the learning, of which in the Middle Ages they were almost the sole depositaries, combined with opportunities of observation enjoyed by the members of these fraternities by reason of their retired pursuits, made them acquainted at a very early period with the best methods of controlling the fermentation of the grape and ameliorating its produce.[94] To the monks of Bèze we owe Chambertin, the favourite wine of the first Napoleon; to the Cistercians of Citaulx the perfection of that Clos Vougeot which passing regiments saluted *tambour battant*; and the Benedictines of Hautvillers were equally regardful of the renown of their wines and vineyards. In 1636 they cultivated one hundred arpents themselves,[95] their possessions including the vineyards now known as Les Quartiers and Les Prières at Hautvillers, and Les Barillets, Sainte Hélène, and Cotes-à-bras at Cumières, the last named of which still retains a high reputation.



Over these vineyards there presided in 1670 a worthy Benedictine named Dom Perignon, who was destined to gain for the abbey a more world-wide fame than the devoutest of its monks or the proudest of its abbots. His position was an onerous one, for the reputation of the wine was considerable, and it was necessary to maintain it. Henry of Andelys had sung its praises as early as the thirteenth century; and St. Evremond, though absent from France for nearly half a score years, wrote of it in terms proving that he had preserved a lively recollection of its merits. Dom Perignon was born at Sainte Ménehould in 1638, and had been elected to the post of procureur of the abbey about 1668, on account of the purity of his taste and the soundness of his head. He proved himself fully equal to the momentous task, devotion to which does not seem to have shortened his days, since he died at the ripe old age of seventy-seven. It was Dom Perignon's duty to superintend the abbey vineyards, supervise the making of the wine, and see after the tithes, paid

either in wine or grapes[96] by the neighbouring cultivators to their seignorial lord the abbot. The wine which thus came into his charge was naturally of various qualities; and having noted that one kind of soil imparted fragrance and another generosity, while the produce of others was deficient in both of these attributes, Dom Perignon, in the spirit of a true Benedictine, hit upon the happy idea of 'marrying,' or blending, the produce of different vineyards together,[97] a practice which is to-day very generally followed by the manufacturers of Champagne. Such was the perfection of Dom Perignon's skill and the delicacy of his palate, that in his later years, when blind from age, he used to have the grapes of the different districts brought to him, and, recognising each kind by its flavour, would say, 'You must marry the wine of this vineyard with that of such another.'[98]



But the crowning glory of the Benedictine's long and useful life remains to be told. He succeeded in

obtaining for the first time in the Champagne a perfectly white wine from black grapes, that hitherto made having been gray, or of a pale-straw colour.[99] Moreover, by some happy accident, or by a series of experimental researches—for the exact facts of the discovery are lost for ever—he hit upon a method of regulating the tendency of the wines of this region to effervesce, and by paying regard to the epoch of bottling, finally succeeded in producing a perfectly sparkling wine, that burst forth from the bottle and overflowed the glass, and was twice as dainty to the palate, and twice as exhilarating in its effects, as the ordinary wine of the Champagne. A correlative result of his investigations was the present system of corking bottles, a wisp of tow dipped in oil being the sole stopper in use prior to his time.[100] To him, too, we owe not only sparkling Champagne itself, but the proper kind of glass to drink it out of. The tall, thin, tapering *flute* was adopted, if not invented, by him, in order, as he said, that he might watch the dance of the sparkling atoms.[101] The exact date of Dom Perignon's discovery of sparkling wine seems to be wrapped in much the same obscurity as are the various attendant circumstances. It was certainly prior to the close of the seventeenth century; as the author of an anonymous treatise, printed at Reims in 1718, remarked that for more than twenty years past the taste of the French had inclined towards sparkling wines, which they had 'frantically adored,' though during the last three years they had grown a little out of conceit with them.[102] This would place it at 1697, at the latest.

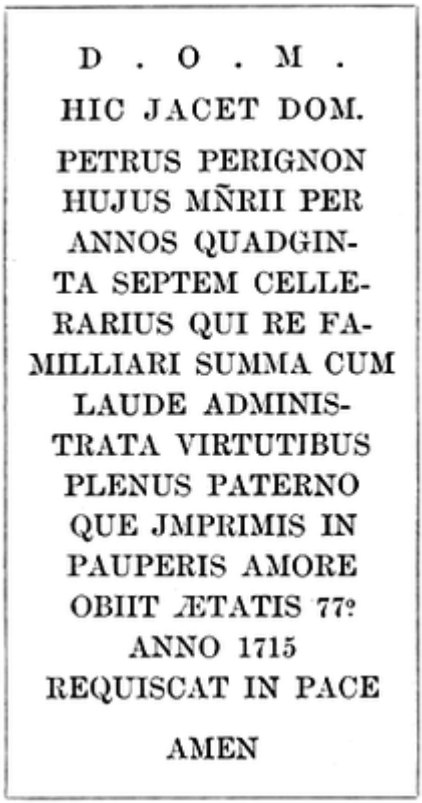
To Dom Perignon the abbey's well-stocked cellar was a far cheerfuller place than the cell. Nothing delighted him more than

‘To come down among this brotherhood
Dwelling for ever underground,
Silent, contemplative, round, and sound;
Each one old and brown with mould,
But filled to the lips with the ardour of youth,
With the latent power and love of truth,
And with virtues fervent and manifold.’



Ever busy among his vats and presses, barrels and bottles, Perignon found out a method of clearing wine, so as to preserve it perfectly limpid and free from all deposit, without being obliged, like all who sought to rival him in its production, to *dépoter* the bottles—that is, to decant their contents into fresh ones.[103] This secret, which helped to maintain the high reputation of the wine of Hautvillers when the manufacture of sparkling Champagne had extended throughout the district, he guarded even better than he was able to guard the apple of his eye. At his

death, in 1715, he revealed it only to his successor, Frère Philippe, who, after holding sway over vat and vineyard for fifty years, died in 1765, imparting it with his latest breath to Frère André Lemaire. Revoked perforce from his functions by the French Revolution, he in turn, before his death about 1795, communicated it to Dom Grossart, who exults over the fact that whilst the greatest Champagne merchants were obliged to *dépoter*, the monks of Hautvillers had never done so.[104] Dom Grossart, who had counted the Moëts amongst his customers, died in his turn without making any sign, so that the secret of Perignon perished with him. Prior to that event, however, the present system of *dégorgeage* was discovered, and eventually *dépotage* was no longer practised.[105]


D . O . M .
HIC JACET DOM.
PETRUS PERIGNON
HUJUS MÑRII PER
ANNOS QUADGIN-
TA SEPTEM CELLE-
RARIUS QUI RE FA-
MILLIARI SUMMA CUM
LAUDE ADMINIS-
TRATA VIRTUTIBUS
PLENUS PATERNO
QUE JMPRIMIS IN
PAUPERIS AMORE
OBIIT ÆTATIS 77?
ANNO 1715
REQUISCAT IN PACE
AMEN

The material result of Dom Perignon's labours was such that one of the presses of the abbey bore this inscription: 'M. de Fourville, abbot of this abbey, had me constructed in the year 1694, and that same year sold his wine at a thousand livres the queue.'[106] Their moral effect was so complete that his name became identified with the wine of the abbey. People asked for the wine of Perignon, till they forgot that he was a man and not a vineyard,[107] and within a year of his death his name figures amongst a list of the wine-producing slopes of the Champagne.[108] His reputation has outlasted the walls within which he carried on his labours, and his merits are thus

recorded, in conventual Latin of the period, on a black-marble slab still to be seen within the altar-steps of the abbey-church of Hautvillers.[109]

The anonymous *Mémoire* of 1718 gives, with an amount of preliminary flourish which would imply a doubt as to the accuracy of the statement made, the secret mode said to have been employed by Dom Perignon to improve his wine, and to have been confided by him a few days before his death to 'a person worthy enough of belief,' by whom it was in turn communicated to the writer. According to this, a pound of sugar-candy was dissolved in a *chopine* of wine, to which was then added five or six stoned peaches, four sous' worth of powdered cinnamon, a grated nutmeg, and a *demi septier* of burnt brandy; and the whole, after being well mixed, was strained through fine linen into a *pièce* of wine immediately after fermentation had ceased, with the result of imparting to it a dainty and delicate flavour. Dom Grossart, however, in his letter to M. Dherbès, distinctly declares that 'we never did put sugar into our wine.'[110] This *collature*, in which peaches play a part, was probably made use of by some wine-growers; and the peach-like flavour extolled by St. Evremond in the wine of Ay may have been due to it, or to the practice then and long afterwards followed of putting peach-leaves in the hot water with which the barrels were washed out, under the idea that this improved the flavour of the wine.[111]

Opinions were widely divided as to the cause of the effervescence in the wines of Hautvillers, for the connection between sugar and fermentation was then undreamt of, although Van Helmont had recognised the existence of carbonic acid gas in fermenting wine as early as 1624. Some thought it due to the addition

of drugs, and sought to obtain it by putting not only alum and spirits of wine, but positive nastinesses, into their wine.[112] Others ascribed it to the greenness of the wine, because most of that which effervesced was extremely raw; and others again believed that it was influenced by the age of the moon at the epoch of bottling. Experience undoubtedly showed that wine bottled between the vintage and the month of May was certain to effervesce, and that no time was more favourable for this operation than the end of the second quarter of the moon of March. Nevertheless, as the wines, especially those of the Mountain of Reims, were not usually matured at this epoch, it was recommended, in order to secure a ripe and exquisite sparkling wine, to defer the bottling until the ascent of the sap in the vine between the tenth and fourteenth day of the moon of August; whereas, to insure a *non mousseux* wine, the bottling ought to take place in October or November.[113]



The fame of the new wine, known indifferently as *vin de Perignon*, *flacon pétillant*, *flacon mousseux*, *vin sautant*, *vin mousseux*, *saute bouchon*, &c., and even anathematised as *vin du diable*—for the present term, *vin de Champagne*, was confined as yet to the still or quasi-still growths—quickly spread. Never, indeed, was a discovery more opportune. At the moment of its introduction the glory of France was on the wane; Colbert, Louvois, and Luxembourg were dead; the Treaty of Ryswick had been signed; famine and deficit reared their threatening heads, and lo, Providence offered this new consolation for all outward and inward ills. With the King it could only find scant favour. The once brilliant Louis was now a bigoted and almost isolated invalid. His debilitated stomach, ruined by long indulgence, could scarcely even support the old Burgundy—so old that it was almost tasteless—which Fagon had prescribed as his sole beverage some years before;[114] and the

popping of sparkling Champagne corks would have scandalised the quiet *tête-à-tête* repasts which he was wont to partake of with the pious Madame de Maintenon.[115]



But the men who were to be the future *roués* of the Regency were in the flower of youthful manhood in 1698, and the recommendation of Comus had with them more weight than the warnings of Æsculapius. At the joyous suppers of Anet, where the Duc de Vendôme laid aside the laurels of Mars to wreathe his brows with the ivy of Bacchus; at the Temple, where his brother, the Grand Prior, nightly revived the most scandalous features of the orgies of ancient Rome; at the Palais Royal, where the future Regent was inaugurating that long series of *petits soupers*

which were ultimately to cost the lives of himself and his favourite daughter; and at Chantilly, where the Prince de Conti sought successfully to reproduce a younger and brighter Versailles, the pear-shaped flasks, ‘ten inches high, including the four or five of the neck,’[116] stamped with the arms of the noble hosts, and secured with Spanish wax,[117] were an indispensable adjunct to the festivities of the table. A story is told of the Marquis de Sillery, who had turned his sword into a pruning-knife, and applied himself to the cultivation of the paternal vineyards, having first introduced the sparkling wine bearing his name at one of the Anet suppers, when, at a given signal, a dozen of blooming young damsels, scantily draped in the guise of Bacchanals, entered the room, bearing apparently baskets of flowers in their hands, but which, on being placed before the guests, proved to be flower-enwreathed bottles of the new sparkling wine.[118] If ever a beverage was intended for the pleasures of society, it was certainly this one, which it was said Nature had made especially for the French,[119] who found in its discovery a compensation for the victories of Marlborough.

Chaulieu, the poetic abbé, and the favourite of both the Vendômes, hailed this new product of his native province in rapturous strophes. In an invitation to supper addressed to his friend, the Marquis de la Fare, in 1701, he describes how

‘Of fivescore clear glasses the number and brightness
Make up for of dishes the absence and lightness,
And the foam, sparkling pure,
Of fresh delicate wine
For Fortune’s frail lure
Blots out all regret in this memory of mine.’[120]

In a letter to St. Evremond, he mentions sundry wonderful things that should happen 'if the Muses were as fond of the wine of Champagne as the poet who writes this to you;' and, in one to the Marquis de Dangeau, jestingly remarks that

'St. Maur's harsher muse
All flight will refuse,
Unless you sustain
Her wings with Champagne.'[121]

Replying to an invitation to Sonning's house at Neuilly on July 20, 1707, he says that when he comes it will be wonderful to see how the Champagne will be drained from the tall glasses known as *flutes*.[122] That the Champagne he extols was a sparkling wine is established in a poetical epistle to Madame D., in answer to her complaint that the wine he had sent her did not froth as when they supped together, and in this he also speaks of its newness.

His brother-rhymster, Jean Baptiste Rousseau, who must not be confounded with the philosophic Jean Jacques, invited Chaulieu to join him at Neuilly, in mingling the water of Hippocrene with the wine of Hautvillers,[123] and announced to the Champagne-loving Marquis d'Ussé, *apropos* of the latter's favourite source of inspiration, that even

'Phœbus will no more go climbing
For water up Helicon's mount,
But admit, as a source of good rhyming,
Champagne excels Hippocrene's fount.'[124]

Such general attention did the subject attract that Frederick William II. of Prussia actually proposed to

the Academy of Arts and Sciences at Berlin the question, 'Why does Champagne foam?' for solution. The Academicians, with unexpected sharpness, petitioned the King for a supply of the beverage in question on which to experiment. But the parsimonious monarch was equal to the occasion, and a solitary dozen of the wine was all he would consent to furnish them with. His ally, Augustus the Strong of Saxony, was the hero of a ludicrous adventure connected with sparkling Champagne. At a banquet given to him at Dresden, a page, who had surreptitiously appropriated a bottle of this costly beverage, and hidden it in the breast of his coat, had to approach the King. The heat and motion combined had imparted briskness to the wine, out popped the cork, and the embroidered garments and flowing periwig of Mr. Carlyle's 'Man of Sin' were drenched with the foaming liquid. The page fell on his knees and roared for mercy, and the King, as soon as he recovered from his bursts of laughter, freely forgave him his offence.

The success of Dom Perignon's wine caused a revolution in the wine-production of the province, and gave rise to numerous imitations, despite the outcry raised against sparkling wine by many *gourmets*, and even by the wine-merchants themselves, who complained that they had to pander to what they regarded as a depraved taste. The elder Bertin du Rocheret, father of the *lieutenant criminel* and a notable dealer in wine, was much opposed to it.[125] Marshal de Montesquiou d'Artagnan, the gallant assailant of Denain, had ordered some wine of him, and he writes in reply, on November 11, 1711: 'I have chosen three poinçons of the best wine of Pierry at 400 francs the queue, not to be drawn off as *mousseux*—that would be too great a pity. Also a

poinçon to be drawn off as *mousseux* at 250 francs the queue; or, if you will only go as far as 180 francs, it will froth just as well, or better. Also a poinçon of *tocane* of Ay to be drunk this winter—that is to say, it should be drunk by Shrovetide—at 300 francs the queue: this wine is very fine.'[126]

On the 27th December 1712 the Marshal writes: 'With regard to my wine being made *mousseux*, many prefer that it should be so; and I should not be vexed, provided it does not in any way depreciate its quality.' On the 18th October of the following year the stern *laudator temporis acti* describes how the bottling has been carried out, 'in order that your wines might be *mousseux*, without which I should not have done it, and perhaps you would have found it better, but it would not have had the merit of being *mousseux*, which in my opinion is the merit of a poor wine, and only proper to beer, chocolate, and whipped cream. Good Champagne should be clear and fine, should sparkle in the glass, and should flatter the palate, as it never does when it is *mousseux*, but has a smack of fermentation; hence it is only *mousseux* because it is working.'

The converted Marshal replies on October 25th: 'I was in the wrong to ask you to bottle my wine so that it might be *mousseux*; it is a fashion that prevails everywhere, especially amongst young people. For my own part, I care very little about it; but I wish the wine to be clear and fine, and to have a strong Champagne bouquet.' In the following December Bertin, in answer to the Marshal's request for three quartaux of wine, says: 'Will you kindly let me know at what date you propose to drink this wine? If it is to be drunk as *mousseux*, I shall not agree with you.'

The allusion to the time of year at which the wine

was to be drunk throws a light upon a practice of the day, confirmed by other passages in this correspondence. Much of the wine made was drunk as *vin bourru* fined, but not racked off, at the beginning of the year, or as *tocane*, which was apt to go off if kept beyond Shrovetide. This speedy consumption and the careful choice made of the grapes intended for *vin mousseux* militated against the formation in the bottles of that deposit, which, up to the commencement of the present century, when the system of *dégorgeage* was introduced, could only be remedied by *dépotage*,[127] though, as we have seen, the Abbey of Hautvillers had a secret method, carefully guarded, of checking its formation. [128]

It is singular that the presence of a natural *liqueur*—the consequence of a complete but not excessive ripeness of the grape, and at present considered one of the highest qualities of the wine—was, at the commencement of the eighteenth century, regarded as a disease. The *Mémoire* of 1718 states that when the wine has any liqueur, however good it may otherwise be, it is not esteemed, and recommends the owner to get rid of this 'bad quality' forthwith by putting a pint of new milk warm from the cow into each *pièce*, stirring it well, letting it rest three days, and then racking the wine off. At this epoch the wine of the Champagne seems to have been preferred perfectly dry.[129] In June 1716 the Marshal d'Artagnan reproached Bertin du Rocheret for sending him Hautvillers wine of the preceding vintage which had turned out *liquoreuse*. However, in August he felt forced to write that it had become excellent, and similar experiences seem to have soon removed all prejudices against this liqueur character. Bertin, in 1725, speaks of it as one of the qualities of

wine, and charges for it in proportion; and six years later remarks that the English are as mad for liqueur and colour in their wines as the French.[130]





IV.
THE BATTLE OF THE WINES.

Temporary check to the popularity of Sparkling Champagne—Doctors disagree—The champions of Champagne and Burgundy—Péna and his patient—A young Burgundian student attacks the Wine of Reims—The Faculty of Reims in arms—A local Old Parr cited as an example in favour of the Wines of the Champagne—Salins of Beaune and Le Pescheur of Reims engage warmly in the dispute—A pelting with pamphlets—Burgundy sounds a war-note—The Sapphics of Benigné Grenan—An asp beneath the flowers—The gauntlet picked up—Carols from a Coffin—Champagne extolled as superior to all other wines—It inspires the heart and stirs the brain—The apotheosis of Champagne foam—Burgundy, an invalid, seeks a prescription—Impartially appreciative drinkers of both wines—Bold Burgundian and stout Rémois, each a jolly tippling fellow—Canon Maucroix's parallel between Burgundy and Demosthenes and Champagne and Cicero—Champagne a panacea for gout and stone—Final decision in favour of Champagne by the medical faculty of Paris—Pluche's opinion on the controversy—Champagne a lively wit and Burgundy a solid understanding—Champagne commands double the price of the best Burgundy—Zealots reconciled at table.



BY a strange fatality the popularity of the sparkling

wine of the Champagne, which had helped to dissipate the gloom hanging over court and capital during the last twenty years of the reign of Louis Quatorze,[131] began to wane the year preceding that monarch's death.[132] Dom Perignon too, as though stricken to the heart by this, forthwith drooped and died. The inhabitants of the province once more turned their attention to their red wines, which continued to enjoy a high reputation during the first half of the century,[133] despite the sweeping assertion that they were somewhat dry, rather flat, and possessed a strong flinty flavour,[134] the *goût de terroir* alluded to by St. Evremond.





These red wines were not only sent to Paris in large quantities by way of the Marne,[135] but commanded an important export trade, those of the Mountain, which were better able to bear the journey than the growths of the River, gracing the best-appointed tables of London, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, and the North,[136] and especially of Flanders, where they were usually sold as Burgundy.[137] It must not be lost sight of that the yield of white sparkling wine from the *crûs d'élite* was for a long time comparatively small, especially when contrasted with that of to-day.[138] At a later period the manufacture of *vin mousseux* increased, notably in the districts south of the Marne,[139] and drove out almost entirely the still red wine; the place of the latter being supplied, as regards Holland, Belgium, and Northern France, by the growths of Bordeaux, which were found to keep better in damp climates.[140]



LOUIS XIV.
(From a portrait of the time).

One cause of this falling off in the popularity of the sparkling wine arose from the great battle which raged for many years respecting the relative merits of Champagne and Burgundy. It was waged in the schools, and not in the field; for the combatants were neither dashing soldiers, brilliant courtiers, nor even gay young students, but potent, grave, and reverend physicians—the wigged, capped, and gowned pedants of the Diaphorus type whom Molière so piteously pilloried. The only blood shed was that of the grape, excepting when some enthusiastic Sangrado was impelled by a too conscientious practical examination into the qualities of the

vintage he championed to a more than ordinary reckless use of the lancet. The contending armies couched pens instead of lances, and marshalled arguments in array in place of squadrons. They hurled pamphlets and theses at each others' heads in lieu of bombshells, and kept up withal a running fire of versification, so that the rumble of hexameters replaced that of artillery.



National pride, and perhaps a smack of envy at the growing popularity of the still red wines of the Champagne, had, as far back as 1652, led a hot-headed young Burgundian, one Daniel Arbinet, to select as the subject of a thesis, maintained by him before the schools of Paris, the proposition that the wine of Beaune was more delicious and more wholesome than any other wine,[141] the remaining vintages of the universe being pretty roughly handled in the thesis in question. The Champenois contented themselves for the time being with cultivating their vineyards and improving their wines, till in 1677, when these latter had acquired

yet more renown, M. de Révélois of Reims boldly rushed into print with the assertion that the wine of Reims was the most wholesome of all.[142] Though the first to write in its favour, he was not the first doctor of eminence who had expressed an opinion favourable to the wine of Champagne. Péna, a leading Parisian physician of the seventeenth century, was once consulted by a stranger. 'Where do you come from?' he inquired. 'I am a native of Saumur.' 'A native of Saumur. What bread do you eat?' 'Bread from the Belle Cave.' 'A native of Saumur, and you eat bread from the Belle Cave. What meat do you get?' 'Mutton fed at Chardonnet.' 'A native of Saumur, eating bread from the Belle Cave and mutton fed at Chardonnet. What wine do you drink?' 'Wine from the Côteaux.'[143] 'What! You are a native of Saumur; you eat bread from the Belle Cave, and mutton fed at Chardonnet, and drink the wine of the Côteaux, and you come here to consult me! Go along; there can be nothing the matter with you!'[144]

Burgundy remained silent in turn for nearly twenty years, when, lo, in 1696—probably just about the time when the popping of Dom Perignon's corks began to make some noise in the world—a yet more opinionated young champion of the Côte d'Or, Mathieu Fournier, a medical student, hard pressed for the subject of his inaugural thesis, and in the firm faith that

'None but a clever dialectician
Can hope to become a good physician,
And that logic plays an important part
In the mystery of the healing art,'

propounded the theory that the wines of Reims

irritated the nerves, and caused a predisposition to catarrh, gout, and other disorders, owing to which Fagon, the King's physician, had forbidden them to his royal master.[145]



ANCIENT TOWER OF REIMS UNIVERSITY.

Shocked at these scandalous assertions, the entire Faculty of Medicine at the Reims University rose in arms in defence of their native vintage. Its

periwigged professors put their learned heads together to discuss the all-important question, 'Is the wine of Reims more agreeable and more wholesome than the wine of Burgundy?' and in 1700 Giles Culotteau embodied their combined opinions in a pamphlet published under that title.[146] After extolling the liquid purity, the excellent brightness, the divine flavour, the paradisiacal perfume, and the great durability of the wines of Ay, Pierry, Verzy, Sillery, Hautvillers, &c., as superior to those of any growth of Burgundy, he instanced the case of a local Old Parr named Pierre Pieton, a *vigneron* of Hautvillers, who had married at the age of 110, and reached that of 118 without infirmity, as a convincing proof of the material advantages reaped from their consumption.

Salins, the *doyen* of the Faculty of Medicine of Beaune, was intrusted with the task of replying, and in 1704 bitterly assailed Culotteau's thesis in a 'Defence of the Wine of Burgundy against the Wine of Champagne,' which ran to five editions in four years. M. le Pescheur, a doctor of Reims, vigorously attacked each of these editions in succession, maintaining amongst other things that the wine of Reims owed its renown to the many virtues discovered in it by the great lords who had accompanied Louis XIV. to his coronation; and that if the King, on the advice of his doctors, had renounced its use, his courtiers had certainly not. He also asserted that England, Germany, and the North of Europe consumed far more Champagne than they did Burgundy, and that it would be transported without risk to the end of the world, Tavernier having taken it to Persia, and another traveller to Siam and Surinam.

The partisanship quickly spread throughout the country, and the respective admirers of Burgundy and Champagne pitilessly pelted each other in prose and verse; for the two camps had their troubadours, who, like those of old, excited the courage and ardour of the combatants. The first to sound the warlike trumpet was Benigné Grenan, professor at the college of Harcourt, who, with the rich vintage of his native province bubbling at fever-heat through his veins, sought in 1711 to crush Champagne by means of Latin sapphics, a sample of which has been thus translated:

‘Lift to the skies thy foaming wine,
That cheers the heart, that charms the eye;
Exalt its fragrance, gift divine,
Champagne, from thee the wise must fly!

A poison lurks those charms below,
An asp beneath the flowers is hid;
In vain thy sparkling fountains flow
When wisdom has their lymph forbid.

’Tis, but when cloyed with purer fair
We can with such a traitress flirt;
So following Beaune with reverent air,
Let Reims appear but at dessert.’[147]



The gauntlet thus contemptuously thrown down was promptly and indignantly picked up by the Rector of the University of Beauvais, the learned Dr. Charles Coffin, a native of Buzancy, near Reims, who in the quiet retirement of the Picardian *Alma Mater* had evidently not forgotten to keep up his acquaintance with the vintage of his native province. The Latin poem he produced in reply, under the title of *Campania vindicata*,[148] had nothing in common with his lugubriously sepulchral name, as may be seen by the following somewhat freely translated extracts from it. After invoking the aid of a bottle of the enlivening liquor whose praises he is about to sing, he exclaims:

‘As the vine, although lowly in aspect, outshines

The stateliest trees by the produce it bears,
So midst all earth's list of rich generous wines,
Our Reims the bright crown of preëminence wears.

The Massica, erst sang by Horace of old,
To Sillery now must abandon the field;
Falernian, nor Chian, could ne'er be so bold
To rival the nectar Ay's sunny slopes yield.

As bright as the goblet it sparklingly fills
With diamonds in fusion, it foaming exhales
An odour ambrosial, the nostril that thrills,
Foretelling the flavour delicious it veils.

At first with false fury the foam-bells arise,
And creamily bubbling spread over the brim,
Till equally swiftly their petulance dies
In a purity that makes e'en crystal seem dim.'[149]



Praising the flavour of this nectar, which he declares

is in every way worthy of its appearance, he stoutly defends the wine from the charge of unwholesomeness adduced against it by Grenan:

‘Despite the tongue of malice,
No poison in thy chalice
Was ever found, Champagne!
Simplicity most loyal
Was e’er thy boast right royal,
And this thy wines retain.
No harm lurks in the fire
That helps thee to inspire
The heart and spur the brain.’[150]



So far from causing inconvenience, he claims for Champagne the property of keeping off both gout and gravel, neither of which, he says, is known in Reims and its neighbourhood, and continues:

‘When on the fruit-piled board,
Thy cups, with nectar stored,
Commence their genial reign,
The wisest, sternest faces
Of mirth display the traces,

And to rejoice are fain.
As laughter's silv'ry ripple
Greets every glass we tipple.
Away fly grief and pain.'[151]



The jovial old rector with the sepulchral appellation then proceeds, according to the most approved method of warfare, to carry the campaign into the enemy's territory. He admits the nutritive and strengthening properties of Burgundy, but demands what it possesses beyond these, which are shared in common with it by many other vintages. He then prophesies, with the return of peace,[152] the advent of the English to buy the wine of Reims; and concludes by wishing that all who dispute the merits of Champagne may find nothing to drink but the sour cider of Normandy or the acrid vintage of Ivri. The citizens of Reims, thoroughly alive to the importance of the controversy, were enchanted with this production; they did not, however, crown the poet with laurel, but more wisely and appropriately

despatched to him four dozen of their best red and gray wines, by the aid of which he continued to tipple and to sing.

Grenan, resuming the offensive in turn, at once addressed an epistle in Latin verse, in favour of Burgundy against Champagne, to Fagon, the King's physician.[153] Complaining that the latter wine lays claim unjustly to the first rank, he allows it certain qualities—brilliancy, purity, limpidity, a subtle savour that touches the most blunted palate, and an aroma so delicious that it is impossible to resist its attractions. But he objects to its pretensions.

'Its vinous flood, with swelling pride
In foaming wavelets welling up,
Pours forth its bright and sparkling tide,
Bubbling and glittering in the cup.'[154]

He goes on to accuse the Champenois poet of being unduly inspired by this wine, the effects of which he finds apparent in his inflated style and his attempts to place Champagne in the first rank, and make all other vintages its subjects; and he reiterates his allegations that, unlike Burgundy, it affects both the head and the stomach, and is bound to produce gout and gravel in its systematic imbibers. He concludes by begging Fagon to pronounce in his favour, as having proved the virtues of Burgundy on the King himself, whose strength had been sustained by it. The retort was sharp and to the point, taking the form of a twofold epigram from an anonymous hand:

'To the doctor to go
On behalf of your wine
Is, as far as I know,
Of its sickness a sign.

Your cause and your wine
Must be equally weak,
Since to check their decline
A prescription you seek.'[155]

Nor was the poet of the funereal cognomen backward in stepping into the field; for he published a metrical decree, supposed to be issued by the faculty of the island of Cos in the fourth year of the ninety-first Olympiad,[156] in which, though a verdict is nominally given in favour of Burgundy, Grenan's pleas on behalf of this wine are treated with withering sarcasm.

But whilst these enthusiastic partisans thus belaboured one another, there were not wanting impartial spirits who could recognise that there were merits on both sides. Bellechaume, in an ode jointly addressed to the two combatants,[157] adjures them to live at peace on Parnassus, and, remembering that Horace praised both Falernian and Massica, to jointly animate their muse with Champagne and Burgundy:

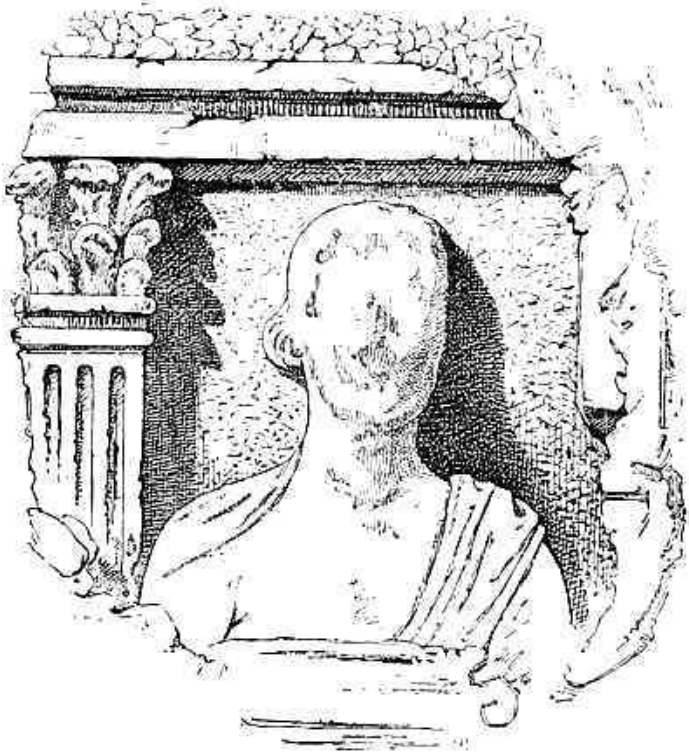
'To learn the difference between
The wine of Reims and that of Beaune,
The fairest plan would be, I ween,
To drink them both, not one alone.'[158]

Another equally judicious versifier called also on the Burgundian champion[159] to cease the futile contest, since

'Bold Burgundian ever glories
With stout Remois to get mellow;
Each well filled with vinous lore is
Each a jolly tippling fellow.'[160]

And the learned Canon Maucroix of Reims exhibited

a similar conciliatory spirit in the ingenious parallel which he drew between the two greatest orators of antiquity and the wines of the Marne and the Côte d'Or. 'In the wine of Burgundy,' he observes, 'there is more strength and vigour; it does not play with its man so much, it overthrows him more suddenly,—that is Demosthenes. The wine of Champagne is subtler and more delicate; it amuses more and for a longer time, but in the end it does not produce less effect,—that is Cicero.'[161]



REMAINS OF THE GATE OF BACCHUS, NEAR REIMS UNIVERSITY.

The national disasters which marked the close of the

reign of Louis XIV. diverted public attention in some degree from the nugatory contest;[162] and though Fontenelle sought to prove that a glass of Champagne was better than a bottle of Burgundy, [163] the impartially appreciative agreed with Panard that

'Old Burgundy and young Champagne
At table boast an equal reign.'[164]

But the doctors continued to disagree, and new generations of them still went on wrangling over the vexed questions of supremacy and salubrity. In 1739 Jean François carried the war into the enemy's camp by maintaining at Paris that Burgundy caused gout; and a little later Robert Linguet declared the wine of Reims to be as healthy as it was agreeable. In 1777 Xavier, Regent of the Faculty of Medicine at the Reims University, affirmed that not only did the once vilified *vin mousseux* share with the other wines of the Champagne the absence of the tartarous particles which in many red wines are productive of gout and gravel, but that the gas it contained caused it to act as a dissolvent upon stone in the human body, and was also invaluable, from its antiseptic qualities, in treating putrid fevers.[165] Further, the appropriately named Champagne Dufresnay established, to his own satisfaction and that of his colleagues, that the wine was superior to any other growth, native or foreign. [166] At length, in 1778, when the bones of the original disputants were dust, and their lancets rust, on the occasion of a thesis being defended before the Faculty of Medicine of Paris, a verdict was formally pronounced by this body in favour of the wine of the Champagne.[167]





V.

PROGRESS AND POPULARITY OF SPARKLING CHAMPAGNE.

Sparkling Champagne intoxicates the Regent d'Orléans and the *roués* of the Palais Royal—It is drunk by Peter the Great at Reims—A horse trained on Champagne and biscuits—Decree of Louis XV. regarding the transport of Champagne —Wine for the *petits cabinets du Roi*—The *petits soupers* and Champagne orgies of the royal household—A bibulous royal mistress—The Well-Beloved at Reims—Frederick the Great, George II., Stanislas Leczinski, and Marshal Saxe all drink Champagne—Voltaire sings the praises of the effervescing wine of Ay—The Commander Descartes and Lebatteux extol the charms of sparkling Champagne—Bertin du Rocheret and his balsamic molecules—The Bacchanalian poet Panard chants the inspiring effects of the vintages of the Marne—Marmontel is jointly inspired by Mademoiselle de Navarre and the wine of Avenay —The Abbé de l'Attaignant and his fair hostesses —Breakages of bottles in the manufacturers' cellars—Attempts to obviate them—The early sparkling wines merely *crémant—Saute bouchon* and *demi-mousseux*—Prices of Champagne in the eighteenth century—Preference given to light acid wines for sparkling Champagne—Lingering relics of prejudice against *vin mousseux*—The secret addition of sugar—Originally the wine not cleared in bottle—Its transfer to other bottles necessary—Adoption of the present method of ridding the wine of its deposit—The vine-cultivators the last to profit by the popularity of sparkling Champagne—Marie Antoinette welcomed to Reims—Reception and coronation of Louis XVI. at Reims—'The crown, it hurts me!'—Oppressive dues and tithes of the *ancien*

régime—The Fermiers Généraux and their hôtel at Reims—Champagne under the Revolution—Napoleon at Epernay—Champagne included in the equipment of his satraps—The Allies in the Champagne—Drunkenness and pillaging—Appreciation of Champagne by the invading troops—The beneficial results which followed—Universal popularity of Champagne—The wine a favourite with kings and potentates—Its traces to be met with everywhere.



WHILST doctors went on shaking their periwigged heads, and debating whether sparkling Champagne did or did not injure the nerves and produce gout, the timid might hearken to their counsels, but there were plenty of spirits bold enough to let the corks pop gaily, regardless of all consequences. The wine continued in high favour with the *viveurs* of the capital, and especially with the brilliant band of titled scoundrels who formed the Court of Philippe le Débonnaire. ‘When my son gets drunk,’ wrote, on the 13th August 1716, the Princess Charlotte Elizabeth of Bavaria, the Regent’s mother, ‘it is not with strong drinks or spirituous liquors, but pure wine of Champagne;’[168] and as the pupil of the Abbé

Dubois very seldom went to bed sober,[169] he must have consumed a fair amount of the fluid in question in the course of his career. Even his boon companion, the Duke de Richelieu, is forced to admit that there was a great deal more drunkenness about him than was becoming in a Regent of France; and that, as he could not support wine so well as his guests, he often rose from the table drunk, or with his wits woolgathering. 'Two bottles of Champagne,' remarks the duke in his *Chronique*, 'had this effect upon him.'



THE REGENT D'ORLÉANS
(From the picture by Santerre).

Desirous, seemingly, that such enjoyments should

not be confined to himself alone, he abolished in 1719 sundry dues on wine in general, whilst his famous, or rather infamous, suppers conduced to the vogue of that sparkling Champagne which was an indispensable accompaniment of those *décolleté* repasts. It unloosed the tongues and waistcoats of the *roués* of the Palais Royal, the Nocés, Broglios, Birons, Brancas, and Canillacs; it lent an additional sparkle to the bright eyes of Mesdames de Parabère and de Sabran, and inspired the scathing remark from the lips of one of those fair frail ones, that 'God, after having made man, took up a little mud, and used it to form the souls of princes and lackeys.' It played its part, too, at the memorable repast at which the Regent and his favourite daughter so scandalised their hostess, the Duchess of Burgundy, and at the fatal orgie shared by the same pair on the terrace of Meudon.



LOUIS XV. WHEN YOUNG
(From a picture of the epoch).

The example set in such high quarters could not fail to be followed. Champagne fired the sallies of the wits and versifiers whom the Duchess of Maine gathered around her at Sceaux, and stimulated the madness which seized upon the whole of Paris at the bidding of the financier Law. It frothed, too, in the goblets which Bertin du Rocheret had the honour of filling with his own hand for Peter the Great, on the passage of the Northern Colossus through Reims in June 1717; and its consumption was increased by a

decree of 1728, which especially provided that people proceeding to their country seats might take with them for their own use a certain quantity of this wine free of duty.

A curious purpose to which the wine was applied appeared from a wager laid by the Count de Saillans —one of the most famous horsemen of his day, and already distinguished by similar feats—to the effect that he would ride a single horse from the gate of Versailles to the Hôtel des Invalides within an hour. His wife, fearing the dangerous descent from Sèvres towards Paris, prevailed on the King to prohibit him from riding in person; but a valet, whose neck was of course of no moment, was allowed to act as his deputy in essaying the feat. The horse selected was carefully fed for some days beforehand on biscuits and Champagne. Crowds assembled to witness the attempt, which was made on May 9, 1725, and resulted in the valet's coming in two and a half minutes behind time. Whether this was due to the badness of the roads, as was alleged, or to the singular *régime* adopted for the animal selected, remains a moot question.[170]

Champagne won equal favour in the eyes of Louis XV., as in those of the curious compound of embodied vices who had watched over the welfare of the kingdom during his minority, though it is true that at a comparatively early age—in the year 1731 —he had, on representations that over-production of wine was lowering its value, prohibited the planting of fresh vineyards without his permission under a penalty of 3000 francs, and had renewed this prohibition the year following.[171]



A FRENCH COUNTRY INN OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
(From the 'Routes de France').

The royal repasts at La Muette, Marly, and Choissy were, however, enlivened with wine from the

Champagne; for we find Bertin du Rocheret in 1738 despatching thirty pieces of the still wine to M. de Castagnet for the *petits cabinets du Roi*,[172] and the eldest of the fair sisters La Nesle, Madame de Mailly, the 'Queen of Choissy' and *maîtresse en titre*, in 1740 reforming the cellar management, and suppressing the *petits soupers* and Champagne orgies of the royal household.[173] Her conduct in this respect seems, however, not to have been dictated by motives of virtue, but rather by the conviction that the wine was too precious to be consumed by inferiors. We are assured that the countess loved wine, and above all that of Champagne, and that she could hold her own against the stoutest toper. 'She has been reproached with having imparted this taste to the King, but it is probable that his Majesty was naturally inclined that way.'[174]



UN PETIT SOUPER OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
(From the collection of the 'Chansons de Laborde').

When, in 1741, the 'Well-Beloved' passed through Reims, Dom Chatelain, after rejoicing over the year's vintage having been a very fine one, adds that it was drunk to a considerable extent and with the greatest joy in the world during the ten days that the King remained in the city. 'It was no longer a question,' he

exclaims exultingly, ‘of sending for Burgundy or Laon wine.’ Three years later, when traversing the Champagne, on his way to Metz, he again halted at Reims; and after hearing mass, ‘retired to the Archevêché, where the Corps de la Ville presented his Majesty with the wines of the town, which he ordered to be taken to his apartments.’[175] Wine was also presented to the Prince de Soubise, Governor of the Champagne; the Duke de Villeroy, M. d’Argenson, and the Count de Joyeuse; whilst, for the benefit of the populace, four fountains of the same fluid flowed at the corners of the Place de l’Hôtel de Ville.[176] In like manner, at the inauguration of that ‘brazen lie,’ the statue of this same Louis XV., in 1767, wine flowed in rivers from the different fountains of the city.[177]

The satyr-like sovereign of France was by no means the only monarch of his time who appreciated sparkling Champagne. Frederick the Great has praised its consoling powers in the doggerel which Voltaire was engaged to turn into poetry; and George II. of England at St. James’s, and Stanislas Leczinski of Poland at Nancy, both quaffed of the same vintage of Ay despatched in 1754 from the cellars of Bertin du Rocheret. Marshal Saxe, during his sojourn in 1745 at Brussels, where he held a quasi-royal court, of which Mademoiselle de Navarre was the bright particular star, drew an ample supply of Champagne from the cellars of that lady’s father, Claude Hevin de Navarre of Avenay, who had established himself as a wine merchant in the Belgian capital.[178] Despite, too, the continued outcry of some connoisseurs,[179] the *vin mousseux* became the universal source of inspiration for the cabaret-haunting poets of that graceless witty epoch.[180] Voltaire, all unmoved by the excellent still

Champagne with which he and the Duke de Richelieu had been regaled at Epernay by Bertin du Rocheret in May 1735, persisted in singing the praises of the effervescing wine of Ay, in the sparkling foam of which he professed to find the type of the French nation:[181]

'Chloris and Eglé, with their snowy hands,
Pour out a wine of Ay, whose prisoned foam,
Tightly compressed within its crystal home,
Drives out the cork; 'midst laughter's joyous sound
It flies, against the ceiling to rebound.
The sparkling foam of this refreshing wine
The brilliant image of us French does shine.'

The Commander Descartes seems not to have been afraid to extol the charms of the sparkling wine to the younger Bertin du Rocheret, as stern a decrier of its merits as his father had previously been. In a letter dated December 1735, asking for 'one or two dozen bottles of sparkling white wine, neither *vert* nor *liquoreux*, "I should like," he says, "some

Of that delectable white wine
Which foams and sparkles in the glass,
And seldom mortal lips does pass;
But cheers, at festivals divine,
The gods to whom it owes its birth,
Or else the great, our gods on earth."'[182]



Amongst other versifiers of this epoch enamoured with the merits of the wine may be cited Charles Lebatteux, professor of rhetoric at Reims University, who in 1739 composed an ode, 'In Civitatem Remensam,' containing the following invocation to Bacchus:

''Tis not on the icy-topped mountains of Thrace,
Or those of Rhodope, thy favours I trace—
Not there to invoke thee I'd roam.
No! Reims sees thee reign sovereign lord o'er her hills;
There I offer my vows, and the nectar that thrills
To my soul I will seek close at home.

Whether Venus-like rising midst foam sparkling
white,
Or wrapped in a mantle of rose rich and bright,
Thou seekest my senses to fire,
Come aid me to sing, for my Muse is full fain
To owe on this day each melodious strain
To the fervour 'tis thine to inspire.'[183]

Bertin du Rocheret, who by no means shared his friend Voltaire's admiration for the sparkling vintage of Ay, sang the praises of the still wine of the Champagne after the following fashion in 1741:

'No, such blockheads do not sip
Of that most delicious wine;
Soul of love and fellowship,
Sweet as truly 'tis benign.
No, their palate, spoilt and worn,
Craves adult'rate juice to drain;
Poison raw which we should scorn,
Beverage fit for frantic brain.
Let us, therefore, hold as fools
Such as now feign to despise
Those *balsamic molecules*
Horace used to sing and prize.

No, such blockheads do not sip
Of that most delicious wine;
Soul of joy and fellowship,
Sweet as truly 'tis benign.
Of that wine, so purely white,
Which the sternest mood makes pass,
And which sparkles yet more bright
In your eyes than in my glass.
Drink, then, drink; I pledge you, dear,
In the nectar old we prize;

Sparkling in our glasses clear,
But more brightly in your eyes.'[184]



Marmontel, the author of *Bélisaire* and editor of the *Mercure de France*, found inspiration in his youthful days in the sparkling wine of Champagne. He describes, in somewhat fatuous style, the results of an invitation he received from Mademoiselle de Navarre to pass some months with her in 1746 at Avenay, where her father owned several vineyards, and where, she added, 'It will be very unfortunate if with me and some excellent vin de Champagne you do not produce good verses.' He tells how, in stormy weather, she insisted, on account of her fear of lightning, on dining in the cellars, where, 'in the midst of fifty thousand bottles of Champagne, it was difficult not to lose one's head;' and how he was accustomed to read to her the verses thus jointly inspired when seated together on a wooded hillock, rising amidst the vineyards of Avenay.[185]

The foregoing in some degree recalls the circumstances under which Gluck, whose fame began to be established about this epoch, was accustomed to seek his musical inspirations. The celebrated composer of *Orpheus* and *Iphegenia in Aulis* was wont, when desirous of a visit from the 'divine afflatus,' to seat himself in the midst of a flowery meadow with a couple of bottles of Champagne by his side. By the time these were emptied, the air he was in search of was discovered and written down.

The lively and good-humoured Abbé de l'Attaignant, whose occupations as a canon of Reims Cathedral seem to have allowed him an infinite quantity of spare time to devote to versifying, addressed some rather indifferent rhymes to Madame de Blagny on the cork of a bottle of Champagne exploding in her hand;[186] and in some lines to Madame de Boulogne, on her pouring out Champagne for him at table, he maintains that the nectar poured out by Ganymede to Jupiter at his repasts must yield to this vintage.[187]

That boon convivialist Panard—who flourished at the same epoch, and was one of the chief songsters of the original Caveau, and a man of whom it was said that, 'when set running, the tide of song flowed on till the cask was empty'—has not neglected sparkling Champagne in his Bacchanalian compositions. The 'La Fontaine of Vaudeville,' as Marmontel dubbed him, does not hesitate to admit that he preferred the popping of Champagne corks to the martial strains of drum and trumpet.[188] The wine, moreover, furnishes him with frequent illustrations for his code of careless philosophy.

'Doctor for vintner vials fills

Most carefully, with lymph of wells.
Champagne, that grew on Nanterre's hills,
Vintner in turn to doctor sells.
So still we find, as on we jog
Throughout the world, 'tis dog bite dog.'[189]

Elsewhere Panard gives expression to the Bacchanalian sentiment, which he seems to have made his rule of life, in the following terms:

'Let's quit this vain world, with its pleasures that cloy,
A destiny tranquil and sweet to enjoy:
Descend to my cellar, and there taste the charms
Of Champagne and Beaune;
Our pleasure will there be without the alarms
Of any joy queller;
For the *ennui* that often mounts up to the throne
Will never descend to the cellar.'[190]

The poet appears to have rivalled one of the characters in his piece, *Les Festes Sincères* (represented on the 5th October 1744 on the occasion of the King's convalescence), who, after describing how wine was freely proffered to all comers, said that he had contented himself with thirty glasses, 'half Burgundy and half Champagne.'

In a piece of verse entitled 'La Charme du Vaudeville à Table,' Panard sketches in glowing colours the inspiriting effect of sparkling Champagne upon such a joyous company of periwigged beaux and patched and powdered beauties as we may imagine to be assembled at the hospitable board of some rich financier of the epoch.

‘’Tis then some joyous guest
A flask, filled with the best
Of Reims or Ay, securely sealed, holds up;
He deftly cuts the string,
Aloft the cork takes wing;
The rest with eager eyes
Thrust glasses t’wards the prize,
And watch the nectar foaming o’er the cup.

They sip, they drink, they laugh,
And then anew they quaff
Their bumpers, crowned above the brim with foam
That gives to laughter birth,
And makes fresh bursts of mirth.
Its spirit and its fire
Unto the brain aspire,
And rouse the wit of which this is the home.’[191]



To its praise he also devotes a poetic *tour de force*, the concluding verses of which may thus be rendered:

‘Thanks to the bowl

That cheers my soul,
No care can make me shrink.
The foam divine
Of this gray wine,[192]
I think,

When it I drain,
Gives to each vein
A link.
Source of pure joy,
Without alloy,
Come, dear one, fain I'd drink!

Divine Champagne,
All grief and pain
In thee I gladly sink.
All ills agree
Away from thee
To slink.

Sweet to the nose
As new-blown rose
Or pink.
With gifts that ease
And charms that please,
Come, dear one, fain I'd drink!'[193]

Despite the success achieved by the *vin mousseux*, merchants, owing to the excessive breakage of the bottles—of the cause of which and of the means of stopping it they were equally ignorant—often saw their hopes of fortune fly away with the splintered fragments of the shattered glass.[194] The following passages from the MS. notes of the founder of one of the first houses of Reims, written in 1770, would imply some knowledge of the fact that a *liquoreux*

wine was likely to lead to a destructive *casse*, and also that the importance of the trade in sparkling Champagne was far greater during the first half of the eighteenth century than is usually supposed.[195] The MS. in question says: 'In 1746 I bottled 6000 bottles of a very *liquoreux* wine; I had only 120 bottles of it left. In 1747 there was less *liqueur*; the breakage amounted to one-third of the whole. In 1748 it was more vinous and less *liquoreux*; the breakage was only a sixth. In 1759 it was more *rond*, and the breakage was only a tenth. In 1766 the wine of Jacquelet was very *rond*; the breakage was only a twentieth.'[196]

The writer then proceeds to recommend, as a means of preventing breakage, that the wine should not be bottled till the *liqueur* had almost disappeared, and that, if necessary, fermentation should be checked by well beating the wine. But as at that epoch there was really no means of effectually testing this disappearance, and as the beating theory was an utterly fallacious one, the followers of his precepts remained with the sad alternative of producing in too many instances either *mousses folles* and their inevitable accompaniment of disastrous breakage, or wine so mature as to be incapable of continuing its fermentation in bottle, and producing *mousse* at all.[197]

It is therefore evident that much of the sparkling wine drunk at the commencement of the last century was what we should call *crémant*, or, as it was then styled, *sablant*,[198] as otherwise the breakage would have been something frightful. Bertin du Rocheret plainly indicates after 1730 a difference between the fiercely frothing kinds, to which the term *saute bouchon* or pop-cork was applied, and wine that was merely *mousseux*.[199] The price of the former is the

highest, ranging up to 3 livres 6 sols, whilst that of the *bon mousseux* does not exceed 50 sols, the difference in the two being no doubt based to a certain extent on the loss by breakage.[200]

Hence, too, a partiality for weak sour growths for making *vin mousseux*, as, although science could give no reason, experience showed that with these the breakage would be less than with those of a saccharine nature.[201] Thus Bertin writes in 1744 that the vineyards of Avize, planted for the most part in 1715, and almost entirely with white grapes, only produced a thin wine, with a tartness that caused it to be one of the least esteemed in the district; but that 'since the mania for the *saute bouchon*, that abominable beverage, which has become yet more loathsome from an insupportable acidity,' the Avize wines had increased in value eightfold.[202] To this acidity the Abbé Bignon refers in a poem of 1741, in which, protesting against the partiality for violently effervescing wines, he says:

‘Your palate is a cripple
Worn out by fiery tipple,
Or else it would prefer juice
Of grapes to fizzing verjuice.’[203]

This serves to explain the preference so long accorded by *gourmets* to the finer *non mousseux* wines, full of aroma and flavour, and often sugary and *liquoreux*, but looked upon by the general public up to the close of the eighteenth century as inferior to those which were sharp, strong, and even sourish, but which effervesced well.[204] Lingering relics of prejudice against sparkling wine existed as late as 1782, when that conscientious observer, Legrand d’Aussy, remarked that since it had been known that sparkling wines were green wines bottled in spring, when the universal revolution of Nature causes them to enter into fermentation, they had not been so much esteemed, the *gourmets* of that day preferring those which did not sparkle.[205]

It was not till the close of the eighteenth century that any attempt was openly made to improve sparkling Champagne by the addition of sugar.[206] Science then came forward to prove that such an addition was not contrary to the nature of wine, and that fermentation converted the saccharine particles of the must into alcohol, and increased the vinosity.[207] Several growers began to profit by this discovery of Chaptal, though, as a rule, those who followed his recommendations in secret were loudest in asserting that Providence alone had rendered their wine better than that of their neighbours.[208] M. Nicolas Perrier of Epernay, an ex-monk of Prémontré, pointed out, at the beginning of the present century, that up to that period sugar was

only regarded as a means of rendering the wine more pleasant to drink, and had always been added after fermentation, and as late as possible. This practice was favoured by the tyrannical routine reigning among the peasants of not tasting the wine till December or January, when in 1800 a decisive experience confirmed the value of the new discoveries. Numerous demands for wine during the vintage led to anticipations of a brisk and speedy sale, and sugar was thereupon added at the time of the first fermentation, merely with the view, however, of bringing the wine more forward for the buyer to taste. The result went beyond the expectations entertained; and at Ay wines of the second class, commonly called *vins de vignerons*, rose to a price previously unheard of.[209]

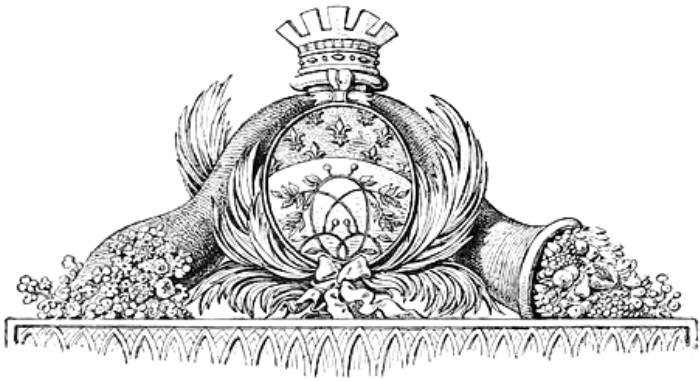
The present system of clearing the wine in bottles was not practised formerly. People were then not so particular about its perfect limpidity; besides which the wine consumed at the beginning of the year[210] had not time to deposit, and that bottled as *mousseux*, owing to its being originally made from carefully-selected grapes, formed very little sediment in the flask.[211] The method of *collage* employed at the Abbey of Hautvillers is said to have preserved the wines from this evil. Whether this method transpired, or other people discovered it, is unknown; but certainly Bertin du Rocheret transmitted it, or something very similar, in July 1752 to his correspondent in London, who bottled Champagne wines regularly every year.[212]

The necessity of ridding the wine of the deposit which deprived it of its limpidity was, however, recognised later on. At first no other method suggested itself, excepting to *dépoter* it—that is, to

decant it into another bottle; a plan fraught, in the case of sparkling wines, with several disadvantages. At the commencement of the present century, however, the system of *dégorgeage* was substituted. [213] As at first practised, each bottle was held neck downwards, and either shaken or tapped at the bottom to detach the sediment, the operation being constantly repeated until the deposit had settled in the neck, when it was driven out by the force of the explosion which followed upon the removal of the cork. Somewhat later the plan now followed of placing the bottles in sloping racks and turning them every day was adopted, to the great saving of time and labour. Its discovery has been popularly attributed to Madame Clicquot; but the fact is the suggestion emanated from a person in her employ named Müller. The idea is said to have simultaneously occurred to a workman in Marizet's house of the name of Thommassin.

Although the advent of such a delectable beverage as sparkling Champagne proved of much benefit to the world in general, and the wine-merchants of Reims and Epernay in particular, those most immediately concerned in its production had little or no reason to rejoice over its renown. The hapless peasants, from whose patches of vineyard it was to a great extent derived, were the last to profit by its popularity. Bidet, writing in 1759, foreshadows the misery which marked the last thirty years of the *ancien régime*.[214] Speaking of the important trade in wine carried on by the city of Reims, he urges that this would in reality be benefited by the old decrees, prohibiting the planting of new vineyards in the Champagne, being enforced to the letter. Extensive plantations of vines in land suitable for the growth of corn had doubled and even tripled the value of

arable land, and caused a rise in the price of wheat. Manure, so necessary to bring these new plantations into bearing, and wood, owing to the demand for vine-stakes, barrel-staves, &c., had risen to thrice their former value. Recent epidemics had cost the lives of a large number of vine-dressers, and public *corvées* occupied the survivors a great part of the year, and hence a considerable increase in the cost of cultivation, landowners having to pay high wages to labourers from a distance. 'Putting together all these excessive charges, with the crushing dues levied in addition upon vine-land as well as upon the sale and transport of wine, the result will infallibly be that the more profitable the wine-trade formerly was to Reims and to the vineyards of the environs, the more it will languish in the end, till it becomes a burden to all the vineyard owners.' Happily these gloomy forebodings have since been completely falsified.



THE ARMS OF REIMS ON THE PORTE DE PARIS.



LOUIS XVI. TAKING THE CORONATION OATH AT REIMS (From a painting by Moreau).

Reims accorded an enthusiastic welcome to the youthful and ill-fated Marie Antoinette, on her passage through the city on May 12, 1770, shortly after her arrival in France;[215] and five years subsequently the Rémois were regaled with the splendours of a coronation, when the young King, Louis XVI., and his radiant Queen passed beneath the elaborately wrought escutcheon surmounting the Porte de Paris, expressly forged by a blacksmith of Reims in honour of the occasion,[216] and received from the hands of the Lieutenant des Habitans the three silver keys of the city.[217] The King was crowned on the 11th June by the Cardinal Archbishop of Reims, Charles Antoine de la Roche Aymon, a prelate who had previously baptised, confirmed, and married him, when the six lay peers were represented by Monsieur (the Count of

Provence), the Count d'Artois, the Dukes of Orleans, Chartres, and Bourbon, and the Prince de Condé. The royal train was borne by the Prince de Lambesq; the Marshal de Clermont Tonnerre officiated as Constable; and the sceptre, crown, and hand of justice were carried respectively by the Marshals de Contades, de Broglie, and de Nicolai.[218] How the ill-fated King exclaimed, as the crown of Charlemagne was placed upon his brow, 'It hurts me,' even as Henri III. had cried, under the same circumstances, 'It pricks me,' and how his natural benevolence led him to slur over that portion of the coronation oath in which he ought to have bound himself to exterminate all heretics, are matters of history. An innovation to be noted is, that at the banquet at the archiepiscopal palace, after the ceremony, the youthful sovereign did *not* sit alone in solitary state beneath a canopy of purple velvet, ornamented with golden fleurs de lis, with his table encumbered by the great gold *nef*, the crown and the sceptres, the Constable, sword in hand, close by him, and the Grand Echanson and Ecuyer Tranchant tasting his wine and cutting his food,[219] circumstances under which 'the roast must be without savour and the Ai without bouquet.'[220] The King on this occasion admitted his brothers to his board; and the ecclesiastical peers, the lay peers, the ambassadors, and the great officers of the crown formed, as usual, four groups at the remaining tables, whilst the Queen and her ladies witnessed the gustatory exploits from a gallery.



The frightful oppression of *tailles*, *aides*, *corvées*, *gabelles*, and other dues that crushed the hapless peasant in the pre-Revolutionary era, weighed with especial severity upon the *vigneron*. In virtue of the *droit de gros*, the officers could at any hour make an inventory of his wine, decree how much he might consume himself, and tax him for the remainder. [221] The *fermiers généraux*, who farmed the taxes of the province, became his sleeping partners, and had their share in his crop.[222] In a vineyard at Epernay, upon four pieces of wine, the average produce of an arpent, and valued at 600 francs, the *ferme* levied first 30 francs, and then when the pieces were sold 75 francs more.[223] The ecclesiastical tithe was also a heavy burden, at Hautvillers the eleventh of the wine being taken as *dismes*, at Dizy the twelfth, and at Pierry the twentieth.[224] The result was one continuous struggle of trickery on the part of the grower, and cunning on that of the officers.[225] The visits of the latter were paid almost daily, and their registers recorded every drop of wine in the cellars of the inhabitants.[226]

But the wine had by no means acquitted all its dues. The merchant buying it had to pay another 75 francs to the *ferme* before despatching it to the consumer.

When he did despatch it, the *ferme* strictly prescribed the route it was to take, any deviation from this being punished by confiscation; and it had to pay at almost every step. Transport by water was excessively onerous from constantly recurring tolls, and by land whole days were lost in undergoing examinations and verifications and making payments.[227] The commissionnaire charged with the conveyance of Bertin du Rocheret's wine to Calais from Epernay had from 70 to 75 francs per poinçon. Despite all these drawbacks, the export trade must have been considerable, for we are told that prior to the Revolution the profits on supplying two or three abbeys of Flanders were sufficient to enable a wine-merchant of Reims to live in good style.[228]



BAS-RELIEF ON THE ANCIENT HÔTEL DES FERMES AT REIMS.

On arriving at the town where it was to be drunk, the wine was subject to a fresh series of charges—*octroi*, *droit de détail*, *le billot*, *le cinquième en sus l'impôt*, *jaugeage*, *courtage*, *gourmettage*, &c.—frequently ranging up to 60 or 70 francs.[229] All this really affected the grower; for if the retail consumer, inhibited by high prices, could not buy, the former was unable to sell. At this epoch vine-grower and pauper were synonymous terms.[230] In certain

districts of the Champagne the inhabitants actually threw their wine into the river to avoid paying the duties, and the Provincial Assembly declared that 'in the greater part of the province the slightest increase in duty would cause all the husbandmen to abandon the soil.'[231] It is scarcely to be wondered at that under such a system of excessive taxation the *fermiers généraux*, who all made good bargains with the State, should have amassed immense fortunes, whilst denying themselves no kind of luxury and enjoyment. They built themselves princely hotels, rivalled the nobility and even the Court in the splendour of their entertainments, grasped at money for the sensual gratification it would purchase, and loved pleasure for its own sake, and women for their beauty and *complaisance*. The *fermiers généraux* of the province of Champagne had their bureaux, known as the Hôtel des Fermes, at Reims, and, after the town-hall, this was the handsomest civil edifice in the city. Erected in 1756 from designs by Legendre, it occupies to-day the principal side of the Place Royale. On the pediment of the façade is a bas-relief of Mercury, the god of commerce, in company with Penelope and the youthful Pan, surrounding whom are children engaged with the vintage and with bales of wool, typical of the staple trades of the capital of the Champagne.



L'ACCORD FRATERNEL
(From a print published at the commencement of the Revolution).

The revolutionary epoch presents a wide gap in the written history of sparkling Champagne which no one seems to have taken the trouble of filling, though this hiatus can be to some extent bridged over by a glance at the caricatures of the period. It is evident from these that Champagne continued to be the fashionable wine *par excellence*. We can comprehend it was *de rigueur* to 'fouetter le Champagne'[232] at the epicurean repasts held at the *petits maisons* of the rich *fermiers généraux*, and that the *talons rouges* of the Court of Louis Seize were not averse to the payment of 3 livres 10 sols for a bottle of this delightful beverage[233] when regaling some fair

émule of Sophie Arnould or Mademoiselle Guimard in the *coulisses*. One evening Mademoiselle Laguerre appeared on the stage as Iphigenia unmistakably intoxicated. 'Ah,' interjected the lively Sophie, 'this is not Iphigenia in Tauris, but Iphigenia in Champagne.' A proof of the aristocratic status of the wine is furnished by a print entitled *L'Accord Fraternel*, published at the very outset of the revolutionary movement, when it was fondly hoped that the Three Orders of the States General would unite in bringing about a harmonious solution to the evils by which France was sorely beset. In this the burly well-fed representative of the clergy holds out a bumper of Burgundy; the peasant—not one of the lean scraggy labourers, with neither shirt nor sabots, [234] prowling about half naked and hunger-stricken in quest of roots and nettle-tops, but a regular stage peasant in white stockings and pumps—grips a tumbler well filled with *vin du pays*; while the nobleman, elaborately arrayed in full military costume, with sword, cockade, and tie-wig all complete, delicately poises between his finger and thumb a tall *flute* charged with sparkling Champagne. Moreover, we can plainly trace the exhilarating influence of the wine upon the 'feather-headed young ensigns' at the memorable banquet given to the officers of the Régiment de Flandre by the Gardes du Corps at Versailles, on the 2d Oct. 1789.[235]



MIRABEAU TONNEAU
(From a sketch by Camille Desmoulins).

Conspicuous amongst the titled topers of this period was the Viscount de Mirabeau—the younger brother of the celebrated orator and a fervent Royalist—nicknamed Mirabeau Tonneau, or Barrel Mirabeau, 'on account of his rotundity, and the quantity of strong liquor he contains.'[236] In a caricature dated 'An 1er de la liberté,' and ascribed to Camille Desmoulins,[237] with whom the viscount long waged a paper war, his physical and bibacious attributes are very happily hit off. His body is a barrel; his arms, pitchers; his thighs, rundlets; and

his legs inverted Champagne flasks; whilst in his left hand he holds a foam-crowned *flute*, and in his right another of those flasks, two of which he was credited with emptying at each repast.[238]

We have seen that the origin of many of the most famous *crûs* of France was due to monkish labours, and that at Reims, as elsewhere, a large proportion of the ecclesiastical revenue was derived, either directly or indirectly, from the vineyards of the district. This was happily hit off in *Le Nouveau Pressoir du Clergé*, or *New Wine-Press for the Clergy*, published in 1789. A man of the people and a representative of the Third Estate, the latter in the famous slouched hat and short cloak, are working the levers of a press, under the influence of which a full-faced abbé is rapidly disgorging a shower of gold. A yet more portly ecclesiastic, worthy to be the Archbishop of Reims himself, is being led forward, in fear and trembling, to undergo a like operation; whilst in the background a couple of his compeers, reduced to the leanness of church-rats, are making off with gesticulations of despair.



LE NOUVEAU PRESSOIR DU CLERGÉ, 1789
(From a caricature of the epoch).

The chief personal traits of Louis Seize, as depicted in numerous contemporary memoirs, seem to have been a passion for making locks and a gross and inordinate appetite. High feeding usually implies deep drinking, and one may suppose that a wine so highly esteemed at Court as Champagne was not neglected by the royal gourmand. Still there seems to have been nothing in the unfortunate monarch's career to justify the cruel caricature wherein he is shown with the ears and hoofs of a swine wallowing in a wine-vat, with bottles, flasks, pitchers, cups, goblets, glasses, and *flûtes* of every variety scattered around him; whilst Henri Quatre, who has just crossed the Styx on a visit to earth, exclaims in amazement, 'Ventre St. Gris! is this my grandson Louis?' In another caricature, entitled 'Le Gourmand,' and said to represent an incident in the flight of the royal family from Paris, Louis XVI. is shown seated at table—surrounded by stringed flasks of Champagne, with the customary tall glasses—engaged in devouring a plump capon. His Majesty is evidently annoyed at being interrupted in the middle of his repast, but it is difficult to divine who the intruder is intended for. He can scarcely be one of the commissioners despatched by the National Assembly to secure the king's return to Paris, as the German hussars drawn up in the doorway are inconsistent with this supposition. The female figure before the looking-glass is of course intended for Marie Antoinette, whilst the ungainly young cub in the background is meant for the Dauphin in an evident tantrum with his nurse.[239]



HENRI QUATRE AND LOUIS SEIZE.
'Ventre St. Gris! Is this my grandson Louis?'
(Facsimile of a woodcut of the time.)

As to the pamphleteers, who advocated the Rights of Man and aspersed Marie Antoinette; the poets, who addressed their countless airy trifles to Phyllis and Chloe; the penniless disciples of Boucher and Greuze; and the incipient demagogues, briefless advocates, unbeneficed abbés, discontented bourgeois, whose eloquence was to shatter the throne of the Bourbons, they were fain for the time being to content themselves with the *petit bleu* of Argenteuil or Suresnes, consumed in company with Manon or Margot, in one of the dingy smoky *cabarets* which the *café* was so soon in a great measure to replace. When, however, their day did come, we may be sure they denied themselves no luxury, and sparkling Champagne would certainly have graced Danton's luxurious repasts, and may possibly have played its part at the last repast of the condemned Girondins. In '93, we find Champagne of 1779—the still wine, of course—announced for sale at Lemoine's shop in the Palais Royal; while a delectable compound,

styled *crême de fleur d'orange grillée au vin de Champagne*, was obtainable at Théron's in the Rue St. Martin.[240] The sparkling wine can scarcely have failed to figure on the *carte* of the sumptuous repasts furnished by the *restaurateurs*, Méot and Beauvillers, to the *de facto* rulers of France,[241] although in 1795 the price of wine generally in Paris had increased tenfold.[242] Ex-*procureurs* of the defunct Parliament carefully hoarded all that remained of the Champagne formerly lavished upon them by their ex-clients;[243] whilst the latter had to content themselves with tea at London and beer at Coblenz.[244]



Although details respecting the progress of the Champagne wine-trade at home and abroad at the outset of the present century are somewhat scanty, we readily gather that the great popularity of the sparkling wine throughout Europe dates from an event which, at the time of its occurrence, the short-sighted Champenois looked upon as most disastrous.

This was the Allied invasion of 1814–15. Consumption, so far as the foreign market was concerned, had been grievously interrupted by the great upset in all commercial matters consequent upon the wars of the Revolution and the Empire. It appears that the white wines of Champagne were sent to Paris, Normandy, Italy, and, 'when circumstances permitted of it,' to England, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Spain, Portugal, and 'beyond the seas.' But the trade had suffered greatly during the wars with Austria and Russia in 1806 and 1807; and in the following years the consumption of white wine had fallen considerably, and a large number of wine-merchants had found themselves unable to meet their engagements.[245]

The wine which Napoleon I. preferred is said to have been Chambertin; still, his intimacy with the Moëts of Epernay could scarcely fail to have led to a supply of the best sparkling Champagne from the cellars he had deigned to visit in person. His satraps, who travelled with the retinue of sovereign princes, included the wine in their equipment wherever they went, and the popping of its mimic artillery echoed in their tents the thunder of their victorious cannon. But comparatively few foreign guests met at their tables; and as their foes had on their side few victories to celebrate in a similar style, the knowledge of sparkling Champagne outside France was confined to the comparatively small number of persons of wealth and position able to pay an extravagant price for it.

At length the fatal year, 1814, arrived, and the Allies swarmed across the frontier after the 'nations' fight' at Leipzig. The Champagne lying directly on the way to Paris saw some hard fighting and pitiless

plundering. The Prussians of Baron von Tromberg got most consumedly drunk at Epernay. The Cossacks ravaged Rilly, Taissy, and the other villages of the Mountain; and not being able to carry off all the wine they found at Sillery, 'added to their atrocities,' in the words of an anonymous local chronicler,[246] by staving in the barrels and flooding the cellars. The Russians, under the renegade St. Priest, seized on Reims, whetted their thirst with salt herrings till the retail price of these dainties rose from 5 liards a pair to 3 sous apiece, and then set to work to quench it with Champagne to such an extent that when Napoleon suddenly swooped down upon the city like his own emblematic eagle, a large number of them, especially among the officers, were neither in a condition to fight nor fly.[247]

The immense body of foreign troops who remained quartered in the east of France after the downfall of the Empire continued to pay unabated devotion to the *dive bouteille*. Tradition has especially distinguished the Russians, and relates how the Cossacks used to pour Champagne into buckets, and share it with their horses. But the walking sand-beds of North Germany, the swag-bellied warriors of Baden and Bavaria, and the stanch topers of Saxony and Swabia must of a surety have distinguished themselves. The votaries of Gambrinus, the beer king, strove whether they could empty as many bottles of Champagne at a sitting as they could flagons filled with the amber-hued beverage of their native province; while the inhabitants of those districts where the grape ripens sought to institute exhaustive comparisons between the vintages they gathered at home and the growths of the favoured region in which they now found themselves.



LES RUSSES À PARIS
(From a coloured print of the time).

The Berliner was fain to acknowledge the superiority of the foam engendered by Champagne over that crowning his favourite *weissbier*, his own beloved *kuhle blonde*, and the beer-topers of Munich and Dresden to give the preference to the exhilaration produced by quaffing the wine of Reims and Epernay over that due to the consumption of *bockbier*. The Nassauer and the Rhinelander had to admit certain intrinsic merits in the vintages produced on the slopes of the Marne, and found to be lacking in those grown on the banks of the Rhine, the Ahr, the Main, and the Moselle. The Austrian recognised the superiority of the wines of the Mountain over those of Voslau or the Luttenberg; and the Magyar had to allow that the *crûs* of the River possessed a special charm which Nature had denied to his imperial Tokay. Even the red-coated officers who followed

'Milord Vilainton' to the great review at Mont Aimé, near Epernay, proved faithless to that palladium of the British mess-table, their beloved 'black strop.' Claret might in their eyes be only fit for boys and Frenchmen, and Port the sole drink for men; but they were forced to hail Champagne as being, as old Baudius had already phrased it, 'a wine for gods.'



LE DÎNER DE MILORD GOGO, 1816
(After a coloured print of the time).

The officers of the Allied armies quartered in Paris after the Hundred Days supplemented the charms of the Palais Royal—then in the very apogee of its vogue as the true centre of Parisian life, with its cafés, restaurants, theatres, gambling-houses, and Galeries de Bois—with an abundance of sparkling Champagne. Royalty itself set the example by indicating a marked preference for the wine, Louis

Dixhuit, according to a statement made by Wellington to Rogers, drinking nothing else at dinner. To celebrate the victories of Leipsic and Waterloo or a successful assault on the bank at Frascati's, to console for the loss of a *grosse mise* at No. 113 or of a comrade transfixed beneath a lamp in the Rue Montpensier by a Bonapartist sword-blade, to win the smiles of some fickle Aspasia of the Palais Royal Camp des Tartares or to blot out the recollection of her infidelity, to wash down one of the Homeric repasts in which the English prototypes of the 'Fudge Family Abroad' indulged, the wine was indispensable; until, as a modern writer has put it, 'Waterloo was avenged at last by the *gros bataillons* of the bankers at *roulette* and *trente et quarante*, and by the sale to the invaders of many thousand bottles of rubbishing Champagne at twelve francs the flask.'[248] The rancorous enmity prevailing between the officers of Bonapartist proclivities placed on half-pay and the returned *émigrés* who had accepted commissions from Louis XVIII., resulted, as is well known, in numerous hostile meetings. Captain Gronow has dwelt upon the bellicose exploits of a gigantic Irish officer in the *gardes du corps*, named Warren, who, when 'excited by Champagne and brandy,'[249] was prepared to defy an army; and he tells us that at Tortoni's there was a room set apart for such quarrelsome gentlemen, where, after these meetings, they indulged in riotous Champagne breakfasts.[250] At home, the British Government were being twitted on their parsimony in limiting the supply of Champagne for the table of the exiled Emperor at St. Helena to a single bottle per diem, a circumstance which led Sir Walter Scott to protest against the conduct of Lord Bathurst and Sir Hudson Lowe in denying the captive 'even the solace of

intoxication.'

As is not unfrequently the case, out of evil came good. The assembled nations had drunk of a charmed fountain, and it had excited a thirst which could not be quenched. The Russians had become acquainted with Champagne, which Talleyrand had styled '*le vin civilisateur par excellence*,' and to love this wine was with them a very decided step towards a liberal education. Millions of bottles, specially fortified to the pitch of strength and sweetness suited for a hyperborean climate, were annually despatched to the great northern empire from the house of Clicquot; and later on the travellers of rival firms, eager to secure a portion of this patronage, traversed the dominions of the autocrat throughout their length and breadth, and poured their wines in wanton profusion down the throats of one and all of those from whom there appeared a prospect of securing custom.



From this influx of sparkling wine into the frozen empire of the Czar the acceptance of civilisation—of rather a superficial character, it is true—may be said to date. Had Peter the Great only preferred Champagne to corn-brandy, the country would have been Europeanised long ago. As it is, the wine has to-day become a recognised necessity in higher class Russian society, and scandal even asserts that whenever it is given at a dinner-party, the host is careful to throw the windows open, in order that the popping of the corks may announce the fact to his neighbours. Abroad the Russians are more reserved in their manners; and though ranking amongst the best customers of the Parisian *restaurateurs* for high-

class wines, it is only now and then that some excited Calmuck is to be seen flooding the glasses of his companions with Champagne in a public dining-room. The Russians, it should be noted, have sought, and not unsuccessfully, to produce sparkling wines of their own, more especially in the country of the Don Cossacks and near the Axis.



Béranger might exclaim, with a poet's license, that he preferred a Turkish invasion to seeing the wines of the Champagne profaned by the descendants of the Alemanni;[251] but the merchants of Reims and Epernay were of a different opinion. *Les militaires* have always affected Champagne; and a military aristocracy like that of the Fatherland, in the cruel days when peace forbade any more free quarters and requisitions, became as large purchasers of the wine

as their somewhat scanty revenues allowed of. Their example was followed to a considerable extent by the self-made members of that plutocratic class which modern speculation has caused to spring into life in Germany. Advantage was speedily taken of this taste by their own countrymen, who aimed at supplanting Champagne by sparkling wines grown on native slopes. Nay more, the Germans, as a military nation, felt bound to carry the war into the enemy's territory, and hence it is that many important houses at Reims and Epernay are of German origin. Across the Rhine patriotism has had to yield to popularity, and the stanchest native topers have been forced to acknowledge, after due comparison in smoky *wein stuben* and gloomy *keller*, that, though the sparkling wines of the Rhine and the Moselle are in their own way most excellent, there is but one *Champagner-wein*, with Reims for its Mecca and Epernay for its Medina.

Of England we shall elsewhere speak at length; but the speculative trade of her colonies, with its sharp bargains, dead smashes, and large profits could hardly be carried on without the wheels of the car of Commerce and the tongues of her votaries being oiled with Champagne. The Swiss have only proved the truth of the proverb that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery by producing tolerable replicas of Champagne at Neufchâtel, Vevay, and Sion. Northern, or, to speak by the map, Scandinavian, Europe takes its fair share of the genuine article; and although the economic Belgian is apt to accept sparkling Saumur and Vouvray as a substitute, both he and his neighbour, the Dutchman, can to the full appreciate the superiority of the produce of the Marne over that of the Loire.



The Italian and the Spaniard may affect to outwardly despise a liquor which they profess not to be able to recognise as wine at all; but the former has to allow, *per Bacco*, that it excels in its particular way his extolled Lacryma Christi, while the latter does not carry his proverbial sobriety so far as to exclude the wine from repasts in the upper circles of Peninsular society. Moreover, of recent years they have both commenced making sparkling wines of their own. The Austrian also produces sparkling wines from native vintages, notably at Voslau, Graz, and Marburg; still this has not in any way lessened his

admiration for, or his consumption of, Champagne. The Greek is ready enough to 'dash down yon cup of Samian wine,' provided there be a goblet of Champagne close at hand to replace it with; and boyards and magnates of the debateable ground of Eastern Europe not only imbibe the sparkling wines of the Marne ostentatiously and approvingly, but several of them have essayed the manufacture of *vin mousseux* on their own estates.

The East, the early home of the vine, and the first region to impart civilisation, is perhaps the last to receive its reflux in the shape of sparkling wine. But, the prohibition of the Prophet notwithstanding, Champagne is to be purchased on the banks of the Golden Horn, and has been imported extensively into Egypt in company with *opéra-bouffe*, French *figurantes*, stock-jobbing, and sundry other matters of foreign extraction under the *régime* of the late Khedive. The land of Iran has beheld with wonderment its sovereign freely quaffing the fizzing beverage of the Franks in place of the wine of Shiraz. The East Indies consume Champagne in abundance; for it figures not only on the proverbially hospitable tables of the merchants and officials of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, but at the symposia of most of the rajahs, princes, nawabs, and other native rulers. The almond-eyed inhabitant of 'far Cathay,' reluctant to abandon that strange civilisation so diametrically opposed in all its details to our own, continues to drink his native vintages, warm and out of porcelain cups, and to regard the sparkling drink of the Fanquis as a veritable 'devils' elixir.' But his utterly differing neighbour, the Japanese, so eager to welcome everything European, has gladly greeted the advent of Champagne, and freely yielded to its fascination.

Turning to the undiscovered continent, we find sable sovereigns ruling at the mouths of the unexplored rivers of Equatorial Africa fully acquainted with Champagne, though disposed, from the native coarseness of their taste, to rank it as inferior to rum; whilst the Arab, filled with wonderment at the marvels of European civilisation which meet his eye at Algiers, bears back with him to the *douar*, wrapped up in the folds of his burnous, a couple of bottles of the wondrous effervescing drink of the Feringhees as a testimony, even as Othere brought the walrus-tooth to Alfred. One enthusiastic Algerian colonist has gone so far as to prophesy the advent of the day when the products of the native vineyards shall eclipse Champagne.[252] Let us hope, however, in the interest of Algerian digestions, that this day is as yet far distant.



With respect to the consumption of Champagne in the Western world, the United States' exceeds that of any European country, England and France alone excepted, despite the competition of sparkling Catawba and of a certain diabolical imitation, the raw material of which, it is asserted, is furnished not by the grapes of the Carolinas, the peaches of New Jersey, or the apples of Vermont, but by the oil-wells of Pennsylvania—in fact, petroleum Champagne. The *cabinet particulier* seems to be an institution as firmly established in the leading cities of the States as in Paris; and rumour says that drinking from a Champagne-glass touched by a fair one's lips has replaced the New England pastime of eating the

same piece of maple-candy till mouths meet. As regards the South American Republics, the popping of musketry at each fresh *pronunciamento* is certain to be succeeded by that of Champagne-corks in honour of the success of one or the other of the contending parties.



'SOUS LA TONNELLE'
(From a print of the time of the Restoration).

In Europe Champagne has continued to be, from the days of Paulmier and Venner downwards, the drink of kings, princes, and great lords as they described it.

Take a list of the potentates of the present century, and the majority of them will be found to have evinced at some time or other a partiality for the wine. Louis XVIII. drank nothing else at table. The late ruler of Prussia, Frederick William IV., had such a penchant for Champagne of a particular manufacture, that he obtained the cognomen of King Clicquot. The predecessor of Pio Nono, Gregory XVI., rivalled him in this appreciation, and, terrible to relate, so did the Commander of the Faithful, Abdul Medjid. The latter might, however, have pleaded the excuse put forward by Abd-el-Kader, that although the Prophet had forbidden wine, yet Champagne came into the category of aerated waters, concerning which he had said nothing, a remark justifying the title given to this wit-inspiring beverage of being 'the father of *bons mots*.' Prince Bismarck, in the stormy period of his youth, was in the barbarous habit of imbibing Champagne mixed with porter; but at present he judiciously alternates it with old Port. Marshal MacMahon and the King of the Belgians are said to drink the pink variety of the *vin mousseux* by preference.







'AU BEAU SEXE!'

Naturally, in France as elsewhere, the sparkling vintage of the Marne maintains its claims to be reckoned the wine of beauty and fashion, and more especially in beauty's gayer hours. A glass of Champagne and a *biscuit de Reims* has been a refection which, though often verbally declined, was in the end pretty sure to be accepted from the days of the *merveilleuses* and *incroyables*, through those of the *lionnes*, down to the present epoch of the *cocodettes de la haute gomme*. Neither at ceremonial

banquets nor at ordinary dinner-parties among our neighbours does Champagne hold, however, so prominent a place as amongst ourselves, owing to the great variety of other wines—all capable of appreciation by trained palates—entering into the composition of these festive repasts. In fact, a *repas de noces* is the only occasion on which Champagne flows in France with anything like the freedom to which we are accustomed; and then it is that its exhilarating effect is marked, as some portly old boy rises with twinkling eye to propose the health of the bride, or of that *beau sexe* to which he feels bound to profess himself deeply devoted. At such open-air gatherings as the races at Longchamps and Chantilly, the *buffet* will be besieged by a succession of frail fair ones in the most elaborate *toilettes de courses*, seeking to nerve themselves to witness a coming struggle, or to console themselves for the defeat of the horse backed by their favoured admirer. And, when writing of this wine, it is altogether impossible to omit a reference to those *tête-à-tête* repasts *en cabinet particulier*, of which it is the indispensable adjunct. Its mollifying influence on the feminine heart on occasions such as these has been happily hit off by Charles Monselet in his *Polichinelle au Restaurant*:

'POLICHINELLE AU RESTAURANT.

I.

In a cabinet of Vachette,
Pomponnette
Listens to the pressing lover;
Who, before they've done their soup,
Cock-a-hoop,
Dares his passion to discover.

II.

Elbows resting on the cloth,
Partly wrath—
So much do his words astound—
Resolute she to resist
Being kissed,
Draws her mantle closer round.

III.

Whilst in vain his cause he pressed,
A third guest,
Who in ice-pail by them slumbered,
Rears above his wat'ry bed
Silver head
And long neck with ice encumbered.

IV.

'Tis Champagne, who murmurs low,
"Don't you know
That when once you set me flowing,
This fair rebel to Love's dart
In her heart
Soon will find soft passion glowing?

V.

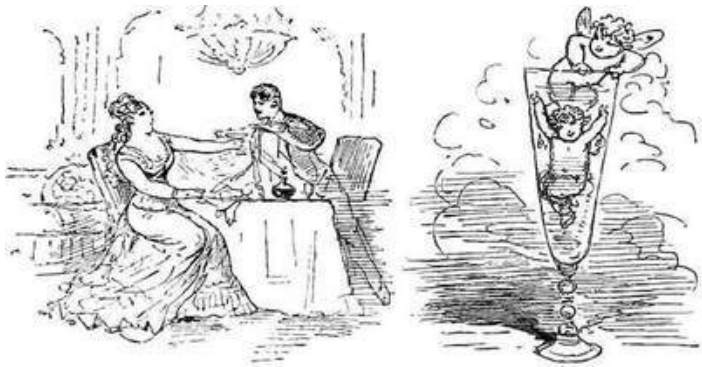
This, if you will list to me,
You shall see;
Cease to swear by flames and fire,
Cast aside each angry thought,
As you ought,
And at once cut through my wire,

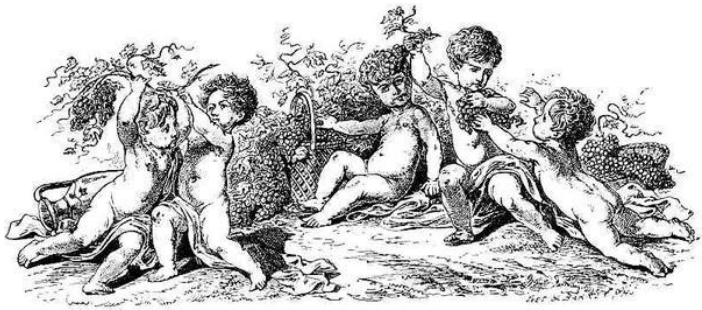
VI.

For I am the King Champagne,
And I reign
Over e'en the sternest lasses,
When midst maddening song and shout
I gush out,
Flooding goblets, bumpers, glasses.

VII.

As thus spoke the generous wine,
Its benign
Influence her heart 'gan soften.
Who seeks such a cause to gain,
To Champagne
His success finds owing often.'[253]





VI.
CHAMPAGNE IN ENGLAND.

The strong and foaming wine of the Champagne forbidden his troops by Henry V.—The English carrying off wine when evacuating Reims on the approach of Jeanne Darc—A legend of the siege of Epernay—Henry VIII. and his vineyard at Ay—Louis XIV.'s present of Champagne to Charles II.—The courtiers of the Merry Monarch retain the taste for French wine acquired in exile—St. Evremond makes the Champagne flute the glass of fashion—Still Champagne quaffed by the beaux of the Mall and the rakes of the Mulberry Gardens—It inspires the poets and dramatists of the Restoration—Is drank by James II. and William III.—The advent of sparkling Champagne in England—Farquhar's *Love and a Bottle*—Mockmode the Country Squire and the witty liquor—Champagne the source of wit—Port-wine and war combine against it, but it helps Marlborough's downfall—Coffin's poetical invitation to the English on the return of peace—A fraternity of chemical operators who draw Champagne from an apple—The influence of Champagne in the Augustan age of English literature—Extolled by Gay and Prior—

Shenstone's verses at an inn—Renders Vanbrugh's comedies lighter than his edifices—Swift preaches temperance in Champagne to Bolingbroke—Champagne the most fashionable wine of the eighteenth century—Bertin du Rocheret sends it in cask and bottle to the King's wine-merchant—Champagne at Vauxhall in Horace Walpole's day—Old Q. gets Champagne from M. de Puissieux—Lady Mary's Champagne and chicken—Champagne plays its part at masquerades and bacchanalian suppers—Becomes the beverage of the ultra-fashionables above and below stairs—Figures in the comedies of Foote, Garrick, Coleman, and Holcroft—Champagne and real pain—Sir Edward Barry's learned remarks on Champagne—Pitt and Dundas drunk on Jenkinson's Champagne—Fox and the Champagne from Brooks's—Champagne smuggled from Jersey—Grown in England—Experiences of a traveller in the Champagne trade in England at the close of the century—Sillery the favourite wine—Nelson and the 'fair Emma' under the influence of Champagne—The Prince Regent's partiality for Champagne punch—Brummell's Champagne blacking—The Duke of Clarence overcome by Champagne—Curran and Canning on the wine—Henderson's praise of Sillery—Tom Moore's summer fête inspired by Pink Champagne—Scott's Muse dips her wing in Champagne—Byron's sparkling metaphors—A joint-stock poem in praise of Pink Champagne—The wheels of social life in England oiled by Champagne—It flows at public banquets and inaugurations—Plays its part in the City, on the Turf, and in the theatrical world—Imparts a charm to the dinners of Belgravia and the suppers of Bohemia—Champagne the ladies' wine *par excellence*—Its influence as a matrimonial agent—'O the wildfire wine of France!'



So great a favourite as Champagne now is with all classes in England, the earliest notice of it in connection with our history nevertheless represents it in a somewhat inimical light. For, according to an Italian writer of the fifteenth century, 'the strong and foaming wine of Champagne was found so injurious that Henry V. was obliged, after the battle of Agincourt, to forbid its use in his army, excepting when tempered with water.'[254] Although this may be the earliest mention of the wine of the Champagne by name in association with our own countrymen, opportunities had been previously afforded to them of becoming acquainted with its assumed objectionable qualities. The prelates who crossed 'the streak of silver sea' with Thurstan of York to attend the ecclesiastical councils held at 'little Rome,' as Reims was styled in the twelfth century, and the knights and nobles who swelled the train of Henry II. when he did homage to Philip Augustus at the latter's coronation, may be regarded as exceptionally fortunate, or unfortunate, in this respect, since the bulk of the English wine-drinkers of that day had to content themselves with the

annual shipments of Anjou and Poitevin wines from Nantes and La Rochelle.[255] But the stout men-at-arms and death-dealing archers who followed the third Edward to the gates of Reims in the days when

‘’Twas merry, ’twas merry in France to go,
A yeoman stout with a bended bow,
To venge the King on his mortal foe,
And to quaff the Gascon wine,’

no doubt found consolation for some of the hardships they endured during their wet and weary watches in the bitter winter of 1365 in the familiarity they acquired with the vintages of the Mountain and the Marne.



And, their sovereign’s prohibition notwithstanding, there is every reason to believe that the heroes of Agincourt drank pottle-deep of the forbidden beverage. The grim Earl of Salisbury bore no love to the burghers of Reims;[256] but there is little likelihood that his aversion extended to the wine of the province he ruled as governor, and the garrisons of its various strongholds over which the red cross of St. George triumphantly floated revelled on the best of ‘the white wyne and the rede.’ In the days of hot fighting and keen foraging which marked the close of Bedford’s regency, there is ample evidence to show

that our countrymen had acquired and retained a very decided taste for these growths. When Charles VII. entered Reims in triumph, with Jeanne Darc by his side and the chivalry of France around him, the retreating English garrison bore forth with them on the opposite side of the city a string of wains piled high with casks of wine, the pillage of the burghers' cellars.[257]

Tradition tells, too, how the English, besieged in the town of Epernay, had gathered there great store of wine, and how this suggested to their captain a cunning stratagem. Having caused a number of wagons to be laden with casks of wine, he despatched them with a feeble escort through the gate furthest from the beleaguering forces, as though destined to Chalons as a place of safety. The French commander marked this, and as soon as the convoy was well clear of the walls, a body of horse came spurring after it in hot haste. The wagon-train halted; there was a brief attempt to turn the laden vehicles homewards, and then, seeing the hopelessness of this, the escort galloped back into the town, and down swooped the Frenchmen on their prize. The ride had been sharp; the day was hot, and the road dusty. So a score of the captured casks were quickly broached; and as the generous fluid flowed freely down the throats of the captors, it soon began to produce an effect. Some of them, overcome by the heat and the wine, loosened their armour, and stretched themselves at length on the ground; whilst others, grouped around some fast emptying barrel, continued to quaff from their helmets and other improvised drinking vessels confusion to the 'island bull-dogs.' When lo, the gate of the town flew open; an English trumpet rang out its note of defiance; and, with lances levelled, the flower of the garrison

poured forth like a living avalanche upon the startled Frenchmen. Before they could make ready to fight or fly, the foe was upon them, and their blood was soon mingling on the dusty highway with the pools of wine which had gushed forth from the abandoned casks. Hardly one escaped the slaughter; but local tradition chuckles grimly as it notes that in revenge thereof every man of the garrison was put to the edge of the sword on the subsequent capture of the town by the French.[258]



At the close of the fruitless struggle against the growing power of Charles the Victorious, we were fain to fall back, as of old, upon the strong wines of

south-western France, the vintages of Bergerac, Gaillac, and Rabestens, shipped to us from the banks of the Garonne,[259] and the luscious malmseys of the Archipelago, to which were subsequently added the growths of southern Spain. The taste of the wine of the Champagne must have been almost forgotten amongst us when the growing fame of the vineyards of Ay attracted the notice of Bluff King Hal. Most likely he and Francis I. swore eternal good fellowship at the Field of the Cloth of Gold over a beaker of this regal liquor. Once alive to its merits, the King, whose ambassadors, *pace* John Styles, seem to have had standing orders to keep an equally sharp look out for wines or wives likely to suit the royal fancy, neglected no opportunity of securing it in perfection. Like his contemporaries, Charles V., Francis I., and Leo X., he stationed a commissioner at Ay intrusted with the onerous duty of selecting a certain number of casks of the best growths, and despatching them, carefully sealed, to the cellars of Whitehall, Greenwich, and Richmond. The example set by the monarch was, however, too costly a one to be followed by his subjects, and the very name of Champagne probably remained unknown to them for years to come. The poets and dramatists of the Elizabethan era, who have left us so accurate a picture of the manners of their day, and make such frequent allusions to the wines in vogue, do not even mention Champagne; Gervase Markham preserves a like silence in his *Modern Housewife*,[260] while the passages in Surflet's *Maison Rustique* extolling the wine of Ay are merely translations from the original French edition.[261] And though Venner speaks of these wines as excelling all others, he is careful to attribute their consumption to the King and the nobles of France.[262]

The captive Queen of Scots, whose consumption of wine elicited dire lament from one of her lordly jailers,[263] may have missed at Fotheringay the vintage she had tasted in early life when enjoying the hospitality of her uncle, Cardinal Charles of Lorraine, at Reims; but to the half-hearted pedant, her son, the name of Epernay recalled no convivial associations—it was merely the title of a part of his slaughtered mother's appanage. Spanish influence and Spanish wine ruled supreme at his Court; and though Rhenish crowned the goblets of many of the high-souled cavaliers who rallied round King Charles and Henrietta Maria, the bulk of the English nation remained faithful, till the close of the Commonwealth, to their old favourites of the south of Spain and the fragrant produce of the Canaries.



All this was altered when 'the King enjoyed his own again;' for the Restoration made Champagne—that is, the still red wine of the province—the most fashionable, if not the most popular, wine in England. At the Court of Louis XIV. the future Merry

Monarch and his faithful followers had acquired a taste for the wines of France, and they brought back this taste,[264] together with sundry others of a far more reprehensible character, with them to England. One of the first and most acceptable gifts of Louis to his brother-sovereign on the latter's recall was 'two hundred hogsheads of excellent wine—Champagne, Burgundy, and Hermitage.'[265] Returning home more French than the French themselves, the late exiles ruminated on the flesh-pots of Egypt, and sighed; and we can readily picture a gallant who had seen hot service under Condé or Turenne exclaiming to his friend and fellow-soldier:

> 'Ah, Courtine, must we be always idle? Must we never see our glorious days again? When shall we be rolling in the lands of milk and honey, encamped in large luxuriant vineyards, where the loaded vines cluster about our tents, drink the rich juice just pressed from the plump grape?'[266]

And that friend replying:

> 'Ah, Beaugard, those days have been; but now we must resolve to content ourselves at an humble rate. Methinks it is not unpleasant to consider how I have seen thee in a large pavilion drowning the heat of the day in Champagne wines—sparkling sweet as those charming beauties whose dear remembrance every glass recorded—with half a dozen honest fellows more.'[267]

Demand created supply, until, in 1667, a few years after the Restoration, France furnished two-fifths of the amount of wine consumed in the kingdom;[268] and the taste of the royal sybarite for the light-coloured wines of the Marne seems to be hinted at in

Malagene's exclamation:

> 'I have discovered a treasure of pale wine.... I assure you 'tis the same the King drinks of.'[269]

St. Evremond, who, though not precisely cast by Nature from 'the mould of form,' fulfilled for many years the duties of arbiter elegantiarum at Charles's graceless Court, decidedly did his best to render the Champagne *flûte* 'the glass of fashion.' Ever ready to speak in praise of the wines of Ay, Avenay, and Reims,[270] the mentor of the Count de Grammont strove by example as well as by precept to win converts to his creed. In verse he declares that the beauties of the country fail to console him for the absence of Champagne; regrets that the season of the wines of the Marne is over, and that the yield of those of the Mountain had failed; and shudders at the prospect of being obliged to have recourse to the Loire, to Bordeaux, or to Cahors for the wine he will have to drink.[271]



The lively Frenchman found plenty of native writers to reëcho him. Champagne sparkles in all the plays of the Restoration, and seems the fitting inspiration of their matchless briskness of dialogue. The Millamours and Bellairs, the Carelesses and Rangers, the Sir Joskin Jolleys and Sir Fopling Flutters, the *beaux* of the Mall and the rakes of the Mulberry and New Spring Gardens, the gay frequenters of the Folly on the Thames and the *habitués* of Pontack's Ordinary, whom the contemporary dramatists transferred bodily to the stage of the King's or the Duke's, are constantly tossing off bumpers of it. Their

lives would seem to have been one continuous round of love-making and Champagne-drinking, to judge from the following ‘catch,’ sung by four merry gentlemen at a period when, according to Redding, ten thousand tuns of French wine were annually pouring into England:

‘The pleasures of love and the joys of good wine,
To perfect our happiness, wisely we join;
We to Beauty all day
Give the sovereign sway,
And her favourite nymphs devoutly obey.
At the plays we are constantly making our court,
And when they are ended we follow the sport
To the Mall and the Park,
Where we love till ’tis dark;
Then sparkling Champaign[272]
Puts an end to their reign;
It quickly recovers
Poor languishing lovers;
Makes us frolic and gay, and drowns all our sorrow;
But, alas, we relapse again on the morrow.’[273]



We learn, indeed, that under the influence of

> ‘powerful Champaign, as they call it, a spark can no more refrain running into love than a drunken country vicar can avoid disputing of religion when his patron’s ale grows stronger than his reason.’[274]

Probably it was owing to this quality of inspiring a tendency to amativeness that ladies were sometimes expected to join in such potations.

‘She’s no mistress of mine
That drinks not her wine,
Or frowns at my friends’ drinking motions;
If my heart thou wouldst gain,
Drink thy flask of Champaign;
’Twill serve thee for paint and love-potions,’[275]

is the sentiment enunciated in chorus by four half-fuddled topers in the New Spring Gardens. At the Mulberry Gardens we find that

> ‘Jack Wildish sent for a dozen more Champaign, and a brace of such girls as we should have made honourable love to in any other place.’[276]

With such manners and customs can we wonder at one gentleman complaining how another

> ‘came where I was last night roaring drunk; swore—d—him!—he had been with my Lord Such-a-one, and had swallowed three quarts of Champaign for his share;’[277]

or have any call to feel surprised that such boon companions should

> ‘come, as the sparks do, to a playhouse too full of Champaign, venting very much noise and very little wit’?[278]

Champagne remains ignored in such books as the *Mystery of Vintners*;[279] but although technical works may be silent, the poets vie with the dramatists in extolling its exhilarating effects—effects surely perceptible in the witty, careless, graceful verse with which the epoch abounds. John Oldham—who, after passing his early years as a schoolmaster, was lured into becoming, in the words of his biographer, ‘at once a votary of Bacchus and Venus’ by the patronage of Rochester, Dorset, and Sedley in 1681, and who realised the fable of the pot of brass and the pot of earthenware by dying from the effects of the company he kept two years later—has given a list of the wines in vogue in his day:

> ‘Let wealthy merchants, when they dine,
> Run o’er their witty names of wine:
> Their chests of Florence and their Mont Alchine,
> Their Mants, Champaigns, Chablees, Frontiniacks
> tell;

Their aums of Hock, of Backrag [Bacharach] and
Mosell.'[280]

He gives the wines of our 'sweet enemy' a high position, too, in his *Dithyrambick, spoken by a Drunkard*, who is made to exclaim,

'Were France the next, this round Bordeau shall
swallow,
Champaign, Langou [L'Anjou], and Burgundy shall
follow.'[281]

Butler makes the hero of his immortal satire prepared to follow the old Roman fashion with regard to his lady's name, and to

'Drink ev'ry letter on't in stum,
And make it brisk Champaign become;'[282]

and speaks of routed forces having

'Recovered many a desperate campaign
With Bordeaux, Burgundy, and Champaign.'[283]

And Sir Charles Sedley, in an apologue written towards the close of the century, tells how a doctor of his day was sorely troubled by the unreasonable lives led by his patients, until

'One day he called 'em all together,
And, one by one, he asked 'em whether
It were not better by good diet
To keep the blood and humours quiet,
With toast and ale to cool their brains
Than nightly fire 'em with Champains.'[284]

In 1679 the peculiar ideas of political economy then prevailing led to a formal prohibition of the

importation of French wines, and the consequent substitution in their place of those of Portugal. One can imagine the consternation of the ‘beaux’ and ‘sparks’ at this fatal decree, and the satisfaction of the few vintners whose cellars chanced to be well stored with the forbidden vintages of France—with

‘The Claret smooth, red as the lips we press
In sparkling fancy while we drain the bowl;
The mellow-tasted Burgundy, and, quick
As is the wit it gives, the gay Champagne.’[285]



But, Port wine and prohibitions notwithstanding, men of fashion of that epoch were not entirely obliged to abandon their favourite potations, since

five thousand hogsheads of French wine were surreptitiously landed on the south-west coast of England in a single year.[286] Fortunately, too, for them, the Government came to the conclusion that it was for the time being futile to fight against popular tastes, and in 1685 the obnoxious prohibition was removed, with the result that, two years later, the imports of French wine were registered as fifteen thousand tuns—that is, sixty thousand hogsheads. [287]

On the outbreak of hostilities with France in 1689, the import of French wines received a serious check, and as they vanished from the revenue returns, so Champagne began to disappear from the social board and the literature of the day. Strange to say, however, it was not only the favourite wine of William III., but of his dethroned father-in-law, James II. The red wines of the province of Champagne had always found a ready sale in Flanders and the Low Countries,[288] and quickened the minds of the stout seamen who fought against Blake and Rupert. The variety produced from the Beaune grape at Vertus was the one patronised by Macaulay's pet hero, the hook-nosed Dutchman,[289] whilst the exile of St. Germain seems to have been more catholic in his tastes.[290]

Eagerly must the *gourmets* of the day, when, 'if we did not love the French, we coveted their wines,'[291] have hailed the return of a peace which permitted them not only to indulge in their old favourites, but to welcome a new attraction in the shape of sparkling Champagne. The term 'sparkling' as applied to wine did not at the outset necessarily mean effervescing, as in one of Farquhar's comedies we find Roebuck comparing himself to 'a bumper of Claret, smiling and sparkling.'[292] Towards the close

of the century, however, we meet with sure proof of the advent of the delectable beverage with which the worthy cellarer of Hautvillers was the first to endow droughty humanity. The contemporary dramatists were ever on the alert to shoot Folly as she flew. The stage was really the mirror of that time, and those who wrote for it seized on every passing whim, fashion, or fancy of the day. The introduction of a new wine was certainly not to be missed by them, and the recently discovered *vin mousseux* of Dom Perignon is plainly referred to in Farquhar's aptly-named comedy, *Love and a Bottle*, produced in 1698, just after the Peace of Ryswick had allowed the reopening of trade with France.

The second scene of act ii. represents the lodgings of Mockmode, the country squire, who aims at being 'a beau,' and who is discovered in close confabulation with his landlady, the Widow Bullfinch:

> '*Mock.* But what's most modish for beverage now? For I suppose the fashion of that always alters with the clothes.
>
> *W. Bull.* The tailors are the best judges of that; but Champaign, I suppose.
>
> *Mock.* Is Champaign a tailor? Methinks it were a fitter name for a wig-maker. I think they call my wig a campaign.
>
> *W. Bull.* You're clear out, sir—clear out. Champaign is a fine liquor, which all great beaux drink to make 'em witty.
>
> *Mock.* Witty! O, by the universe, I must be witty! I'll drink nothing else; I never was witty in my life. Here, Club, bring us a bottle of what d'ye call it—the witty liquor.'

The Widow having retired, Club, Mockmode's servant, reënters with a bottle and glasses.

> '*Mock.* Is that the witty liquor? Come, fill the glasses.... But where's the wit now, Club? Have you found it?
>
> *Club.* Egad, master, I think 'tis a very good jest.
>
> *Mock.* What?
>
> *Club.* Why, drinking. You'll find, master, that this same gentleman in the straw doublet, this same Will o' the Wisp, is a wit at the bottom. Here, here, master, how it puns and quibbles in the glass![293]
>
> *Mock.* By the universe, now I have it; the wit lies in the jingling! All wit consists most in jingling. Hear how the glasses rhyme to one another.... I fancy this same wine is all sold at Will's Coffee-house.'

Here we have a palpable hit at the source of inspiration indulged in by many of the wits and rhymesters who gathered round 'glorious John Dryden' within the hallowed walls of that famous rendezvous. And likely enough, when they

> 'were all at supper, all in good humour, Champaign was the word, and wit flew about the room like a pack of losing cards.'[294]

Farquhar seems, above all others, to have hailed the new wine with pleasure. We all remember the 'red Burgundy' which saves Mirabel from his perilous position in the cut-throats' den; but the flighty hero of the *Inconstant* is equally enthusiastic over sparkling wine when he exclaims:

> 'Give me the plump Venetian, brisk and sanguine, that smiles upon me like the glowing sun, and meets my lips like sparkling wine, her person shining as the glass, and spirit like the foaming liquor.'[295]

The benignant influence of the beverage is, moreover, referred to by Farquhar in his epilogue to the *Constant Couple*, where, in alluding to the critics, it is said that

'To coffee some retreat to save their pockets,
Others, more generous, damn the play at Locket's;
But there, I hope, the author's fears are vain,
Malice ne'er spoke in generous Champain.'[296]

Further, he makes Benjamin Wouldbe exclaim:

> 'Show me that proud stoick that can bear success and Champain; philosophy can support us in hard fortune, but who can have patience in prosperity?'[297]

Farquhar shows his usual keen observation of the minutest features of the life of his day in his allusion to the flask—the pear-shaped *flacon* in which Champagne made its *entrée* into fashionable life.[298] Archer, in his ditty on 'trifles,' thus warbles:

'A flask of Champaign, people think it
A trifle, or something as bad;
But if you'll contrive how to drink it,
You'll find it no trifle, egad!'[299]

Congreve, in evident reference to the still wine, thus writes to Mr. Porter, husband of the celebrated actress, from Calais, August 11, 1700:

> 'Here is admirable Champaign for twelvepence a

> quart, as good Burgundy for fifteenpence; and yet I have virtue enough to resolve to leave this place to-morrow for St. Omers, where the same wine is half as dear again, and may be not quite so good.'[300]

Champagne suffered like other French wines from the War of Succession and the Methuen Treaty, by which the Government strove to pour Port wine down the throats of the people. The poets and satirists, supported by Dean Aldrich, 'the Apostle of Bacchus;' the miserly Dr. Ratcliffe, who ascribed all diseases to the lack of French wines, and imputed the badness of the vintages he was wont to place upon his table to the difficulty he experienced in obtaining them; the jovial Portman Seymour; the rich 'smell-feast' Pereira and General Churchill, Marlborough's brother, together with a host of 'bottle companions,' lawyers, and physicians, united to fight against this attempt.[301] They would drink their old favourites, in spite of treaties, and would praise them as they deserved; and means were found to gratify their wishes. According to official returns, the nominal importation of French wines fell in 1701 to a trifle over two thousand tons; and though this quantity was only once exceeded up to 1786, the influence of a steady demand, a short sea-passage, an extensive coast-line, and a ridiculously inefficient preventive service in aid of the high duty need to be taken into consideration. The contraband traders of the beginning of the century smuggled French wine into England, just as they continued to do at a later period into Scotland and Ireland, when the taste for ardent spirits which sprang up in the Georgian era rendered the surreptitious import of 'Nantz' and 'Geneva' the more profitable transaction as regarded England. Farquhar throws light on one method

pursued when Colonel Standard hands Alderman Smuggler his pocket-book, which he had dropped, with the remark:

> 'It contains an account of some secret practices in your merchandising, amongst the rest, the counterpart of an agreement with a correspondent at Bordeaux about transporting French wine in Spanish casks.'[302]

That the Champenois were themselves aware of the appreciation in which their wine was held in England is shown by a passage in Coffin's *Campania vindicata*. Writing in 1712, the year before the ratification of the Treaty of Utrecht, he calls on the Britons in presence of returning peace to cross the seas, and instead of lavishing their wealth to pleasure blood-stained Mars, to fill their ships with the treasures of the Remois Bacchus, and bear home these precious spoils instead of fatal trophies.[303]

Addison, referring to one source whence French wines were derived, remarks:

> 'There is in this City a certain fraternity of Chymical Operators who work underground, in holes, caverns, and dark retirements, to conceal their mysteries from the eyes and observation of mankind. These subterraneous Philosophers are daily employed in the Transmigration of Liquors, and, by the power of Magical Drugs and Incantations, raise under the streets of *London* the choicest products of the hills and valleys of *France*. They can squeeze *Bourdeaux* out of a *Sloe*, and draw *Champagne* from an *Apple*.'[304]

He tells us that

> 'the person who appeared against them was a

> Merchant, who had by him a great magazine of wines, that he had laid in before the war: but these Gentlemen (as he said) had so vitiated the nation's palate, that no man could believe his to be *French*, because it did not taste like what they sold for such.'

For the defence it was urged that

> 'they were under a necessity of making Claret if they would keep open their doors, it being the nature of Mankind to love everything that is Prohibited.'[305]

The enquiry,

> 'And where would your beaux have Champaign to toast their mistresses were it not for the merchant?'[306]

is from a panegyrist of the more legitimate school of trade.

Altogether it is tolerably certain that Champagne—genuine or fictitious, from grape or gooseberry—played a more important part in the conviviality of the early portion of the eighteenth century than might be supposed from the imports of the epoch, whilst there is little doubt but that it helped to inspire some of the finest productions of the Augustan age of English literature.

Gay places it first amongst the wines offered to a party of guests entering a tavern, making the drawer exclaim:

'Name, sirs, the wine that most invites your taste,
Champaign or Burgundy, or Florence pure,
Or Hock antique, or Lisbon new or old,
Bourdeaux, or neat French wine, or Alicant.'[307]

This reference to Champagne most likely relates to the still wine; but it is probably the sparkling variety which is alluded to in the verses which Gay addressed to Pope on the completion of the *Iliad* in 1720, and wherein he represents General Wilkinson thus apostrophising as the ship conveying the poet passes Greenwich:

‘Come in, my friends, here shall ye dine and lie;
And here shall breakfast and shall dine again,
And sup and breakfast on (if ye comply),
For I have still some dozens of
Champaign.’[308]

Witty Mat Prior, poet and diplomatist, was always ready to manifest his contempt for the heavy fluid with which the Methuen treaty deluged our island in place of the light fresh-tasting wines of France that had cheered and inspired his earlier sallies. Writing whilst in custody on a charge of treason between 1715 and 1717, and referring to the mind under the name of Alma, he tells us how

‘By nerves about our palate placed,
She likewise judges of the taste,
Else (dismal thought!) our warlike men
Might drink thick Port for fine Champagne.’[309]

He likewise inculcates a lesson of philosophy, especially suited to his own situation at that moment, when he remarks of fortune:

‘I know we must both fortunes try,
And bear our evils, wet or dry.
Yet, let the goddess smile or frown,
Bread we shall eat, or white or brown;
And in a cottage or a court

Drink fine Champagne or muddled Port.'[310]

There were many, no doubt, ready to emulate the hero of one of his minor pieces, and

'from this world to retreat
As full of Champagne as an egg's full of meat.'[311]

Shenstone gives expression to much the same sentiment as Prior when he found 'his warmest welcome at an inn,' and wrote on the window-pane at Henley:

''Tis here with boundless power I reign,
And every health which I begin
Converts dull Port to bright Champagne;
Such freedom crowns it at an inn.'[312]



Vanbrugh, whose writings were of a decidedly lighter character than the edifices he erected, probably had recourse to Champagne to assist him in the composition of the former, and neglected it when planning the designs for the latter. These, indeed, would seem to have been conceived under the influence of some such 'heavy muddy stuff' as the 'Norfolk nog,' which Lady Headpiece reproaches her husband for allowing their son and heir to indulge in, saying:

> 'Well, I wonder, Sir Francis, you will encourage that lad to swill such beastly lubberly liquor. If it were Burgundy or Champaign, something might be said for't; they'd perhaps give him some art and spirit.'[313]

Swift has given in his *Journal to Stella* extensive information as to the wines in vogue in London in 1710–13. He seems for his own part to have been, as far as nature permitted him, an accommodating toper, indulging, in addition to Champagne, in Tokay, Portugal, Florence, Burgundy, Hermitage, 'Irish wine,' *i.e.* Claret, 'right French wine,' Congreve's 'nasty white wine' that gave him the heartburn, and Sir William Read's 'admirable punch.' He acknowledges that the more fashionable beverages of the day were not to his taste. 'I love,' writes he, 'white Portugal wine better than Claret, Champaign, or Burgundy. I have a sad vulgar appetite.'[314] Still, while observing due moderation, he did not entirely shun the lighter potations with which the table of the luxurious and licentious St. John was so freely supplied. On one occasion he writes:

> 'I dined to-day by appointment with Lord Bolingbroke; but they fell to drinking so many Spanish healths in Champaign, that I stole away to the ladies and drank tea till eight.'[315]

And on another we find him refusing to allow his host to

> 'drink one drop of Champaign or Burgundy without water.'[316]

Our countrymen do not appear to have taken heed of the controversy regarding the respective merits of Champagne and Burgundy, but thankfully accepted the goods that the gods and the sunny soil of France provided them. The accusation, however, banded about by the partisans of these rival vintages, of their tendency to produce gout, had apparently been accepted as gospel truth over here in the first decade

of the century. Thus the Dean notes that he

> ‘dined with Mr. Secretary St. John, and staid till seven, but would not drink his Champaign and Burgundy, for fear of the gout.’[317]

When suffering from a rheumatic pain he displays commendable caution at dinner with Mr. Domville, only drinking

> ‘three or four glasses of Champaign by perfect teasing,’[318]

for fear of aggravating his suffering. He is prompt, however, to acknowledge himself mistaken:

> ‘I find myself disordered with a pain all round the small of my back, which I imputed to Champaign I had drunk, but find it to have been only my new cold.’[319]

The Dean does not appear to have been the only sufferer, for we find him writing:

> ‘I called this evening to see Mr. Secretary, who had been very ill with the gravel and pains in his back, by Burgundy and Champaign, added to the sitting up all night at business; I found him drinking tea, while the rest were at Champaign, and was very glad of it.’[320]

Even Pope, the perforcedly abstemious, was lured into similar excesses by the young Earl of Warwick and Colley Cibber, during his visits to London, whilst engaged on his translation of the *Iliad*, and writes to Congreve,

> ‘I sit up till two o’clock over Burgundy and Champagne.’[321]

A proof of the popularity of French wines at this period is found in the fact that in 1713, the year of the Peace of Utrecht, the registered imports, despite high duties, reached 2551 tuns, an amount not exceeded till 1786. The Treaty of Commerce, with which Bolingbroke (whose partiality to Champagne we have seen) and M. de Torcy sought to supplement that of Peace, having fallen through, the tavern-keepers put such a price on these wines that it was only members of the fashionable world who could afford to have what was termed 'a good Champagne stomach.'[322] Their vogue is confirmed by the order given to her servant by a lady aspiring to take a leading position in the *beau monde* to

> 'go to Mr. Mixture, the wine-merchant, and order him to send in twelve dozen of his best Champaign, twelve dozen of Burgundy, and twelve dozen of Hermitage,'[323]

as the entire stock for her cellar. 'Good wine' was indeed, in those days, 'a gentleman.'



‘GOOD WINE A GENTLEMAN.’

The unvarying rule that the fashions set by the most select are inevitably aped by the most degraded, so far as lies in their power, is exemplified in the Tavern Scene of Hogarth’s *Rake’s Progress*, where the table at which the hero and his *inamoratas* are seated is set out with the tall wine-glasses wherein

> ‘Champaign goes briskly round.’[324]



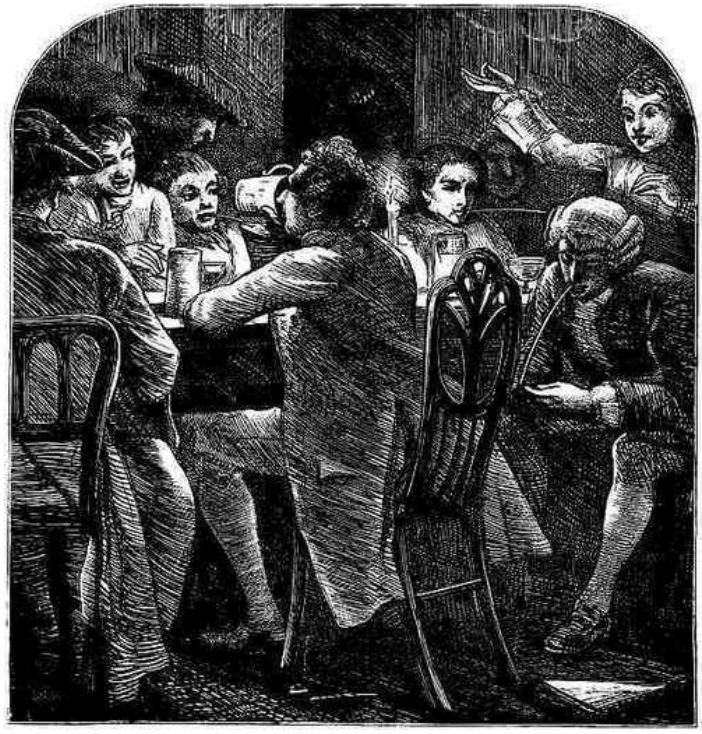
TAVERN SCENE FROM 'THE RAKE'S PROGRESS.'

The Jacobites, faithful to their traditional ally, continued to toast 'the King over the water' by passing glasses charged with the sparkling wine of France across a bowl filled to the brim with the pure element. The middle classes clung to their beer, or at most indulged in Port and punch; whilst the lower orders seem to have become seized with that insane passion for ardent spirits which Hogarth satirised in his 'Gin Lane,' and hailed with glee Sir Robert Walpole's

'attempt,
Superior to Canary or Champagne,
Geneva salutiferous to enhance.'[325]



‘THE KING OVER THE WATER.’



The registered imports of the wines of France—though figures in this respect are, we admit, exceedingly deceptive—show a continuous falling off, which reached its lowest ebb in 1746, during war time; and we may be certain that when, after supper,

> 'Champagne was the word for two whole hours by Shrewsbury clock,'[326]

it was at the cost of a pretty penny. Although the recorded imports of French wines show but little improvement with the return of peace in 1748, we gather from other sources that the Champagne of 1749 met with a ready market over here, and find Bertin du Rocheret writing exultingly to his friend, the Marquis de Calvières, that the Champenois were making the English pay the cost of the war.

The voluminous correspondence of Bertin du Rocheret gives some curious information as to the manner in which the Champagne trade was carried on with England during the second quarter of the eighteenth century. From 1725 to 1754 he was in constant communication with Mr. James Chabane, who seems to have been the Court wine-merchant, and to whom he despatched at first ten, but during the latter portion of their transactions seldom more than four, pièces of wine annually during the winter months.[327] As regards the particular vintage consumed in England, a preference evidently existed for that of Ay, though it really appears as if Bertin was wont to introduce under this name the then far cheaper growths of Avize. Such, at any rate, seems to have been the case with the parcel of wine divided, in 1754, between King George in London and King Stanislas at Nancy. Referring to the wines of

Hautvillers and Sillery, Bertin writes to Chabane in 1731, that a year's notice must be given in advance to obtain them. A *liquoreux* wine was then preferred, as in 1732 he remarks, respecting the yield of the preceding year, that the English are as mad after *liqueur* as the French; and it is evident that the taste continued, as in 1744 he announces the departure for London of eleven poinçons *liquoreux*.

Not only was Chabane accustomed to bottle these wines, but while doing so was able to insure to them a semi-sparkling character. With this view Bertin tells him, in 1731, that he must not keep them in cask after the three *sèves*, or motions of the sap of April, June, or August, except in the case of a pièce from 'the *clos*' reserved 'for the supply of the Court,' and intended to be drunk as still wine. Some wine despatched in 1754 is recommended to be bottled during the first quarter of the moon.[328] In addition to the wine thus sent in casks, Bertin was also accustomed to send his correspondent a certain quantity in bottles. In 1725 he quotes for him 'flacons blancs mousseux liqueur,' at from 30 to 50 sols, and 'ambrés non-mousseux sablant,' at 25 sols. These flasks were all despatched to Dunkirk or into Holland, whence they were smuggled to their ultimate destination, for the introduction of wine in bottles into England was rigidly prohibited until the close of 1745, when it was legalised by Act of Parliament.[329]



SCENE AT VAUXHALL GARDENS
(From an engraving after a drawing by Gravelot).

Horace Walpole, who deals with men rather than manners, with sayings rather than doings, and whose forte is epigram and not description, has little to tell us about the drinking customs of his day. The strictly temperate regimen that marked his later years, and rendered him unfit for mere convivial gatherings, extended to his writings, and he seldom permits his pen to expatiate on those pleasures in which he sought no share. Even in his letters from Reims, written in 1739, when he was doing the grand tour, he omits all mention of the wine for which that city is famed. Still he incidentally furnishes a few instances of the esteem in which Champagne was held by the upper classes in the middle of the eighteenth century. In a letter to George Montague, dated June 23, 1750, he describes how Lord Granby joined his party at Vauxhall whilst suffering

considerably under the influence of the Champagne he had consumed at 'Jenny's Whim,' a noted tavern at Chelsea; and writing to Sir Horace Mann, a year later, he says that the then chief subjects of conversation in London were the two Miss Gunnings and an extravagant dinner at White's.

> 'The dinner was a frolic of seven young men, who bespoke it to the utmost extent of expense; one article was a tart made of duke cherries, from a hothouse; and another, that they tasted but one glass out of each bottle of Champagne. The bill of fare has got into print, and with good people has produced the apprehension of another earthquake.'[330]

The Earl of March, afterwards 'Old Q,' in a letter to Walpole's friend, George Selwyn, in November 1766, writes: 'I have not yet received some Champaign that Monsieur de Prissieux has sent me.'[331] And we find Horace Walpole's fair foe, that eighteenth-century exemplar of strong-minded womanhood, Lady Mary Wortley Montague, whose letters indicate a *penchant* for Burgundy, acknowledging in verse the exhilarating effects of Champagne. Of the *beaux* of 1721 she says that

'They sigh, not from the heart but from the brain,
Vapours of vanity and strong Champagne.'[332]

Better known by far are her oft-quoted lines,

'But when the long hours of the public are past,
And we meet with Champagne and a chicken at last,
May every fond pleasure that moment endear,
Be banished afar both discretion and fear,'[333]

which drew from Byron the terror-stricken comment,

‘What say you to such a supper with such a woman?’[334]





During the third quarter of the eighteenth century a cloud dims the lustre of Champagne. It was then looked upon by a vast majority as only a fit accompaniment to masquerades, ridottos, ultra-fashionable dinners, and Bacchanalian suppers. ‘The Champaign made some eyes sparkle that nothing else could brighten,’[335] says the contemporary account of one of those scenes of shameless revelry held under the title of masquerades at the Pantheon, and the orgies that, under the auspices of Mrs. Cornelys, disgraced Carlisle House were mainly inspired by the consumption of the same wine. The citizens of the Georgian era, who had lost the tastes of their fathers, hated French wines simply because they were French; and the hundred thousand gallons imported on an average annually from 1750 to 1786 were entirely consumed amongst the upper or the dissipated classes. Though smuggling was still looked upon as patriotic, if not loyal, those engaged in it had discovered that, thanks to the combined effects of duty and demand, Nantes brandy and Hollands gin

paid better. What, indeed, is to be thought of the taste of an era that produced poets whose muse sought inspiration in punch, and who had the sublime audacity to extol the rum of the West Indies above the produce of 'Marne's flowery banks'?[336] Only a few of the higher-class men, however, engaged in literature and art seem to have retained a preference for French wine. The accounts of the Literary Club established by Sir Joshua Reynolds show the average consumption at each sitting to have been half a bottle of Port and a bottle of Claret per head. Johnson drank Port mixed with sugar from about 1752 to 1764; became a total abstainer until 1781, and then seems to have given the preference to Madeira.



THE LITERARY CLUB.

In contemporaneous comedy we are pretty sure to find the mirror held up to fashion, if not to Nature; and turning to the playwrights of that day, it is easy to cull a few confirmatory excerpts. Thus we have Sterling, the ambitious British merchant, in order to do honour to his noble guests, preparing to

> 'give them such a glass of Champaign as they never drank in their lives; no, not at a duke's table.'[337]

While Lord Minikin, the peer of fashion, makes his entrance on the stage, exclaiming:

> 'O my head! I must absolutely change my wine-merchant; I cannot taste his Champaigne without disordering myself for a week.'[338]

On Miss Tittup inquiring if his depression is due to losses at cards, he replies,

> 'No, faith, our Champaigne was not good yesterday.'[339]

Jessamy, his lordship's valet, profits of course by so aristocratic an example; and when speaking of his exploits at the masquerade, says,

> 'I was in tip-top spirits, and had drunk a little too freely of the Champaigne, I believe.'[340]

With Philip the butler, 'Burgundy is the word,' and from the choicest vintages of his master's cellar he places on the table 'Claret, Burgundy, and Champaign; and a bottle of Tokay for the ladies;'[341] while Port is characterised by the Duke's servant as 'only fit for a dram.'[342] Mrs. Circuit presses the guests at a clandestinely-given repast to 'taste the Champagne;' and her husband, the

Sergeant, is surprised on his return home to find that they have been so indulging:

> 'Delicate eating, in truth; and the wine [*Drinks*] Champagne, as I live! Must have t'other glass ... delicate white wine, indeed! I like it better every glass.'[343]

Such is his comment.

The effects of the wine are characterised in the following fashion by Garrick, when Sparkish, entering, according to the stage directions, 'fuddled,' declares that

> 'when a man has wit, and a great deal of it, Champaign gives it a double edge, and nothing can withstand it; 'tis a lighted match to gunpowder; the mine is sprung, and the poor devils are tossed heels uppermost in an instant.'[344]



LORD MINIKIN.

We greet, too, what was perhaps the first appearance of a joke now grown venerable in its antiquity in a farce of Foote's, the scene of which is laid at Bath. He introduces us to a party of pseudo-invalids devoting their whole time and attention to conviviality, recruiting their debilitated stomachs with turtle and venison, and alternating Bath waters

with the choicest vintages, so that the hero Racket is fain to observe to one of them,

> 'My dear Sir Kit, how often has Dr. Carawitchet told you that your rich food and Champaigne would produce nothing but poor health and real pain?'[345]

And how many gentlemen in difficulties have not since followed the example set by Harry Dornton in the spunging-house, and ordered, as a consolation,

> 'a bottle of Champagne and two rummers'![346]

Turning from fancy to fact, we find Sir Edward Barry furnishing some particulars respecting the Champagne wines consumed in England during the latter half of the last century.[347] He informs us at the outset that

> 'the wines of Champaign and Burgundy are made with more care than any other French wines; and the vaults in which the former are preserved are better than any other in France. These wines, from their finer texture and peculiar flavour, cannot be adulterated without the fraud being easily discovered, and are therefore generally imported pure, or by proper care may be certainly procured in that state.'

His remarks evidently refer to the still wines, as he proceeds to explain that 'the Champaign River Wines are more delicate and pale than those which are distinguished from them by the name of Mountain gray Wines,' the latter being more durable and better suited for exportation, whilst the former, if allowed to remain too long in the cask, acquire a taste from the wood, although keeping in flasks from four to six years without harm. Referring to the taste of the day,

he explains that

> ‘among the River Wines the Auvillers and Epernay are most esteemed, and among the Mountain Wines the Selery and St. Thyery, and in general such as are of the colour of a partridge’s eye. These are likewise distinguished for their peculiar grateful pungency and balsamic softness, which is owing to the refined saline principle which prevails more in them than in the Burgundy Wines, on which account they are less apt to affect the head, communicate a milder heat, and more freely pervade and pass through the vessels of the body.... To drink Champaign Wines in the greatest perfection, the flask should be taken from the vault a quarter of an hour before it is drunk, and immersed in ice-water, with the cork so loose in it as is sufficient to give a free passage to the air, and yet prevent too great an evaporation of its spirituous parts.’



HIGH LIVING AT BATH
(After Rowlandson, in the *New Bath Guide*).

The foregoing practice still obtains with Sillery, classed by Barry as the first of the Mountain growths, and in the highest favour in England throughout the remainder of the century. Regarding sparkling wine, of which he was evidently no admirer, he adds:

> 'For some years the French and English have been particularly fond of the sparkling frothy Champaigns. The former have almost entirely quitted that depraved taste, nor does it now so much prevail here. They used to mix some ingredients to give them that quality; but this is unnecessary, as they are too apt spontaneously to run into that state; but whoever chooses to have such Wines may be assured that they will acquire it by bottling them any time after the vintage before the month of the next May; and the most sure rule to prevent that disposition is not to bottle them before the November following. This rule has been confirmed by repeated experiments.'

On the signature of the Treaty of Peace with France in 1783, it had been stipulated that a Treaty of Commerce should likewise be concluded; and in 1786, under the auspices of Pitt, a treaty of this character was made, the first article providing that 'The wines of France imported directly from France into Great Britain shall in no case pay any higher duties than those which the wines of Portugal now pay.' Pitt, spite of his well known *penchant* for Port, had yet a sneaking liking for Champagne, arising no doubt from his early familiarity with the wine when he went to Reims to study, after leaving the University of Cambridge. It was with Champagne that he was primed on the memorable occasion when he, Lord Chancellor Thurlow, and Mr. Secretary Dundas galloped after dusk through an open turnpike-gate without paying toll, and only just missed receiving the contents of a loaded blunderbuss, which the turnpike man, fancying they were highwaymen, fired after them. The party had been dining with the President of the Board of Trade at Addiscombe, and a rhymester of the epoch commemorated the incident in the following lines:

'How as Pitt wandered darkling o'er the plain,
His reason drowned in Jenkinson's Champagne,
A rustic's hand, but righteous fate withstood,
Had shed a premier's for a robber's blood.'



DUNDAS AND PITT AS SILENUS AND BACCHUS
(After Gilray).



WILLIAM PITT
(After Gilray).

Tickell has noted the appreciation of Brooks' Champagne shown by Pitt's great rival in the lines addressed to Sheridan, and purporting to be an invitation to supper from Fox. The illustrious member for Westminster promises his guest that

'Derby shall send, if not his plate, his cooks,
And know I've bought the best Champaign from
Brooks.'[348]

Brooks' Club enjoyed a high reputation for its

Champagne, and we find Fighting Fitzgerald emptying three bottles there without assistance, the same evening on which he bullied the members into electing him.[349]

The year after the Treaty of Commerce was signed, we have an anonymous writer remarking[350] that in time of peace the English drew large quantities of wine from Bordeaux and Nantes, and that the other French wines they were in the habit of consuming were those of Mantes, Burgundy, and Champagne, shipped respectively from Rouen, Dunkirk, and Calais. Arthur Young, writing at the same time, remarks, *apropos* of Champagne, that the trade with England 'used to be directly from Epernay; but now the wine is sent to Calais, Boulogne, Montreuil, and Guernsey, in order to be passed into England they suppose here by smuggling. This may explain our Champagne not being so good as formerly.'[351] It is to be hoped that neither Arthur Young nor other connoisseurs of Champagne had been enticed into drinking as the genuine article any of the produce of the vineyard which the Hon. Charles Hamilton had planted with the Auvernat grape near Cobham, in Surrey, and which was said to yield a wine 'resembling Champagne.'[352]

The reduction of duty consequent upon the treaty as a matter of course largely increased the importation of French wine. Respecting the taste for Champagne then prevailing in England, and the price the wine commanded, a few interesting particulars are afforded by the early correspondence and account-books of Messrs. Moët & Chandon of Epernay, which we have courteously been permitted to inspect. From these we find that in October 1788 the Chevalier Colebrook, writing in French to the firm from Bath,

asks that seventy-two bottles of Champagne may be sent to his friend, the Hon. John Butler of Molesworth-street, Dublin, 'who, if content with the wine, will become a very good customer, being rich, keeping a good house, and receiving many amateurs of *vin de Champagne*.' The writer is no doubt the 'M. Collebrock' to whom the firm shortly afterwards forward fifty bottles of '*vin non mousseux*, 1783,' on his own account. Messrs. Carbonnell, Moody, & Walker, predecessors of the well-known existing firm of Carbonnell & Co., London, in a letter dated November 1788, and also written in French, say: 'If you can supply us with some Champagne of a very good body, not too much charged with liqueur, but with an excellent flavour, and not at all *moussu*, we beg you to send two ten dozen baskets. Also, if you have any dry Champagne of very good flavour, solidity, and excellent body, send two baskets of the same size.'

The taste of the day was evidently for a full-bodied non-sparkling wine; and this is confirmed by Jeanson, Messrs. Moët's traveller in England, who writes from London in May 1790: 'How the taste of this country has altered within the last ten years! Almost everywhere they ask for a dry wine; but they want a wine so vinous and so strong, that there is hardly anything but Sillery that will satisfy them.' Additional confirmation is found in a letter, written from London in May 1799 to Messrs. Moët, by a Mr. John Motteux, complaining of delay in the delivery of a parcel of wine said to have been sent off by way of Havre, and very likely destined to be surreptitiously introduced into England *viâ* Guernsey. He asks for a further supply of Sillery, if its safe arrival can be guaranteed, and remarks, 'There is nothing to be compared to Sillery when it is genuine;

it must not have the least sweetness nor *mousse*.'[353]

During the great French war, patriotism and increased duties might have been expected to check the import of French wines; yet, if statistics are worth anything, the reverse would appear to have been the case. The registered imports, which from 1770 to 1786 had fluctuated between 80,000 and 125,000 gallons, rose during the last fourteen years of the century to an average of 550,000 gallons per annum. In those fighting, rollicking, hard-drinking times, when it was a sacred social duty to toast 'great George our King' on every possible occasion, Champagne continued to be 'the wine of fashion.' The sparkling variety was terribly costly, no doubt, and was often doled out, as Mr. Walker relates, 'like drops of blood.'[354] But whilst the stanch admirers of Port might profess to despise Champagne as effeminate, and the 'loyal volunteers' condemn it as the produce of a foeman's soil, there were plenty to sing in honour of 'The Fair of Britain's Isle:'

'Fill, fill the glass, to beauty charge,
And banish care from every breast;
In brisk Champaign we'll quick discharge,
A toast shall give the wine a zest.'[355]

Indeed, the greatest of England's naval heroes was not insensible to the attractions of this gift from 'our sweet enemy France.' In October 1800 Nelson, together with Sir William and Lady Hamilton, was a guest of Mr. Elliot, the British Resident at Dresden. At dinner Lady Hamilton drank more Champagne than the narrator of this little incident imagined it was possible for a woman to consume, and inspired thereby, insisted on favouring the company with her imitations of classical statuary. Nelson thereupon got

uproarious, and went on emptying bumper after bumper of the same fluid in honour of the fair Emma, and swearing that she was superior to Siddons. The host kept striving ‘to prevent the further effusion of Champagne,’ but did not succeed till Sir William in his turn had astonished all present with a display of his social talents. The grave diplomatist lay down on his back, with his arms and legs in the air, and in this position bounded all round the room like a ball, with his stars and ribbons flying around him.[356]

If we may give credit to Tom Moore, ‘the best wigged prince in Christendom,’ who was subsequently to ‘d —— Madeira as gouty,’ and bring Sherry into fashion, preferred stronger potations than those produced on the banks of the Marne. In one of the poet’s political skits the Prince is introduced soliloquising *à la* Jemmy Thompson—

‘O Roman Punch! O potent Curaçoa!
O Maraschino! Maraschino O!
Delicious drams’[357]—

and describing his favourite luncheon as ‘good mutton cutlets and strong curaçoa.’[358] Nevertheless, the First Gentleman in Europe did consume Champagne; but it was concentrated in the form of punch, especially devised for him, and indulged in by him in company with Barrymore, Hanger, and their fellows.[359]





THE PRINCE REGENT
(After Gilray).

His sometime model and subsequent victim, poor Brummell, is said to have put the wine to a still more ignoble use. One day a youthful beau approached the great master in the arts of dress and deportment, and said, 'Permit me to ask you where you get your blacking?' 'Ah,' replied Brummell, gazing complacently at his boots, 'my blacking positively ruins me. I will tell you in confidence it is made with the finest Champagne.'[360] Probably the great dandy was merely quizzing his interlocutor, though

such an act of extravagance would have been a pull on even the longest purse in those days, 'your bottle of Champagne in the year 1814 costing you a guinea.'[361]

As to the Prince Regent's brothers, we know that the Duke of York was such a powerful toper, that 'six bottles of Claret after dinner scarce made a perceptible change in his countenance,'[362] and remember the Duke of Clarence making his appearance at the table of the Royal household at Windsor, and getting so helplessly drunk on Champagne as to be utterly incapable of keeping his promise to open the ball that evening with his sister Mary.[363] Two prominent orators of that day are credited with *mots* upon Champagne. Curran said, *apropos* of the rapid but transient intoxication produced by this wine, that 'Champagne made a runaway rap at a man's head;' while Canning maintained that any man who said he really liked dry Champagne simply lied.

After Waterloo, although a few *gourmets* continued to prefer the still wine, sparkling Champagne became the almost universally accepted variety. Nevertheless, Henderson, while noting that 'by Champagne wine is usually understood a sparkling or frothy liquor,' gives the foremost place to the wine of Sillery, which, he remarks, 'has always been in much request in England, probably on account of its superior strength and durable quality.' He extols the Ay wine as 'an exquisite liquor, lighter and sweeter than the Sillery, and accompanied by a delicate flavour and aroma somewhat analogous to that of the pine-apple.'[364]

The poets of the first half of the present century have hardly done justice to Champagne. Tom Moore, the

most Anacreontic of them all, although ready, like his Grecian prototype, to 'pledge the universe in wine,' the merits of which he was continually chanting in the abstract, has seldom been so invidious as to particularise any especial vintage. Champagne, the wine of all others best fitted to inspire his bright and sparkling lyrics, has received but scant attention in his earlier productions. Bob Fudge, writing from Paris in 1818, is made to speak approvingly of Beaune and Chambertin, but only mentions Champagne as a vehicle in which to *sauter* kidneys;[365] and in the *Sceptic* it is simply brought in to point a moral respecting the senses:

'Habit so mars them, that the Russian swain
Will sigh for train-oil while he sips Champagne.'[366]

In two instances only the poet who sang in such lively numbers of woman and wine pointedly refers to the vintage of the Champagne. One is when he says:

'If ever you've seen a party
Relieved from the presence of Ned,
How instantly joyous and hearty
They've grown when the damper was fled.
You may guess what a gay piece of work,
What delight to Champagne it must be,
To get rid of its bore of a cork,
And come sparkling to you, love, and
me.'[367]

And his description of a summer *fête* is indeed

'a mere terrestrial strain
Inspired by naught but pink Champagne;'[368]

such as might be penned

‘While as the sparkling juice of France
High in the crystal brimmers flowed,
Each sunset ray, that mixed by chance
With the wine’s diamond, showed
How sunbeams may be taught to dance;’[369]

with the final result that

‘Thus did Fancy and Champagne
Work on the sight their dazzling spells,
Till nymphs that looked at noonday plain
Now brightened in the gloom to belles.’[370]

Moore’s Diary, however, proves that if he did not care to praise the wine in verse, it was not for want of opportunities of becoming acquainted with it. Witness his ‘odd dinner in a borrowed room’ at Horace Twiss’s in Chancery-lane, with the strangely incongruous accompaniments of ‘Champagne, pewter spoons, and old Lady Cork.’[371]



CAPTAIN CHARLES MORRIS
(After Gilray).

As to that most convivial of songsters, Captain Charles Morris, poet-laureate of the Ancient Society of Beefsteaks, he labours under a similar reproach. Though he has filled several hundred octavo pages of his *Lyra Urbanica* with verses in praise of wine, the liquor with which he crowns 'the mantling goblet,' 'the fancy-stirring bowl,' or 'the soul-subliming cup,' usually figures under some such fanciful designation as 'the inspiring juice,' 'the cordial of life,' or 'Bacchus' balm.' Champagne he evidently ignores as a beverage of Gallic origin, utterly unfitted for the praise of so true a Briton as himself; and the only vintage which he does condescend to mention with approbation is the favourite one of our beef-eating, hard-drinking, frog-hating forefathers, 'old Oporto'

from ‘the stout Lusitanian vine.’

Strange as it may seem, the manlier Muse of Scott used at times to dip her wing into the Champagne cup, although she has failed to express any verbal gratitude to this source of inspiration. ‘In truth,’ says his biographer, ‘he liked no wines except sparkling Champaign and Claret; but even as to this last he was no connoisseur, and sincerely preferred a tumbler of whisky-toddy to the most precious liquid ruby that ever flowed in the cup of a prince. He rarely took any other potation when alone with his family; but at the Sunday board he circulated the Champaign briskly during dinner, and considered a pint of Claret each man’s fair share afterwards.’[372] Scott himself, wearied with a round of London festivities, is impelled to write, ‘I begin to tire of my gaieties. I wish for a sheep’s head and whisky-toddy against all the French cookery and Champaign in the world.’[373] Lockhart, in his *Life of Scott*, notes the excellent flavour of some Champagne sent to Abbotsford by a French admirer of the Northern Wizard in return for a set of his works, and more than once incidentally refers to the presence of the wine at Scott’s table on festive gatherings.

Byron, who furnished in the course of his career a practical exemplification of the maxim that

> ‘Comus all allows
> Champaign, dice, music, or your neighbour’s spouse,’[374]

did the vintage of the Marne justice in his verses. In *Don Juan* he shows himself not insensible to the charms of

> ‘Champagne with foaming whirls

As white as Cleopatra's melted pearls.'[375]

The wine, moreover, furnishes two striking comparisons in that poem—one when he observes that

'The evaporation of a joyous day
Is like the last glass of Champagne, without
The foam which made its virgin bumper gay;'[376]

and the other, where, in his sketch of Lady Adeline Amundeville, he rejects the trite metaphor of the snow-covered volcano in favour of

'a bottle of Champagne
Frozen into a very vinous ice,
Which leaves few drops of that immortal rain;
Yet in the very centre, past all price,
About a liquid glassful will remain;
And this is stronger than the strongest grape
Could e'er express in its expanded shape:

'Tis the whole spirit brought to a quintessence;
And thus the chilliest aspects may concentre
A hidden nectar under a cold presence.'[377]

Although we find Henderson remarking, in 1822, that

> 'the pink Champagne is less in request than the colourless, and has in fact nothing to entitle it to the preference,'

yet wine of this tint continued to reappear from time to time, securing a transitory popularity from its attractive appearance, which caused it to be likened to the dying reflection of the setting sun on a clear

stream. An interesting incident in connection with its advent on one of these occasions at the table of Rogers, the banker-poet, has been recorded by Mr. R. A. Tracy Gould of the American Bar. He was dining, it seems, in company with Tom Moore and John Kenyon, with Rogers at St. James's-place, when their host, who had recently received through the French Ambassador a present of a case of pink Champagne from Louis Philippe, had the first bottle of it produced at the end of the dinner. The saucer-shaped Champagne glasses were then just coming into use, and pink Champagne, which was a revived novelty in England at that moment, looked singularly beautiful in them, crowned with its snow-white foam. Kenyon, who, as Gould remarks, was nothing if not declamatory, held up his glass, and apostrophised it as follows:

'Lily on liquid roses floating!
So floats yon foam o'er pink Champagne!
Fain would I join such pleasant boating,
And prove that ruby main,
And float away on wine!'

This being vociferously applauded, after a few minutes' pause he added the second verse:

'Those seas are dangerous, graybeards swear,
Whose sea-beach is the goblet's brim;
And here it is they drown dull Care—
But what care we for him?
So we but float on wine!'

On being desired to continue, Kenyon declared that he had done his part, and that it was now the turn of some one else. Moore and Rogers both claimed exemption, as being on the 'retired list' of the

Parnassian army, and peremptorily demanded a contribution from the Transatlantic guest, Tracy Gould, who thereupon, with ‘great diffidence,’ as he tells us, delivered himself of the third and fourth stanzas:

‘Gray Time shall pause and smooth his wrinkles,
Bright garlands round his scythe shall twine;
While sands from out his glass he sprinkles,
To fill it up with wine—
With rosy sparkling wine!

Thus hours shall pass which no man reckons,
’Mongst us, who, glad with mirth divine,
Heed not the shadowy hand that beckons
Across the sea of wine—
Of billowy gushing wine!’

Kenyon then added another stanza, which suggested a final verse to the American:

‘And though ’tis true they cross in pain,
Who sober cross the Stygian ferry,
Yet only make our Styx Champagne,
And we shall cross right merry,
Floating away on wine!’

‘Old Charon’s self shall make him mellow,
Then gaily row his bark from shore;
While we and every jolly fellow
Hear unconcerned the oar
That dips itself in wine!’

By this time the inspiration and the Champagne were alike exhausted.

The history of Champagne in England during the latter half of the present century may be briefly

summed up in the assertion of the ever-growing popularity of the wine, and the high repute attained by certain brands, which it would be invidious to particularise. Its success in oiling the wheels of social life is so great and so universally acknowledged that its eclipse would almost threaten a collapse of our social system. We cannot open a railway, launch a vessel, inaugurate a public edifice, start a newspaper, entertain a distinguished foreigner, invite a leading politician to favour us with his views on things in general, celebrate an anniversary, or specially appeal on behalf of a benevolent institution without a banquet, and hence without the aid of Champagne, which, at the present day, is the obligatory adjunct of all such repasts.

When the Municipality of London welcome the Khan of Kamschatka to our shores and to the Guildhall, Champagne flows in the proverbial buckets full. When the Master and Wardens of the Coalscuttle-Makers' Company bid the Livery to one of their periodical feasts, scandal says that even this measure is exceeded. When Sir Fusby Guttleton gives one of his noted 'little spreads' at Greenwich, are not torrents of iced 'dry' needed to quench the thirst excited by the devilled bait? Aware, too, of the unloosening effect the wine exercises upon the strings of both heart and purse, Pomposo, as chairman at the annual festival of the Decayed Muffinmongers' Asylum, is careful to see that the glasses of the guests have been well charged with it before he commences his stirring appeal on behalf of that deserving institution.

Does Ingenioso wish to introduce to the notice of the British public a new heating-power or lighting-apparatus or ice-making machinery, he straightway

issues cards for a private view to critics and cognoscenti, and is careful that these shall observe the merits of his invention through the medium of a glass—bubbling over with Champagne. So it is at the openings of the latest extension of the Mugby Junction Railway and of the Palatial Hotel, at the private view of the Amicable Afghans, or Tinto's new picture, or any one of Crotchet's manifold inventions. If the bidding, too, flags at a sale of shorthorns or thoroughbreds, at a wink from the auctioneer the Champagne-corks are set a-popping, and advance promptly follows advance in responsive echoes.

Not less important is the part that Champagne plays in the City. Capel Crash, the great financier, literally *floats* the concerns he deigns to 'promote' by its agency. When Consol, the millionaire, makes one of a set for rigging the market, and the 'ring' thus formed has reaped the reward of their ingenuity, does he not entertain his intimate friends with the story and with the choicest Champagne? The amount of business, moreover, transacted by the aid of the wine is incalculable. Bargains in stocks and shares, tea and sugar, cotton and corn, hemp and iron, hides and tallow, broadcloth and shoddy, are clinched by its agency. On the other hand, many a bit of sharp practice has been forgiven, many a hard bargain has been forgotten, many a smouldering resentment has been quenched for ever, and many an enmity healed and a friendship cemented, over a bottle of Champagne.



‘I say, old fellow, how do you go to the Derby this year?’
‘O, the old way—hamper-and-four.’
(From a drawing by John Leech in ‘Punch.’)



AT THE DERBY
(From a drawing by John Leech in 'Punch.')

The Turf is said to be our national pastime, and no one will deny the close connection existing between sport and Champagne. From the highest to the lowest of that wonderful agglomeration of individuals interested in equine matters, it is recognised as the only standard 'tipple.' Champagne goes down to the Derby in its hamper-and-four, like other pertinacious patrons of the race, and its all but ubiquitous presence on the course is warmly welcomed by thousands of thirsty visitors of very various grades. At Ascot, does H. R. H. the Prince of Wales seek to congratulate the Marquis of Hartington on his success, it is by wishing him further success in a glass of sparkling wine. Does Mr. William Kurr, welsher,

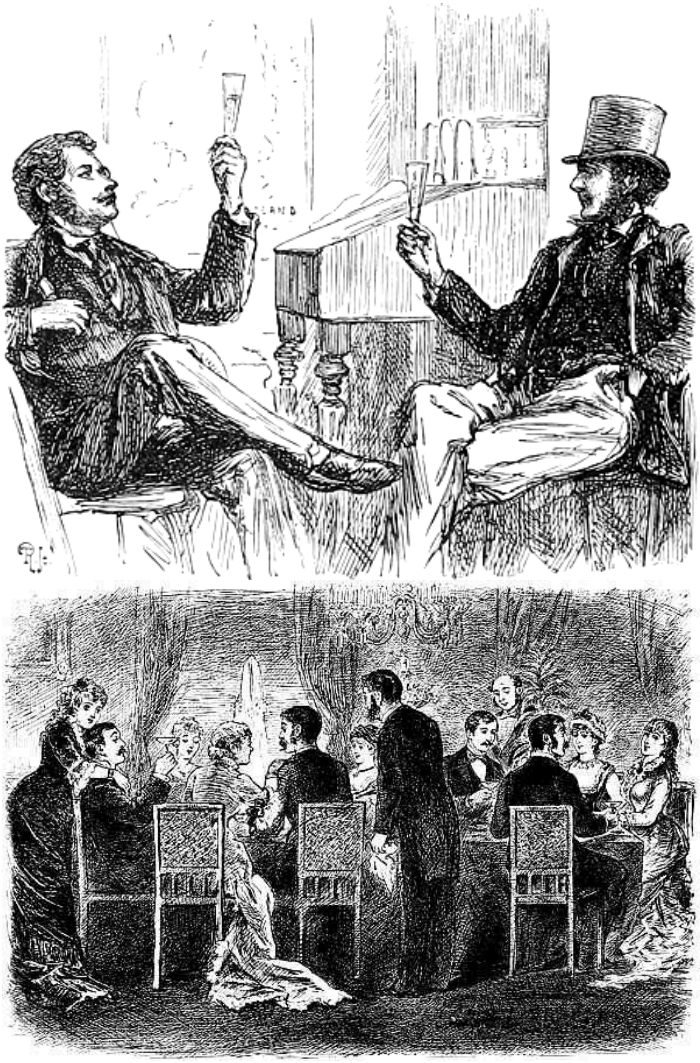
desire to make the acquaintance of Mr. Druscovitch, detective, he seeks an introduction from Mr. Meiklejohn over a bottle of ‘fiz.’ Does the favourite horse win—quick, fill high the bowl with sparkling wine, to celebrate his triumph; does he lose, the same vintage will serve to drown our sorrows and obliterate the recollection of our losses. How many cunning *coups*, how many clever combinations, have there not been worked out in all their details over a bottle of ‘Cham.’ in quiet hotel-parlours at Doncaster or Newmarket! How many bets have been laid and paid in the same medium! How many a jockey has been bought, and how many a race has been sold, owing to the moral as well as physical obliquity of vision which the ingurgitation of the wine has induced! Nor should the existence of Champagne Stakes be forgotten. There are now several races of this name at different meetings; but the oldest is that established at Doncaster in 1828, and taking its title from the fact of the owner of the winner having to present six dozen of Champagne to the Doncaster Club.



***Jones*: 'I say, Brown, things are deuced bad in the City.'**
***Brown*: 'Then I'm deuced glad I'm at Epsom.'**
(From a drawing by John Leech in 'Punch.')

Look, too, at the influence exercised by the wine on the British drama, or rather on what to-day passes as such. Plagioso the playwright freely opens a bottle of Champagne with the object of stimulating the wit of his friend and collaborateur in the task of adapting Messrs. Meilhac & Halévy's latest production to the London stage. Adverse critics, moreover, are said to

be mollified by the subjugating influence of the wine; while authors, enraged at the way in which their pieces have been 'cut,' are similarly soothed; squabbles too between rival *artistes* as to parts and lengths are satisfactorily arranged in the managerial sanctum over a bottle of fiz. Does Lord Nortiboy wish to smooth over a tiff with the tow-haired young lady who is making ducks and drakes of his money at the Gynarchic Theatre, and whose partiality for sparkling wine is notorious, a dinner at Richmond and floods of 'Cham' for herself and friends is the plan that naturally suggests itself. Should the enterprising lessees of the Chansonnette Theatre determine to celebrate the thousand and first night of the run of *Their Girls*, a Champagne supper is recognised as the fit and proper method of doing so. Supper is the favourite meal of the profession, and Champagne is of course the best of all wine to take at that repast. On the stage itself it has often proved of very serious service. Robust tragedians and prima donnas in good training may indulge in stout, as more 'mellering to the organ;' but by the judicious administration of Champagne many a nervous *débutant* has been encouraged to conquer 'stage fright' and to face the footlights, many a jaded *tragédienne* enabled to rally her fainting energies in the last act, and to carry her audience with her in a final outburst of pathos or passion.



AT THE STAR AND GARTER, RICHMOND.

Statesmen no longer prime themselves with Port before strolling down to the House, till they get into the condition of the two members, one of whom averred that he could not see any Speaker in the

chair, whilst the other gravely accounted for the phenomenon of this disappearance by asserting that, for his part, he saw a couple. Perhaps it is to be regretted that the records of the 'tea-room' do not vouch for a larger consumption of Champagne, as then perhaps the reporters overnight and their readers the nest morning might escape the wearisome reiteration of purposeless recrimination and threadbare platitudes. Such should certainly be the case, since the power of the wine as an incentive to brisk and sparkling conversation has been universally acknowledged in social life.



'Now, George, my boy, there's a glass of Champagne for you. Don't get such stuff at school, eh?'
'H'm! Awfully sweet. Very good sort for ladies. But I've arrived at a time of life when I confess I like my wine dry.'
(From a drawing by John Leech in 'Punch.')

To the dinners of Bloomsbury and Belgravia, as well as the suppers of Bohemia, Champagne imparts a charm peculiarly its own by placing all there present

en rapport. The modern mind may well look back with shuddering horror to that dreary period when Champagne, if given at all, was doled out at dinner-parties 'like drops of blood.' No wonder the ladies used to fly from the table and the gentlemen to slide underneath it. And, speaking of the ladies, is not Champagne their wine *par excellence*? How would the fragile products of modern civilisation be able to outdo the most robust of their ancestresses—whose highest saltatory feats were the execution of the slow and stately minuet, the formal quadrille with its frequent rests, or at most the romping country dance—by whirling almost uninterruptedly in the mazes of the giddy waltz from nine in the evening until five in the morning, without the sustaining power the sparkling fluid affords them? Has it not on their tongues an influence equal to that which it exercises on their swiftly-flying feet, inspiring pretty prattle, sparkling repartee, enchanting smiles, and silvery laughter? Old Bertin du Rocheret was quite right when he invited his fair friends to continue drinking

'De ce nectar délicieux,
Qui pétille dans vos beaux yeux
Mieux qu'il ne brille dans mon verre.'

Since these lines were penned, many thousands of bright eyes have so borrowed an additional lustre.





It would certainly be going too far to suggest that flirtation and Champagne must have been introduced simultaneously, yet the former can only have attained perfection since the advent of the latter. Only consider what a failure a picnic or a garden-or water-party, or any other kind of entertainment to which that much-abused term *fête champêtre* is applied, and where flirtation would be, without Champagne! As a matrimonial agent, Champagne's achievements outdo those of the cleverest of manœuvring mammas. It was solely those two extra glasses at supper which emboldened young Impey

Cue of the Foreign Office to summon up sufficient courage to propose in the conservatory to Miss Yellowboy, the great heiress; and Impey Cue now lords it at Yellowboy Park as though to the manor born. Nor must the part it plays on the eventful day when the fatal knot is firmly tied be overlooked. It has been cynically remarked that it is a painful spectacle even for the most hardened to witness the consigning of a victim to the doom matrimonial; and that it becomes all the more painful when, under the futile pretext of festivity, bewildered fathers, harassed mothers, sorrowing sisters, envious cousins, bored connections, and pitying friends, arrayed in their best attire, meet at an abnormally early hour round the miscalled social board. Still, fancy what a wedding breakfast would be without the accompaniment of Champagne!



THE SOCIAL TREADMILL—THE WEDDING BREAKFAST
(From a drawing by John Leech in 'Punch').

With mamma in tears and papa in the fidgets, the bride half-way towards hysterics, and the bridegroom wishing from the bottom of his heart that the crowded dining-room would suddenly transform itself into a securely-locked first-class coupé speeding onwards in the direction of Dover, the task of those speakers on whom devolves the duty of descanting upon 'the happy occasion which has brought us together' is of a surety no easy one. And it would be still more uphill work were it not for the amount of cheerful inspiration fortunately to be drawn from the familiar foil-topped bottles. By and by, when the more serious speeches have been duly

stammered through, and the jovial bachelor—a middle-aged one by preference—rises to propose ‘the health of the bridesmaids,’ bursts of laughter from the men and responsive titters, bubbling up like the sparkling atoms in the wine which has inspired them, from the lips of the damsels in question and their compeers, prove beyond question that Champagne has done its duty in dissipating the gloom originally prevailing.



COMING OF AGE (Drawn by R. Caldecott).

A wedding, too, is the customary precursor of other family gatherings at which the vintage of the Marne plays the same enlivening part. There are, for instance, christenings where godfathers bring as their offerings masterpieces of the silversmith’s craft, and the infant’s health is quaffed by turns in

‘Sherry in silver, Hock in gold, and glassed
Champagne;’

for the wine of mirth is out of place in metal, however precious, and needs the purest crystal to exhibit all its finer qualities. There are also coming-of-age banquets, whereat young Hopeful is enabled to stumble and stutter through a series of jerky and disjointed phrases of thanks—commonplace as they may be, which never fail to awaken the tenderest emotions in the heart of the maternal author of his being—by the aid of sundry glasses of the sparkling wine of the Marne.

‘O the wildfire wine of France!
Quick with fantasies florescent,
Rapturously effervescent,
How its atoms leap and dance!

Floric fount of love and laughter,
Where its emanations rise
All the difficulty dies
From the now and the hereafter.
Through the happy golden haze
Time’s gray cheek is bright with dimples,
And his laugh more lightly wimples
Than the sea’s on summer days.

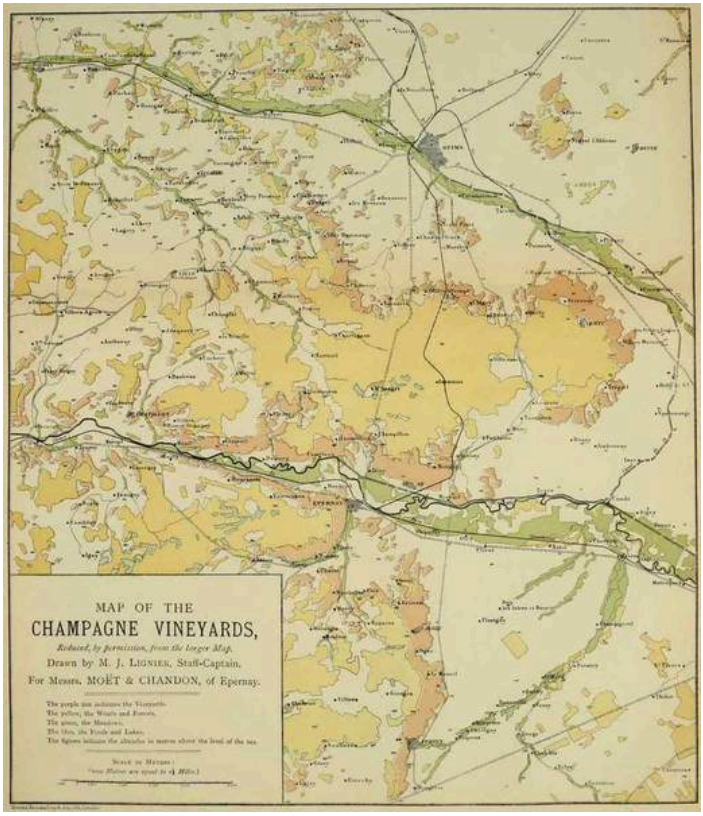
Tongue and throat it makes to tingle,
Beats the blood from heart to vein,
And ascending to the brain,
Bids the spirit forth and mingle
With a world no longer grim,
But serene and sweet and spacious,
Where the girls are fair and gracious,
And the Cupids light of limb.

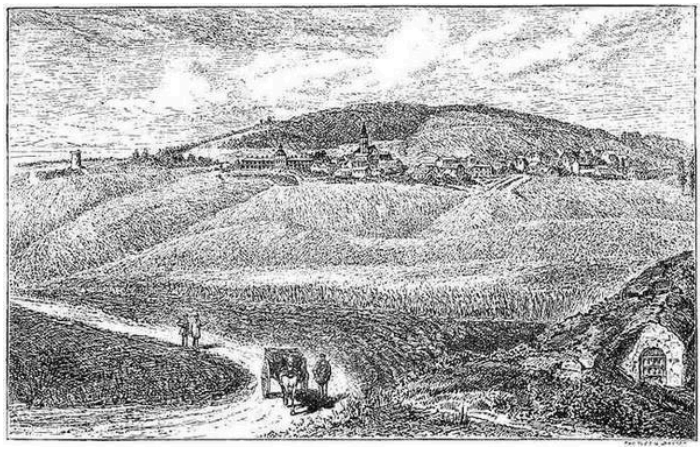
Soul and sense are all untethered!
Who would be an angel when,
Clement king of gods and men,

He can soar so grandly, feathered
With thy plumage, O Champagne?
Bottled gladness! thou magician!
Silver-bearded! mist Elysian!
Ecstasy of sun and rain!

Swift and subtle, glad and glorious,
O the wildfire wine of France!
How its atoms frisk and dance,
Over Fate and Time victorious!'



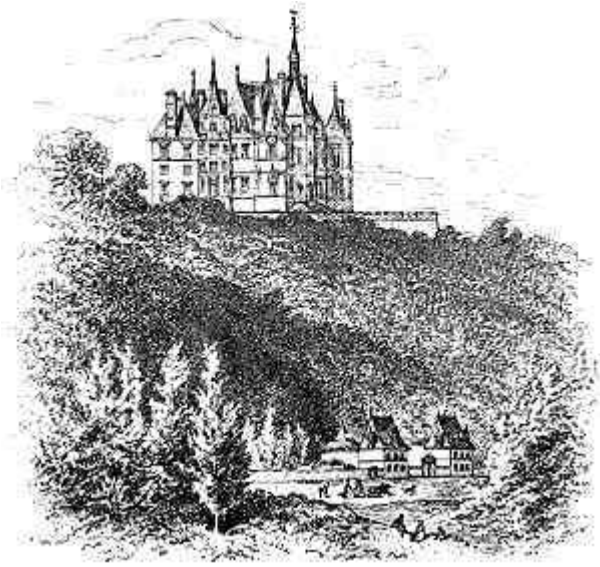

MAP OF THE
CHAMPAGNE VINEYARDS,
Reduced, by permission, from the larger Map.
Drawn by M. J. LIGNIER, Staff-Captain,
For Messrs. MOËT & CHANDON, of Epernay.



THE VINEYARDS AND ABBEY OF HAUTVILLERS.

PART II.

I.
THE CHAMPAGNE VINELANDS—THE VINEYARDS OF THE RIVER.



CHÂTEAU DE BOURSAULT.

The vinelands in the neighbourhood of Epernay—Viticultural area of the Champagne—A visit to the vineyards of 'golden plants'—The Dizy vineyards—Antiquity of the Ay vineyards—St. Tresain and the wine-growers of Ay—The Ay vintage of 1871—The Mareuil vineyards and their produce—Avernay; its vineyards, wines, and ancient abbey—The vineyards of Mutigny and Cumières—Damery and 'la belle hôtesse' of Henri Quatre—Adrienne Lecouvreur and the Maréchal de Saxe's matrimonial schemes—Pilgrimage to Hautvillers—Remains of the Royal Abbey of St. Peter—The ancient church—Its quaint decorations and monuments—The view from the heights of Hautvillers—The abbey vineyards and wine-cellars in the days of Dom Perignon—The vinelands of the Côte d'Epernay—Pierry and its vineyard cellars—The Moussy, Vinay, and Ablois St. Martin vineyards—The Côte d'Avize—Chavot, Monthelon, Grauves, and Cuis—The vineyards of

Cramant and Avize, and their light delicate white wines—The Oger and Le Mesnil vineyards—Vertus and its picturesque ancient remains—Its vineyards planted with Burgundy grapes from Beaune—The red wine of Vertus a favourite beverage of William III. of England.

WITH the exception of certain famous vineyards of the Rhône, the vinelands of the Champagne may, perhaps, be classed among the most picturesque of the more notable vine-districts of France. Between Paris and Epernay, even, the banks of the Marne present a series of scenes of quiet beauty. The undulating ground is everywhere cultivated like a garden. Handsome châteaux and charming country houses peep out from amid luxuriant foliage. Picturesque antiquated villages line the river's bank or climb the hill-sides, and after leaving La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, the cradle of the Condés, all the more favoured situations commence to be covered with vines.

This is especially the case in the vicinity of Château-Thierry—the birthplace of La Fontaine—where the view is shut in on all sides by vine-clad slopes, which the spring frosts seldom spare. Hence merely one good vintage out of four gladdens the hearts of the peasant proprietors, who find eager purchasers for their produce among the lower-class manufacturers of Champagne. In the same way the *petit vin de Chierry*, dexterously prepared and judiciously mingled with other growths, often figures as 'Fleur de Sillery' or 'Ay Mousseux.' In reality it is not until we have passed the ornate modern Gothic château of Boursault, erected in her declining years by the wealthy Veuve Clicquot, by far the shrewdest

manipulator of the sparkling products of Ay and Bouzy of her day, and the many towers and turrets of which, rising above umbrageous trees, crown the loftiest height within eyeshot of Epernay, that we find ourselves in that charmed circle of vineyards whence Champagne—the wine, not merely of princes, as it has been somewhat obsequiously termed, but essentially the *vin de société*—is derived.

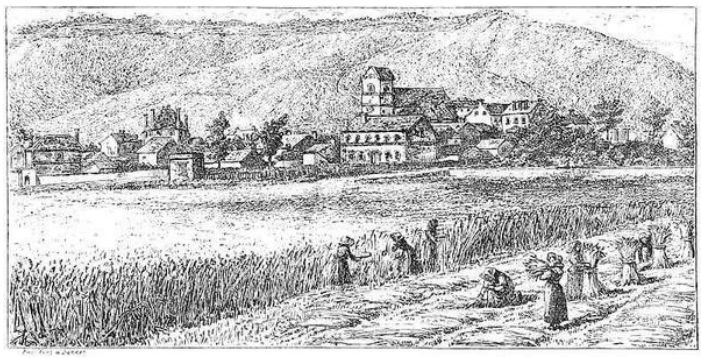
The vinelands in the vicinity of Epernay, and consequently near the Marne, are commonly known as the 'Vineyards of the River,' whilst those covering the slopes in the neighbourhood of Reims are termed the 'Vineyards of the Mountain.' The Vineyards of the River comprise three distinct divisions—first, those lining the right bank of the Marne and enjoying a southern and south-eastern aspect, among which are Ay, Hautvillers, Cumières, Dizy, and Mareuil; secondly, the Côte d'Epernay on the left bank of the river, of which Pierry, Moussy, and Vinay form part; and thirdly, the Côte d'Avize (the region *par excellence* of white grapes), which stretches towards the south-east, and includes the vinelands of Cramant, Avize, Oger, Le Mesnil, and Vertus. The entire vineyard area is upwards of 40,000 acres.[378]

The Champagne vineyards most widely celebrated abroad are those of Ay and Sillery, although the last named are really the smallest in the Champagne district. Ay, distant only a few minutes by rail from Epernay, is in the immediate centre of the Vinelands of the River, having Mareuil and Avenay on the east, and Dizy, Hautvillers, and Cumières on the west; while Sillery lies at the foot of the so-called Mountain of Reims, and within an hour's drive of the old cathedral city.

It was on one of those occasional sunshiny days in the early part of October[379] when we first visited Ay—the vineyard of 'golden plants,' the unique *premier cru* of the Wines of the River—and the various adjacent vinelands. The road lay between two rows of closely-planted poplar-trees reaching almost to the village of Dizy, whose quaint gray church-tower, with its gabled roof, is dominated by the neighbouring vine-clad slopes, which extend from Avenay to Venteuil, some few miles beyond Hautvillers, the cradle, so to speak, of the *vin mousseux* of the Champagne. The vineyards of Dizy, the upper soil of which is largely mixed with loose stones, have chiefly a southern or western aspect, and, excepting in the case of the precipitous height suggestively styled 'Grimpe Chat,' their incline is generally a gentle one. In these vineyards, which rank among the *premiers crus* of the Champagne, a quantity of wine from white grapes is regularly made.

From Dizy the road runs immediately at the base of vine-clad slopes, broken up occasionally by a conical peak detaching itself from the mass, and tinted from base to summit with richly-variegated hues, among which deep purple, yellow, green, gray, and crimson by turns predominate. On our right hand we pass a vineyard called Le Léon, which tradition asserts to be the one whence Pope Leo the Magnificent, the patron of Michael Angelo, Raffaelle, and Da Vinci, drew his supply of Ay wine. The village of Ay lies immediately before us at the foot of the slopes of vines, with the tapering spire of its ancient church rising above the neighbouring hills and cutting sharply against the bright blue sky. The vineyards, which spread themselves over a calcareous declivity, have mostly a full southern aspect, and the predominating vines are

those known as golden plants, the fruit of which is of a deep purple colour. After these comes the *plant vert doré*, and then a moderate proportion of the *plant gris*, white varieties of grapes being no longer cultivated as formerly.[380]



DIZY AND ITS VINEYARD SLOPES.

The Ay vineyards are mentioned in a charter of Edmund of Lancaster, son of our Henry II. and guardian of Jehanne, heiress of Henri le Gros, Count of Champagne, dated 1276, and confirming the right of the Abbey of Avenay to four hogsheads of wine from the *terroir* of Ay.[381] If faith, however, may be placed in monkish legends, their existence dates back to the sixth century, at which epoch St. Tresain, the patron saint of Avenay and a contemporary of St. Remi, emigrated to the Champagne from Scotland. Having given away all he possessed in charity, he became perforce a swineherd at Mutigny, a village on the summit of the hill overlooking Ay, Mareuil, and Avenay. One day the vine-growers of Ay, hearing that St. Remi was at Ville-en-Selve, sought him out, and clamorously accused St. Tresain of neglecting to look after his pigs, which had devastated the vineyards on the slopes, and so

caused great loss to the community. When called upon for his defence, St. Tresain acknowledged that he was wont to listen in the church-porch to the celebration of mass, and to forget on these occasions all such sublunary matters as swine. St. Remi, finding him so deeply religious, not only forgave him his negligence and relieved him from his porcine charge for the future, but appointed him parish priest of Mareuil and Mutigny, the inhabitants of which, it is to be hoped, received more attention from him than his pigs had done. St. Tresain, although his promotion was brought about by the complaint of the men of Ay, retorted on the latter in a vindictive and unsaintly spirit, for he ill-naturedly cursed them, and declared that after thirty years of age not one of them or their posterity should prosper temporally or spiritually—a prophecy which, if it affected the vine-growers of that epoch, has proved harmless enough in the case of their descendants.[382]

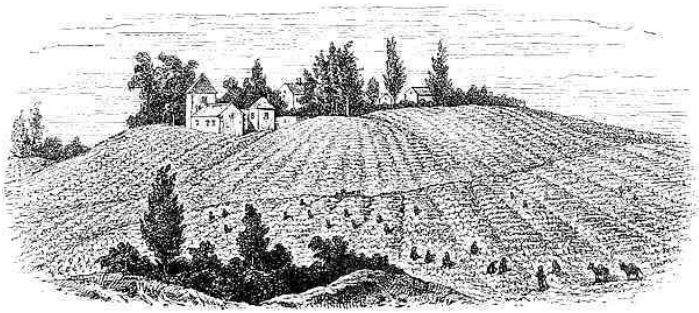


At Ay we visited the pressoir of the principal producer of *vin brut*, who, although the owner of merely five hectares, or about twelve and a half acres of vines, expected to make as many as 1500 pièces of wine that year, mainly of course from grapes

purchased from other growers.[383] On our way from Ay to Mareuil, along the lengthy Rue de Châlons, we looked in at the little auberge at the corner of the Boulevard du Sud, and found a crowd of coopers and others connected in some way with the vintage, taking their cheerful glasses round. The walls of the room were appropriately enough decorated with capering bacchanals squeezing bunches of purple grapes and flourishing their thyrsi about in a very tipsy fashion. All the talk—and there was an abundance of it—had reference to the yield of this particular vintage and the high rate the Ay wine had realised. Eight hundred francs the pièce of 200 litres, equal to 44 gallons, appeared to be the price fixed by the agents of the great Champagne houses, and at this figure the bulk of the vintage was disposed of before a single grape passed through the winepress. [384]

The Mareuil vinelands, which include the vineyard bequeathed some six hundred years ago by Canon John de Brie to the chapter of Reims cathedral, and possibly those vineyards bestowed in 1208 on the Abbey of Avenay by Alain de Jouvincourt, cover the slopes of two coteaux, the first a continuation of the Côte d'Ay, and the second a detached spur, known as the Mont de Fourche, overlooking the Marne canal. Owing to the steepness of the slopes and to the roads through the vineyards being impracticable for carts, the grapes were being conveyed to the press-houses in baskets slung across the backs of mules and donkeys, most of which, on account of their known partiality for the ripe fruit, were muzzled while thus employed. The wine yielded by the Mareuil vineyards possesses body and vinosity, and while of course regarded as inferior to that of Ay, found a ready market the year of our visit at from five to six

hundred francs the pièce. Prior to the French Revolution, the produce of the winepresses of the Seigneurs of Mareuil and the Abbess of Avenay were almost as renowned as the best growths of Ay. The reputation of the wine was then shared by the inhabitants of the village; the popular local diction, 'Les gens d'Ay, les messieurs de Mareuil, et les crottés d'Avenay,' referring to the days when the first was inhabited by enriched wine-growers, the second by people of some position, and the third merely by peasants, simply from its being cut off, in a great measure, from outside intercourse through the badness of its approaches. It was not until after 1776, when the *seigneurie* of Louvois was purchased from the Marquis de Souvré by Madame Adelaïde, aunt of Louis XVI., that the road from Epernay to Louvois, which passes through Mareuil and Avenay, was, if not constructed, at any rate rendered practicable, in order to facilitate the visits of the princess to her new acquisition. These roads exist, though no traces remain of the ancient fort of Mareuil on the bank of the Marne, taken from the English in 1359 by Gaucher de Chatillon, captain of Reims, and alternately occupied by Leaguers and Royalists during the War of Religion in the sixteenth century. Nor does there seem any chance of identifying either the 'vineyard called la Gibaudelle, lying next the vineyard of Oudet, surnamed Leclerc,' in the territory of Mareuil, which Guillaume de Lafors and Marguerite his wife bestowed upon the Abbey of Avenay in 1273, or those from which, in the fourteenth century, Archbishop Richard Pique of Reims used to draw ten muids or hogsheads of wine annually for 'droits de vinage.'



AVENAY AS SEEN FROM THE RAILWAY.

The vineyards of Avenay also date prior to the thirteenth century, mention being frequently made of them in the charters of that epoch.[385] Their best wine, which Saint Evremond extolled so highly, is vintaged to-day up the slopes of Mont Hurlé. Avenay itself is a tumbledown little village situated in the direction of Reims, and the year of our visit we found the yield from its vineyards had been scarcely more than the third of an average one, and that the wine produced at the first pressure of the grapes had been sold for 500 francs the pièce. We tasted there some very fair still red wine, made from the same grapes as Champagne, remarkably deep in colour, full of body, and possessing that slight sweet bitterish flavour which characterises certain of the better-class growths of the South of France.

Although at Avenay vineyards cover the slopes as of yore, when Marmontel used to wander amongst them in company with his inamorata Mademoiselle Hévin de Navarre, no traces remain of the ancient royal abbey—founded by St. Bertha in 660, on the martyrdom of her husband, St. Gombert, one of the early Christian missionaries to Scotland—where Charles V. took up his quarters when invading

Champagne in 1544, and where the deputies of the Leaguers of Reims and of the Royalists of Châlons met in October 1592 to settle the terms of the 'Traité des Vendanges,' securing to both parties liberty to gather in the vintage unmolested.[386] The villagers still point out the house where Henri Quatre slept, and the window from which he harangued the populace during the visit paid by him to Madame Françoise de la Marck, the Abbess of Avenay,[387] in August of the same year. This, by the way, does not seem to have been the only occasion when the spot was honoured by the presence of Royalty; for a tradition, which, although unsupported by any documentary evidence, appears to be worthy of credence, is current to the effect that Marie Antoinette paid a visit to the Abbey of Avenay during her sojourn at Louvois as the guest of Madame Adelaïde in 1786. The spring which, according to the legend, gushed forth when St. Bertha, in imitation of Moses, struck the rock with her distaff, is still shown to travellers; and scandal has gone so far as to say that recourse is sometimes had to it to eke out the native vintage.

On leaving Avenay we ascended the hills to Mutigny, and wound round thence to Cumières, on the banks of the Marne, finding the vintage in full operation all throughout the route. The vineyards of Cumières—classed as a second cru—yield a wine which, though celebrated in the verses of Eustache Deschamps, a famous and prolific Champenois poet of the fourteenth century, varies to-day considerably in quality, the best coming from the 'Côtes-à-bras,' the property of the Abbey of Hautvillers in Dom Perignon's day. The Cumières vineyards join those of Hautvillers on the one side and Damery on the other, the latter a cosy little river-side village, where the

bon Roi Henri sought relaxation from the turmoils of war in the society of the fair Anne du Pay, *sa belle hôtesse*, as the gallant Béarnais was wont to style her. Damery also claims to be the birthplace of Adrienne Lecouvreur, the celebrated actress of the Regency, and mistress of the Maréchal de Saxe, who coaxed her out of her 30,000 *l.* of savings to enable him to prosecute his suit with the obese Anna Iwanowna, niece of Peter the Great, which, had he only been successful, would have secured the future hero of Fontenoy the coveted dukedom of Courland. From Cumières can be distinguished far away on the horizon the ruined tower of the *bourg* of Châtillon, the birthplace of Pope Urban II., preacher of the first Crusade, and a devotee of the wine of Ay.[388]

It was during the budding spring-time when we made our formal pilgrimage to Hautvillers across the swollen waters of the Marne at Epernay. Our way lay for a time along a straight level poplar-bordered road, with verdant meadows on either hand; then diverged sharply to the left, and we commenced ascending the vine-clad hills, on a narrow plateau of which the church and abbey remains are picturesquely perched. The closely-planted vines extend along the undulating slopes to the summit of the plateau, and wooded heights rise up beyond, affording shelter from the bleak winds that sweep over here from the north. Spite of the reputation which the wine of Hautvillers enjoyed a couple of centuries ago, and its association with the origin of *vin mousseux*, the vineyards to-day appear to have been relegated to the rank of a second cru, their produce ordinarily commanding less than two-thirds of the price obtained for the Ay and Verzenay growths.[389]

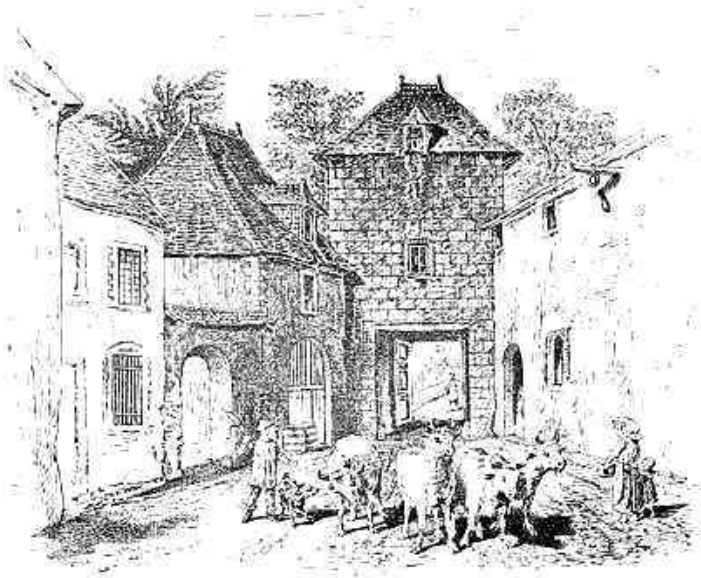
The church of Hautvillers and the remains of the abbey are situated at the farther extremity of the village, at the end of its one long street, named, pertinently enough, the Rue de Bacchus. Time, the iconoclasts of the great Revolution, and the quieter, yet far more destructive, labours of the Bande Noire, have spared but little of the royal abbey of St. Peter, where Dom Perignon lighted upon his happy discovery of the effervescent quality of Champagne. The quaint old church, scraps of which date back to the twelfth century, the remnants of the cloisters, and one of the abbey's ancient gateways, are all that remain to testify to the grandeur of its past, when it was the proud boast of the brotherhood that it had given nine archbishops to the see of Reims, and two-and-twenty abbots to various celebrated monasteries.



FOUNTAIN AT A CAFÉ IN THE RUE DE BACCHUS, HAUTVILLERS.

Passing through an unpretentious gateway, we find ourselves in a spacious courtyard, bounded by

buildings somewhat complex in character. On our right rises the tower of the church with the remains of the old cloisters, now walled-in and lighted by small square windows, and propped up by heavy buttresses. To the left stands the residence of the bailiff, and beyond it an eighteenth-century château on the site of the abbot's house. Formerly the abbey precincts were bounded on this side by a picturesque gateway-tower leading to the vineyards, and known as the 'Porte des Pressoirs,' from its contiguity to the winepresses. The court is enclosed on its remaining sides by huge barn-like buildings, stables, and cart-sheds; while roaming about are numerous live stock, indicating that what remains of the once-famous royal abbey of St. Peter has degenerated into an ordinary farm. To-day the abbey buildings and certain of its lands are the property of M. Paul Chandon de Brialles, of the firm of Moët & Chandon, the great Champagne manufacturers of Epernay, who maintains them as a farm, keeping some six-and-thirty cows there, with the object of securing the necessary manure for the numerous vineyards which the firm own hereabouts.



THE PORTE DES PRESSOIRS, ABBEY OF HAUTVILLERS (Destroyed by fire in 1879).



REMAINS OF CLOISTERS, ABBEY OF HAUTVILLERS.

The dilapidated cloisters, littered with old casks,

farm implements, and the like, preserve ample traces of their former architectural character, changed as they are since the days when the sandalled feet of the worthy cellarer resounded through the echoing arches as he paced to and fro, meditating upon coming vintages and future marryings of wines. Vine-leaves and bunches of grapes decorate some of the more ancient columns inside the church, and grotesque mediæval monsters, such as monkish architects habitually delighted in, entwine themselves around the capitals of others. The stalls of the choir are elaborately carved with cherubs' heads, medallions and figures of saints, cupids supporting shields, and free and graceful arabesques of the epoch of the Renaissance. In the chancel, close by the altar-steps, are a couple of black-marble slabs, with Latin inscriptions of dubious orthography, the one to Johannes Royer, who died in 1527, and the other, which has been already cited in detail, setting forth the virtues and merits of Dom Petrus Perignon, the discoverer of the effervescing qualities of Champagne. In the central aisle a similar slab marks the resting-place of Dom Thedoricus Ruynart—obit 1709—an ancestor of the Reims Ruinarts; and little square stones interspersed among the tiles with which the side aisles of the church are paved record the deaths of other members of the Benedictine brotherhood during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Several large pictures grace the walls of the church, the most interesting one representing St. Nivard, Bishop of Reims, and his friend, St. Berchier, designating to some mediæval architect the site which the contemplated Abbey of St. Peter is to occupy, as set forth in the legend already related.



FROM THE ABBEY CHURCH, HAUTVILLERS

At a short distance from the abbey farm, Messrs. Moët & Chandon have erected a tower, whence a splendid view, extending over the vineyards of Cumières, Hautvillers, Dizy, and Ay, with those lying on the opposite bank of the river, is to be obtained. Gazing from here, it is easy to imagine the scene presented in the days when the Abbey of St. Peter still reared its stately walls, when Louis Chaumejan de Tourille wore the abbatial insignia, and Dom Perignon displayed with equal pride as the badge of his office the key of the abbey cellars. Over these slopes on a dewy autumn morning the latter's eyes, ere sealed in blindness, must have often wandered, and an unctuous chuckle must have welled up from between his lips as he marked the grapes steadily advancing towards maturity. We can fancy him pausing from time to time

'To breathe an ejaculatory prayer
And a benediction on the vines,'

although in those halcyon days there was neither oïdium nor phylloxera to be dreaded, and an extra taper or so to St. Vincent, the patron of vine-dressers, sufficed to secure the crop from ordinary accidents of flood and field.

When the epoch of the vintage arrived, and the slopes were all alive with bands of vintagers engaged in stripping the ripened purple bunches from the vines, and carefully transporting them to the winepress, one can picture Dom Perignon smiling contentedly at the report of the gray-haired bailiff that no such crop had been garnered for years before. And when the must began to gush forth as the stalwart bare-armed peasants tugged at the levers of the huge press on which M. de Tourille had placed the glorifying inscription elsewhere cited, with what satisfaction must Perignon have recognised a foreshadowing of that divine aroma which lends so exquisite a charm to the choice vintages of the Champagne! Later on we can imagine him entering the abbey cellar, stored with the results of his careful labours, as a

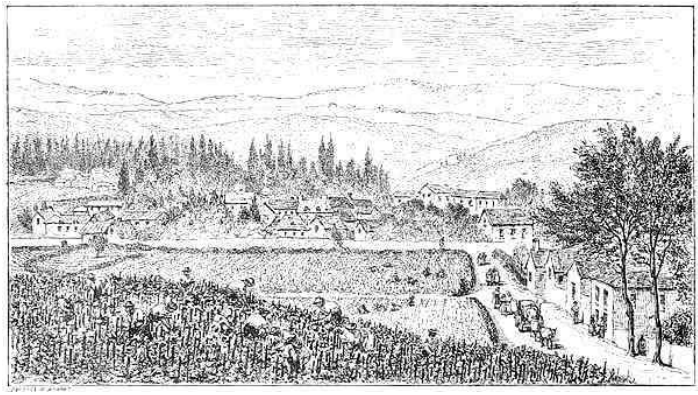
‘sacred place,
With a thoughtful, solemn, and reverent pace,’

and softly chanting to himself, as he draws off a flagon of the best and choicest vintage which the gloomy vaults contain:

‘Ah, how the streamlet laughs and sings!
What a delicious fragrance springs
From the deep flagon as it fills,
As of hyacinths and daffodils!’

The vineyards of the Côte d’Epernay, on the southern bank of the Marne, extend eastward from beyond Boursault, on whose wooded height stands the fine château built by Madame Clicquot, and in which her granddaughter, the Comtesse de Mortemart, to-day resides. They then follow the course of the river, and, after winding round behind Epernay, diverge

towards the south-west. Amongst them are the slopes of Pierry, Mardeuil, Moussy, Vinay, Ablois, and Chouilly, the last named situate somewhat apart from the rest to the east of Epernay, and yielding a light wine, qualified as slightly purgative. The vines of the Côte d'Epernay produce only black grapes, and many of the vineyards are of great antiquity, the one known as the Closet, near Epernay, having been bequeathed under that name by a canon of Laon named Parchasius to the neighbouring Abbey of St. Martin six and a half centuries ago.



THE VILLAGE OF PIERRY.

A short drive along the high-road leading from Epernay to Orleans brings us to the village of Pierry, cosily nestling amongst groves of poplars in the valley of the Cubry, with some half-score of châteaux of the last century, belonging to well-to-do wine-growers of the neighbourhood, screened from the road by umbrageous gardens. Vines mount the slopes that rise around, the higher summits being crowned with forest, while here and there some pleasant village shelters itself under the brow of a lofty hill. Near Pierry many cellars have been excavated in the

chalky soil, to the flints so prevalent in which the village is said to owe its name. The entrances to these cellars are closed by iron gateways, and on the skirts of the vineyards we come upon whole rows of them picturesquely overgrown with ivy, and suggestive in appearance of catacombs. Early in the last century the wine vintaged here in the Clos St. Pierre, belonging to an abbey of this name at Châlons, acquired a high reputation through the care bestowed upon it by Brother Jean Oudart, whose renown almost rivalled that of Dom Perignon himself; and to-day the Pierry vineyards, producing exclusively black grapes, hold a high rank among the second-class crus of the Marne.[390]



VINEYARD WINE-CELLARS AT PIERRY.

Crossing the Sourdon, a little stream which, after bubbling up in the midst of huge rocks in the forest of Epernay, rushes down the hills, and then changes its name to the Cubry, we soon reach Moussy, where vineyards have been in existence for something like eight centuries; for we find enumerated in the list of bequests made to the hospital of St. Mary at Reims in

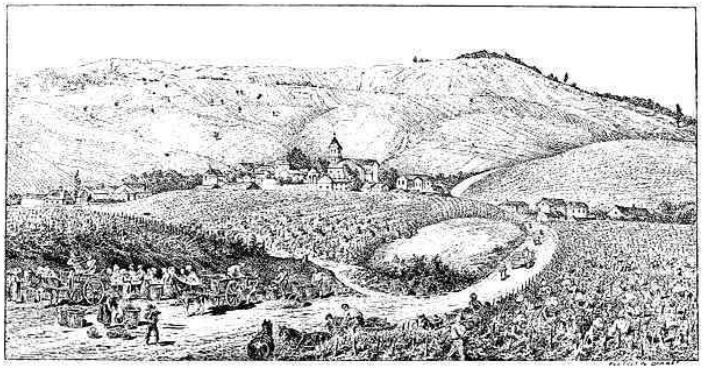
the eleventh and twelfth centuries sundry ‘vineas in Moiseio’ devised by such long-forgotten notabilities as Pontius, priest and canon, Tebaldus Papilenticus, Johannes de Germania, and Macela, wife of Pepinus. Spite, however, of their long pedigree and advantageous southern aspect, the Moussy vineyards rank to-day merely as a second cru. Continuing to skirt the vine-clad slopes we come to Vinay, noted for an ancient grotto[391]—the former comfortless abode of some rheumatic anchorite—and a pretended miraculous spring to which fever-stricken pilgrims to-day credulously resort. The water may possibly merit its renown; but the wine here produced is very inferior, due no doubt to the class of vines, the meunier being the leading variety cultivated. At Ablois St. Martin, once a fief of Mary Queen of Scots, and picturesquely perched partway up a slope in the midst of hills covered with vines and crowned with forest trees, the Côte d’Epernay ends, and the produce becomes of a choicer character.

As the Côte d’Avize lies to the south-east, to reach it we have to retrace our steps to Pierry, and follow the road which there branches off, leaving on our right hand the vineyards of Chavot, Monthelon, and Grauves, now of no particular note, although of undoubted antiquity, Blanche of Castille, Countess of Champagne, having endowed the Abbey of Argensolles, on its foundation in 1224, with sundry strips of vineland, including one at Grauves, possibly the vineyard of Les Roualles, which yields a wine not unlike certain growths of the Mountain of Reims. After passing through Cuis, where the slopes, planted with both black and white varieties of vines, are extremely abrupt, and where Simon la Bole, man-at-arms of Epernay, and his wife Basile gave, in 1210,

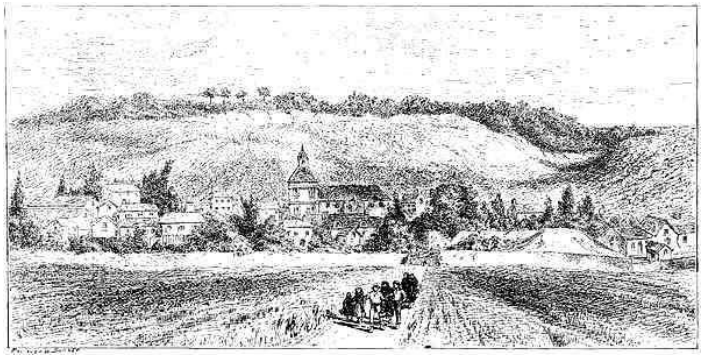
'four hogsheads of *vinage* to be taken annually' to Hugo, Abbot of St. Martin at Epernay, we eventually reach Cramant, one of the grand *premiers crus* of the Champagne. From the vineyards around this picturesque little village, and extending along the somewhat precipitous Côte de Saran—a prominent object, on which is M. Moët's handsome château—there is vintaged a wine from white grapes, especially remarkable for lightness and delicacy and the richness of its bouquet, and an admixture of which is essential to every first-class Champagne *cuvée*.

From Cramant the road runs direct to Avize, a large thriving village, lying at the foot of vineyard slopes, where numerous Champagne firms have established themselves. Its prosperity dates from the commencement of the last century (1715), when the Count de Lhery, its feudal lord, cleared away the remains of its ancient ramparts, filled up the moat, and planted the ground with vines, the produce of which proved admirably suited for the sparkling wines then coming into vogue. Prior to this the Avize wine, made almost entirely from white grapes, fetched only from 25 to 30 francs the queue; but being found well adapted for the manufacture of the strongly-effervescent wine known as *saute-bouchon*, it soon commanded as much as 300 francs, and the arpent of vineyard rose in value from 250 to 2000 francs.[392] To-day the light delicate wine of Avize is classed, like that of Cramant, as a *premier cru*, and it is the same with the wine of Oger,[393] lying a little to the south, while the neighbouring growths of Le Mesnil hold a slightly inferior rank. The latter village and its gray Gothic church lie under the hill in the midst of vines that almost climb the forest-crowned summit. The stony soil hereabouts is said to be better

adapted to the cultivation of white than of black grapes; besides which, the wines of Le Mesnil are remarkable for their effervescent properties.



LE MESNIL AND ITS VINEYARDS.



VIEW OF VERTUS.

Vertus forms the southern limit of the Côte d'Avize, and the vineyard slopes subsiding at their base into a broad expanse of fertile fields, and crested as usual with dense forest, rise up behind the picturesque old town, which is mentioned in a letter of the Emperor Louis and a charter of Charles the Bald in the ninth century. It was once strongly fortified, though a

dilapidated gateway is all that to-day remains of the ancient ramparts, which failed to secure it in 1380, when the English, under the 'Comte de Bouquingouan,' presumably Buckingham, burnt the whole of the town except the Abbey of St. Martin, and elicited from the native poet, Eustache Deschamps, *dit* Morel, 'huissier d'armes' to Charles VI. and castellan of Fismes, a lamentation, wherein he fails not to mention the high renown of the local vintage.[394]



OLD HOUSES AT VERTUS.

Vertus can still boast a curious old church of the eleventh century, with solid Romanesque towers, elaborate mouldings, and richly ornamented capitals;

also a picturesque promenade, shaded with centenarian trees, together with several quaint old houses, including one with a florid Gothic window surrounded by a border of grapes and vine-leaves, and another with a quaintly projecting corner turret, dominated by a conical roof. The Vertus vineyards are mentioned in a charter of the Abbey of Ste. Marie, dated 1151. They were originally planted with vines from Beaune in Burgundy, and in the fourteenth century yielded a red wine held in high repute, of pleasant flavour, and rich in perfume,[395] but which would appear to have been imbued with those purgative properties[396] traceable in other growths of the Champagne. The red wine of Vertus formed the favourite beverage of William III. of England, and was long in high repute. To-day, however, the growers find it more profitable to make white instead of red wine from their crops of black grapes, the former commanding a good price for conversion into *vin mousseux*, from being in the opinion of some manufacturers especially valuable for binding a *cuvée* together. The Vertus growths rank among the second-class Champagne crus.[397]



SILLERY AND ITS VINEYARDS.

II.
THE CHAMPAGNE VINELANDS—THE VINEYARDS OF THE MOUNTAIN.



**TOWER AND GATEWAY OF
THE CHÂTEAU DE SILLERY.**

The wine of Sillery—Origin of its renown—The Maréchale d'Estrées a successful Marchande de Vin—The Marquis de Sillery the greatest wine-farmer in the Champagne—Cossack appreciation of the Sillery produce—The route from Reims to Sillery—Henri Quatre and the Taissy wines—Failure of the Jacquesson system of vine cultivation—Château of Sillery—Wine-making at M. Fortel's—Sillery sec—The vintage at Verzenay and the vendangeoirs—Renown of the Verzenay wine—The Verzy vineyards—Edward III. at the Abbey of St. Basle—Excursion from Reims to Bouzy—The herring procession at St. Remi—Rilly, Chigny, and Ludes—The Knights Templars' 'pot' of wine—Mailly and the view over the Champagne plains—Wine-making at Mailly—The

village in the wood—Château and park of Louvois, Louis le Grand's War Minister—The vineyards of Bouzy—Its church-steeple, and the lottery of the great gold ingot—Pressing grapes at the Werlé vendangeoir—Still red Bouzy—Ambonnay—A pattern peasant vine-proprietor—The Ambonnay vintage—The vineyards of Ville-Dommange and Sacy, Hermonville and St. Thierry—The still red wine of the latter.

THE vineyards of the Mountain of Reims may be divided into two zones, one of which, known as the Basse Montagne, is situate north-west of Reims, and comprises the vineyards of St. Thierry, Marsilly, Hermonville, and others; whilst the more important zone lies to the south of the old cathedral city, and includes the better-known crus of Sillery, Verzy, Verzenay, Mailly, Ludes, Chigny, and Rilly. The vinelands of Bouzy and Ambonnay are also reckoned within it, though situate somewhat apart on a southern slope of the Mountain some few miles from the Marne.

The smallest of the Champagne vineyards are those of Sillery, and yet no wine of the Marne enjoys a greater renown, due originally to the intelligence and energy of the family of the Brularts, Marquises of Sillery and Puisieux, to whom the estate originally belonged, and who seem to have devoted great attention to viticulture from certainly the middle of the seventeenth century. The reputation of the still wine of Sillery, 'the highest manifestation of the divinity of Bacchus in all France,' was firmly established at this epoch. 'As to M. de Puyzieux,' writes St. Evremond to his friend Lord Galloway in August 1701, 'he acts wisely to fall in with the bad

taste now in fashion concerning Champagne in order to sell his own the better;' but at the same time he counsels his correspondent to get the marquis to make him 'a little barrel after the fashion in which it was made forty years before, prior to the existing depravation of taste.'[398] The marquis here referred to was Roger Brulart, Governor of Epernay, who was himself a joyous *bon vivant*, and died from over-indulgence in the good things provided at a dinner given by the Chartreux in 1719.[399] He was succeeded by his nephew, Louis Philogène Brulart, Marquis de Sillery et de Puisieux, to whom, in 1727, on the occasion of his marriage with Mademoiselle de Souvré, granddaughter of Louvois, the Sieurs Quatresous and Chertemps presented at his château of Sillery, on behalf of the town of Epernay, a basket of one hundred flasks of wine.[400] He died in 1771, leaving an only daughter, Adelaïde Félicité Brulart de Sillery, married, in 1744, to Louis César le Tellier, Maréchal Duc d'Estrées.

The wine attained its apogee under the fostering care of the Maréchale d'Estrées, to whom not only this cru, but those of Mailly, Verzy, and Verzenay belonged, and who concentrated their joint produce in the capacious cellars of her château, afterwards sending it forth with her own guarantee, under the general name of Sillery, which, like Aaron's serpent, thus swallowed up the others. The Maréchale's social position enabled her to secure for her wines the recognition they really merited, being made with the utmost care and a rare intelligence, shown by the removal of every unripe, rotten, or imperfect grape from the bunches before pressing, so that the *Vin de la Maréchale*, as it was styled, became famous throughout Europe.[401] This lady is not to be confounded with that other Maréchale d'Estrées

mentioned by St. Simon, noted for her exquisite and magnificent although rare entertainments, and so sordid that when her daughter, who was covered with jewels, fell down at a ball, her first cry was, not like Shylock's, 'My daughter!' but 'My diamonds!' as, rushing forward, she strove to pick up, not the fallen dancer, but her scattered gems.



HENRI QUATRE.

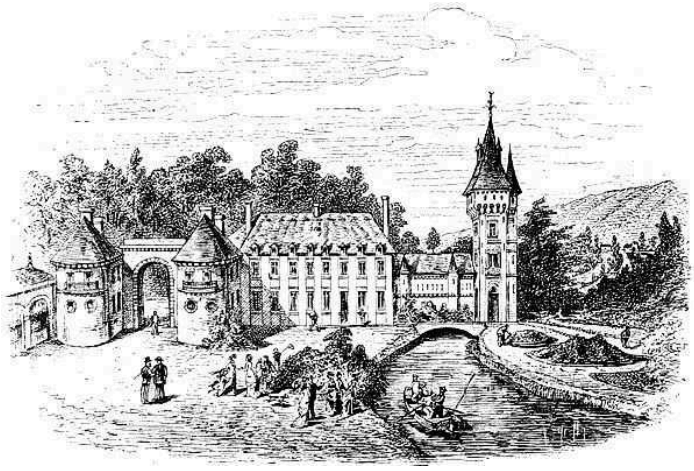
Later owners of the famous Sillery cru did their best to sustain its reputation, and Arthur Young, who stopped here in 1787, speaks of the Marquis de Sillery as 'the greatest wine-farmer in the Champagne,' having on his own hands 180 arpents of vines, and cellar-room for a couple of hundred pièces of wine.[402] Among more recent appreciation of the merits of Sillery sec may be mentioned the Cossacks, who pillaged the district in 1814, and who, not being able to carry off all the wine from the cellar of the Count de Valence at Sillery, stove in some thirty pièces of the best, and set the place

afloat.[403]

The drive from Reims to Sillery has nothing attractive about it. A long, straight, level road bordered by trees intersects a broad tract of open country, skirted on the right by the Petite Montagne of Reims, with antiquated villages nestled among the dense woodland. After crossing the Châlons line of railway—near where one of the new forts constructed for the defence of Reims rises up behind the villages and vineyards of Cernay and Nogent l'Abbesse—the country becomes more undulating. Poplars border the broad Marne canal, and a low fringe of foliage marks the course of the languid river Vesle, on the banks of which is Taissy, famous in the old days for its wines, great favourites with Sully, and which almost lured Henri Quatre from his allegiance to the vintages of Ay and Arbois that he loved so well.[404]

To the left rises Mont de la Pompelle, where the first Christians of Reims suffered martyrdom, and where, in 1658, the Spaniards under Montal, when attempting to ravage the vineyards of the district, were repulsed with terrible slaughter by the Rémois militia, led on by Grandpré. A quarter of a century ago the low ground on our right near Sillery was planted with vines by the late M. Jacquesson, the then owner of the Sillery estate, and a large Champagne manufacturer at Châlons, who was anxious to resuscitate the ancient reputation of the domain. Under the advice of Dr. Guyot, the well-known writer on viticulture, he planted the vines in deep trenches, which led to the vineyards being punningly termed Jacquesson's *celery* beds. To shield the vines from hailstorms prevalent in the district, and the more dangerous spring frosts, so fatal to

vines planted in low-lying situations, long rolls of straw-matting were stored close at hand with which to roof them over when needful. These precautions were scarcely needed, however; the vines languished through moisture at the roots, and eventually were mostly rooted up.



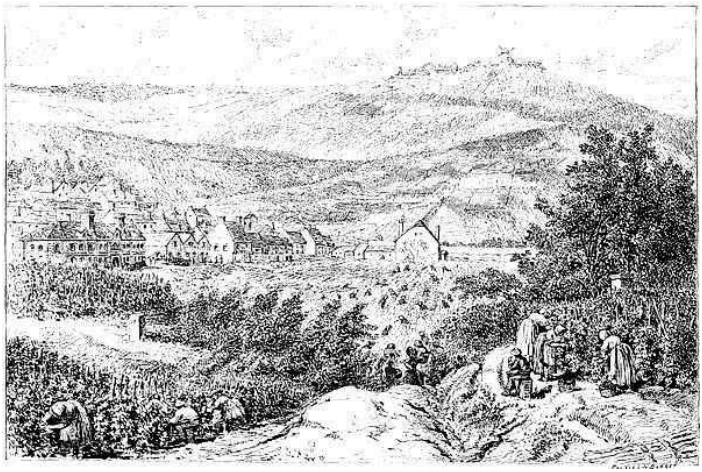
CHÂTEAU DE SILLERY.

After again crossing the railway we pass the trim restored turrets of the famous château of Sillery, with its gateways, moats, and drawbridges, flanked by trees and floral *parterres*. It was here that the stout squire Laurent Pichiet kept watch and ward over the ‘forte maison de Sillery’ on behalf of the Archbishop of Reims at the close of the fourteenth century, that the Maréchale d’Estrées carried on her successful business as a *marchande de vins*, and that the pragmatic and pedantic Comtesse de Genlis, governess of the Orleans princes, spent, as she tells us, the happiest days of her life. The few thriving vineyards of Sillery cover a gentle eminence which rises out of the plain, and present on the one side an

eastern and on the other a western aspect. They have fallen somewhat from their high estate since the days when old Coffin of Beauvais University sang their praises in Latin:

'Let Horace the charms of old Massica own,
And the praise of Falernian sound;
Such wines, although famous, must bow to that grown
On Sillery's fortunate ground.'[405]

To-day the Vicomte de Brimont and M. Fortel of Reims, the latter of whom cultivates some forty acres of vines, yielding ordinarily about 300 hogsheads, are the only wine-growers at Sillery. Before pressing his grapes—of course for sparkling wine—M. Fortel has them thrown into a trough, at the bottom of which are a couple of grooved cylinders, each about eight inches in diameter, and revolving in contrary directions, the effect of which, when set in motion, is to disengage the grapes partially from their stalks. Grapes and stalks are then placed under the press, which is on the old cider-press principle, and the must runs into a reservoir beneath, whence it is pumped into large vats, each holding from 250 to 500 gallons. Here it remains from six to eight hours, and is then run off into casks, the spigots of which are merely laid lightly over the holes, and in the course of twelve days the wine begins to ferment. It now rests until the end of the year, when it is drawn off into new casks and delivered to the buyer, invariably one or other of the great Champagne houses, who willingly pay an exceptionally high price for it. The second and third pressures of the grapes yield an inferior wine, and from the husks and stalks *eau-de-vie*, worth about five shillings a gallon, is distilled.



THE VINEYARDS OF VERZENAY.

The wine known as Sillery sec is a full, dry, pleasant-flavoured, and somewhat spirituous amber-coloured wine. Very little of it is made nowadays, and most that is comes from the adjacent vineyards of Verzenay and Mailly, and is principally reserved by the growers for their own consumption. One of these candidly admitted that the old reputation of the wine had exploded, and that better white Bordeaux and Burgundy wines were to be obtained for less money. In making dry Sillery, which locally is esteemed as a valuable tonic, it is essential that the grapes should be subjected to only slight pressure; while to have it in perfection it is equally essential that the wine should be kept for ten years in the wood according to some, and eight years in bottle according to others, to which circumstance its high price is in all probability to be attributed. In course of time it forms a deposit, and has the disadvantage common to all the finer still wines of the Champagne district of not travelling well.



DEVICE ABOVE ENTRANCE TO VENDANGEOIR AT VERZENAY.

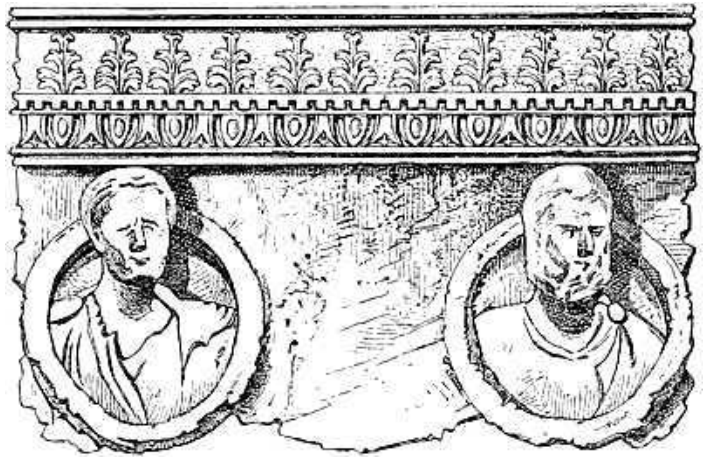
Beyond Sillery the vineyards of Verzenay unfold themselves, spreading over the extensive slopes and stretching to the summit of the steep height to the right, where a windmill or two are perched. Everywhere the vintagers are busy detaching the grapes with their little hook-shaped *serpettes*, the women all wearing projecting close-fitting bonnets, as though needlessly careful of their anything but blonde complexions. Long carts laden with baskets of grapes block the narrow roads, and donkeys, duly muzzled, with panniers slung across their backs, toil up and down the steeper slopes. Half-way up the principal hill, backed by a dense wood and furrowed with deep trenches, whence soil has been removed for manuring the vineyards, is the village of

Verzenay—where in the Middle Ages the Archbishop of Reims had a fief—overlooking a veritable sea of vines. Rising up in front of the old gray cottages, encompassed by orchards or gardens, are the white walls and long red roofs of the vendangeoirs belonging to the great Champagne houses—Moët & Chandon, Clicquot, G. H. Mumm, Roederer, Deutz & Geldermann, and others—all teeming with bustle and excitement, and with the vines almost reaching to their very doors. Messrs. Moët & Chandon have as many as eight presses in full work, and own no less than 120 acres of vines on the neighbouring slopes, besides the Clos de Romont—in the direction of Sillery, and yielding a wine of the Sillery type—belonging to M. Raoul Chandon. Verzenay ranks as a *premier cru*, and for three years in succession—1872, 3, and 4—its wines fetched a higher price than either those of Ay or Bouzy. In 1873 the *vin brut* commanded the exceptionally large sum of 1050 francs the hogshead of 44 gallons. All the inhabitants of Verzenay are vine-proprietors, and several million francs are annually received by them for the produce of their vineyards from the manufacturers of Champagne. The wine of Verzenay, remarkable for its body and vinosity, has always been held in high repute,[406] which is apparently more than can be said of the probity of the inhabitants, for, according to an old Champagne saying, 'Whenever at Verzenay "Stop thief" is cried every one takes to his heels.'

Just over the Mountain of Reims is the village of Verzy, the vine-growers of which distinguished themselves in the fifteenth century by their resistance to the officials sent to levy the 'aide en gros' of two sols per queue, imposed by Louis XI. on all wine made within a radius of four miles of Reims. The Verzy vineyards—ranked to-day as a second cru

—date at least from the days of the Knights Templars, when the Commanderie of Reims had ‘two vineyards near the abbey’ here. They adjoin those of Verzenay, and are almost exclusively planted with white grapes, the only instance of the kind to be met with in the district. In the Clos St. Basse, however—taking its name from the Abbey of St. Basle, of which the village was a dependency, and where Edward III. of England had his head-quarters during the siege of Reims—black grapes alone are grown, and its produce is almost on a par with the wines of Verzenay.

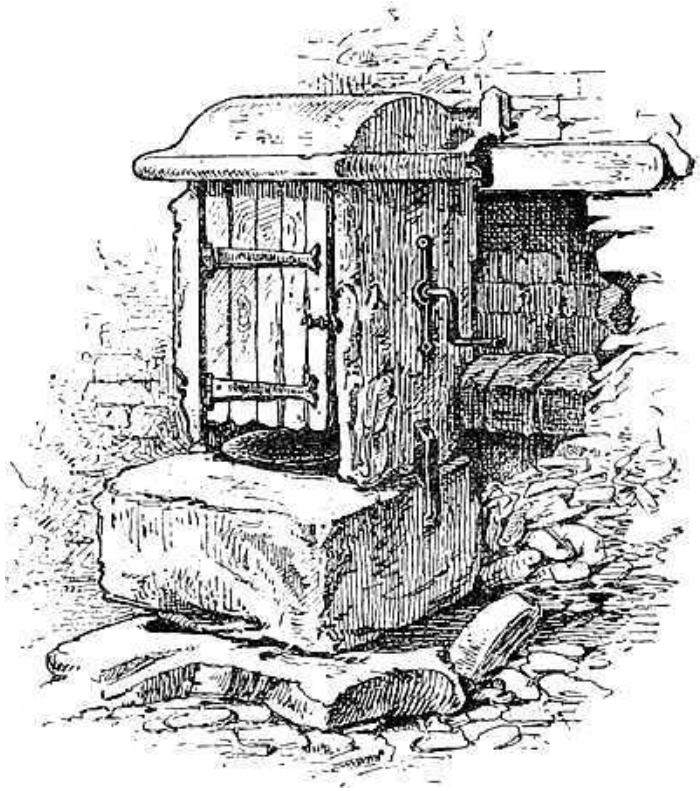
Immediately prior to the Revolution, one-fourth of the inhabitants of Verzy were landholders, each cultivating about five arpents of vines, and obtaining therefrom, on an average, twenty poinçons, out of which the abbey exacted one and three-quarters for ‘droits de dimes et de banalité de pressoir.’ Southwards of Verzy are the third-class crus of Villers-Marmery and Trépail, the former of which was of some repute in the Middle Ages.



PORTION OF FRIEZE OF OLD HOUSE, RUE DU BARBATRE,

REIMS.

We made several excursions to the vineyards of Bouzy, driving out of Reims along the ancient Rue du Barbâtre and past the quaint old church of St. Remi, one of the sights of the Champagne capital, and notable, among other things, for its magnificent ancient stained-glass windows, and the handsome modern tomb of the popular Rémois saint. It was here in the Middle Ages that that piece of priestly mummery, the procession of the herrings, used to take place at dusk on the Wednesday before Easter. Preceded by a cross, the canons of the church marched in double file up the aisles, each trailing a cord after him, with a herring attached. Every one's object was to tread on the herring in front of him, and prevent his own herring from being trodden upon by the canon who followed behind—a difficult enough proceeding, which, if it did not edify, certainly afforded much amusement to the lookers-on.



ANCIENT WELL, RUE DU BARBATRE, REIMS.

After crossing the canal and the river Vesle, and leaving the gray antiquated-looking village of Cormontreuil on our left, we traversed a wide stretch of cultivated country streaked with patches of woodland, with occasional windmills dotting the distant heights, and villages nestling among the trees up the mountain-sides and in the quiet hollows. Soon a few vineyards occupying the lower slopes, and thronged by bands of vintagers, came in sight, and the country too grew more picturesque. We passed successively on our right hand Rilly, a former fief of

the Archbishop of Reims, and noted for its capital red wine; then Chigny, where the Abbot of St. Remi had a vineyard as early as the commencement of the thirteenth century; and afterwards Ludes,—all three of them situated more or less up the mountain, with vines in every direction, relieved by a dark background of forest-trees. In the old days, the Knights Templars of the Commanderie of Reims had the right of *vinage* at Ludes, and exacted their modest 'pot' (about half a gallon) per pièce on all the wine the village produced. On our left hand is Mailly, the vineyards of which join those of Verzenay, and, though classed only as a second cru, yielding a wine noted for *finesse* and bouquet, identified by some as the vintage which was recommended in the ninth century to Bishop Hincmar of Reims by his *confrère*, Pardulus of Laon. From the wooded knolls hereabouts a view is gained of the broad plains of the Champagne, dotted with white villages and scattered homesteads among the poplars and the limes, the winding Vesle glittering in the sunlight, and the dark towers of Notre Dame de Reims, with all their rich Gothic fretwork, rising majestically above the distant city.

At one vendangeoir we visited, at Mailly, between 350 and 400 pièces of wine were being made at the rate of some thirty pièces during the long day of twenty hours, five men being engaged in working the old-fashioned press, closely resembling a cider-press, and applying its pressure longitudinally. This ancient press doubtless differs but little from the one which the chapter of Reims Cathedral possessed at Mailly in 1384. As soon as the must was expressed it was emptied into large vats, holding about 450 gallons, and in these it remained for several days before being drawn off into casks. Of the above thirty

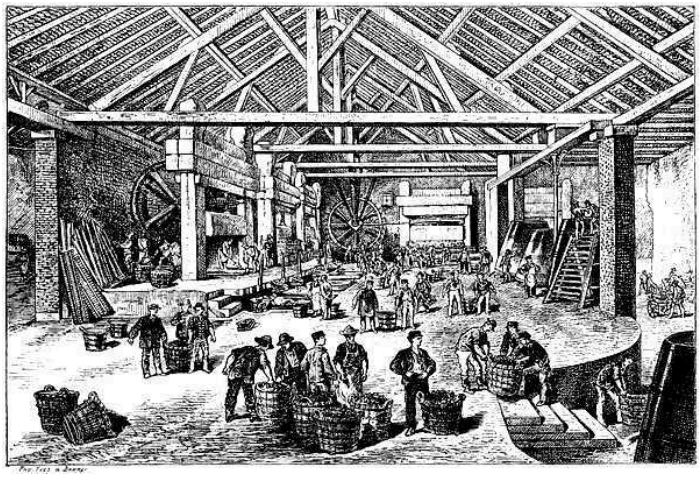
pièces, twenty resulting from the first pressure were of the finest quality, while four produced by the second pressure were partly reserved to replace what the first might lose during fermentation, the residue serving for second-class Champagne. The six pièces which came from the final pressure, after being mixed with common wine of the district, were converted into Champagne of an inferior quality.



THE VINEYARDS OF BOUZY.

We now crossed the mountain, sighting Ville-en-Selve—the village in the wood—among the distant trees, and eventually reached Louvois, whence the Grand Monarque's domineering war minister derived his marquisate, and where his château, a plain but capacious edifice, may still be seen nestled in a picturesque and fertile valley, and surrounded by lordly pleasure-grounds. Château and park are to-day the property of M. Frédéric Chandon, who has bestowed much care on the restoration of the former. Soon after we left Louvois the vineyards of Bouzy appeared in sight, with the prosperous-looking little village rising out of the plain at the foot of the vine-clad slopes stretching to Ambonnay, and the

glittering Marne streaking the hazy distance. The commodious new church is said to have been indebted for its spire to the lucky gainer—who chanced to be a native of Bouzy—of the great gold ingot lottery prize, value 16,000*l.*, drawn in Paris some years ago. The Bouzy vineyards occupy a series of gentle inclines, and have the advantage of a full southern aspect. The soil, which is of the customary calcareous formation, has a marked ruddy tinge, indicative of the presence of iron, to which the wine is in some degree indebted for its distinguishing characteristics—its delicacy, spirituousness, and pleasant bouquet. Vintagers were passing slowly in between the vines, and carts laden with grapes came rolling over the dusty roads. The mountain which rises behind the vineyards is scored up its sides and fringed with foliage at its summit, and a small stone bridge crosses the deep ravine formed by the swift-descending winter torrents.



THE VENDANGEOIR OF M. WERLÉ AT BOUZY.

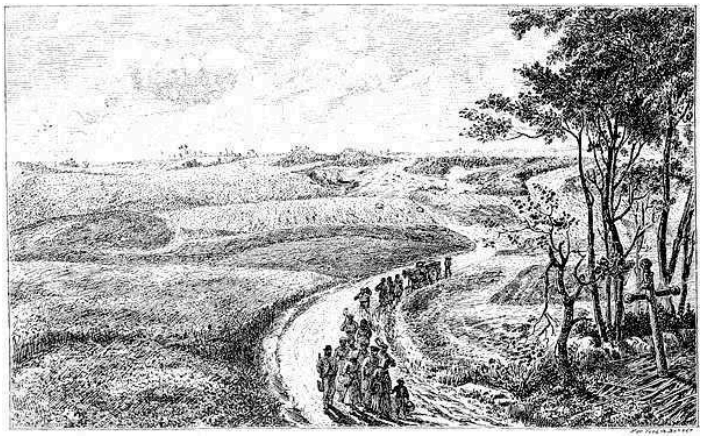
The principal vineyard proprietors at Bouzy, which

ranks, of course, as a *premier cru*, are M. Werlé, M. Irroy, and Messrs. Moët & Chandon, the first and last of whom have capacious vendangeoirs here, M. Irroy's pressing-house being in the neighbouring village of Ambonnay. M. Werlé possesses at Bouzy from forty to fifty acres of the finest vines, forming a considerable proportion of the entire vineyard area. At the Clicquot-Werlé vendangeoir, containing as many as eight presses, about 1000 pièces of wine are made annually. At the time of our visit, grapes gathered that morning were in course of delivery, the big basketfuls being measured off in caques—wooden receptacles holding two-and-twenty gallons—while the florid-faced foreman ticked them off with a piece of chalk on the head of an adjacent cask.

As soon as the contents of some half-hundred or so of these baskets had been emptied on to the floor of the press, the grapes undetached from their stalks were smoothed compactly down, and a moderate pressure was applied to them by turning a huge wheel, which caused the screw of the press to act—a gradual squeeze rather than a powerful one, and given all at once, coaxing out, it was said, the finer qualities of the fruit. The operation was repeated as many as six times; the yield from the three first pressures being reserved for conversion into Champagne, while the result of the fourth squeeze would be applied to replenishing the loss, averaging 7½ per cent, sustained by the must during fermentation. Whatever comes from the fifth pressure is sold to make an inferior Champagne. The grapes are subsequently well raked about, and then subjected to a couple of final squeezes, known as the *rébêche*, and yielding a sort of *piquette*, given to the workmen employed at the pressoir to drink.

The small quantity of still red Bouzy wine made by M. Werlé at the same vendangeoir only claims to be regarded as a wine of especial mark in good years. The grapes, before being placed beneath the press, are allowed to remain in a vat for as many as eight days. The must undergoes a long fermentation, and after being drawn off into casks is left undisturbed for a couple of years. In bottle—where, by the way, it invariably deposits a sediment, which is indeed the case with all the wines of the Champagne, still or sparkling—it will outlive, we were told, any Burgundy.

Still red Bouzy has a marked and agreeable bouquet and a most delicate flavour, is deliciously smooth to the palate, and to all appearances is as light as a wine of Bordeaux, while in reality it is quite as strong as Burgundy, to the finer crus of which it bears a slight resemblance. It was, we learnt, very susceptible to travelling, a mere journey to Paris being, it was said, sufficient to sicken it, and impart such a shock to its delicate constitution that it was unlikely to recover from it. To attain perfection, this wine, which is what the French term a *vin vif*, penetrating into the remotest corners of the organ of taste, requires to be kept a couple of years in wood and half a dozen or more years in bottle.



THE AMBONNAY VINEYARDS.

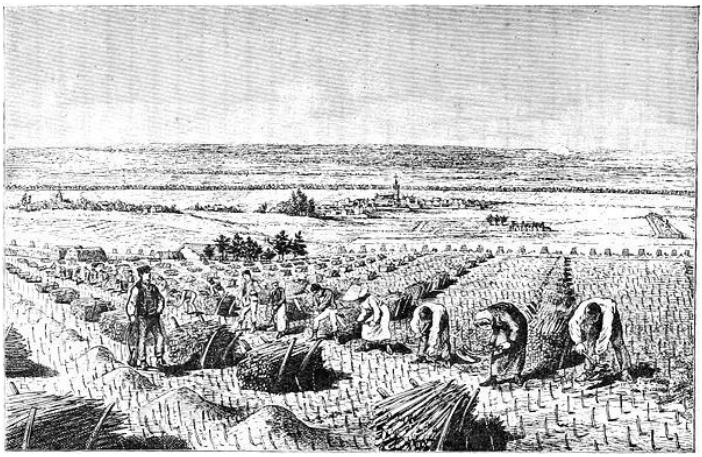
From Bouzy it was only a short distance along the base of the vine-slopes to Ambonnay, where there are merely two or three hundred acres of vines, and where we found the vintage almost over. The village is girt with fir-trees, and surrounded with rising ground fringed either with solid belts or slender strips of foliage. An occasional windmill cuts against the horizon, which is bounded here and there by scattered trees. Inquiring for the largest vine-proprietor, we were directed to an open porte-cochère, and on entering the large court encountered half a dozen labouring men engaged in various farming occupations. Addressing one whom we took to be the foreman, he referred us to a wiry little old man, in shirt-sleeves and sabots, absorbed in the refreshing pursuit of turning over a big heap of rich manure with a fork. He proved to be M. Oury, the owner of we forget how many acres of vines, and a remarkably intelligent peasant, considering what dunderheads the French peasants as a rule are, who had raised himself to the position of a large vine-

proprietor. Doffing his sabots and donning a clean blouse, he conducted us into his little salon, a freshly-painted apartment about eight feet square, of which the huge fireplace occupied fully one-third, and submitted patiently to our catechising.

At Ambonnay, as at Bouzy, they had that year, M. Oury said, only half an average crop; the caque of grapes had, moreover, sold for exactly the same price at both places, and the wine had realised about 800 francs the pièce. Each hectare (2½ acres) of vines had yielded 45 caques of grapes, weighing some 2¾ tons, which produced 6½ pièces, equal to 286 gallons of wine, or at the rate of 110 gallons per acre. Here the grapes were pressed four times, the yield from the second pressure being used principally to make good the loss which the first sustained during its fermentation. As the squeezes given were powerful ones, all the best qualities of the grapes were by this time extracted, and the yield from the third and fourth pressures would not command more than eighty francs the pièce. The vintagers who came from a distance received either a franc and a half per day and their food, consisting of three meals, or two francs and a half without food, the children being paid thirty sous. M. Oury further informed us that every year vineyards came into the market, and found ready purchasers at from fifteen to twenty thousand francs the hectare, equal to an average price of 300 *l.* the acre, which, although Ambonnay is classed merely as a second cru, has since risen in particular instances to upwards of 600 *l.* per acre. Owing to the properties being divided into such infinitesimal portions, they were not always bought up by the large Champagne houses, who objected to be embarrassed with the cultivation of such tiny plots, preferring rather to buy the produce from their

owners.

There are other vineyards of lesser note in the neighbourhood of Reims producing very fair wines, which enter more or less into the composition of Champagne, and almost all of which can boast of a pedigree extending back at least to the Middle Ages. Noticeable among these are Ville-Dommange and Sacy, south-west of Reims. At Sacy the Abbey of St. Remi had a vineyard in 1218; and in the return of church property made in 1384, the doyen of the Cathedral is credited with 'rentes de vin' and about six *jours* of vineland here, the Convent of Clermares at Reims owning a piece of 'vigne gonesse.' North-west of the city the best-known vineyards are those of Hermonville—mentioned likewise at the beginning of the thirteenth century, and in the return which we have just quoted—and St. Thierry, where the Black Prince took up his quarters during the siege of Reims, and where Gerard de la Roche wrought such havoc amongst the vines in the twelfth century, to the great indignation of their monkish owners. The still red wine of St. Thierry, which recalls the growths of the Médoc by its tannin, and those of the Côte d'Or by its vinosity, is to-day almost a thing of the past, it being found here, as elsewhere, more profitable to press the grapes for sparkling in preference to still wine.



LABOURERS AT WORK IN THE EARLY SPRING IN M. ERNEST IRROY'S BOUZY VINEYARDS.

III.
The Vines of the Champagne and the System of Cultivation.



CARRYING MANURE TO THE VINEYARDS.

A combination of circumstances essential to the production of good Champagne—Varieties of vines cultivated in the Champagne vineyards—Different classes of vine-proprietors—Cost of cultivation—The soil of the vineyards—Period and system of planting the vines—The operation of 'provenage'—The 'taille' or pruning, the 'bêchage' or digging—Fixing the vine-stakes—Great cost of the latter—Manuring and shortening back the vines—The summer hoeing around the plants—Removal of the stakes after the vintage—Precautions adopted against spring

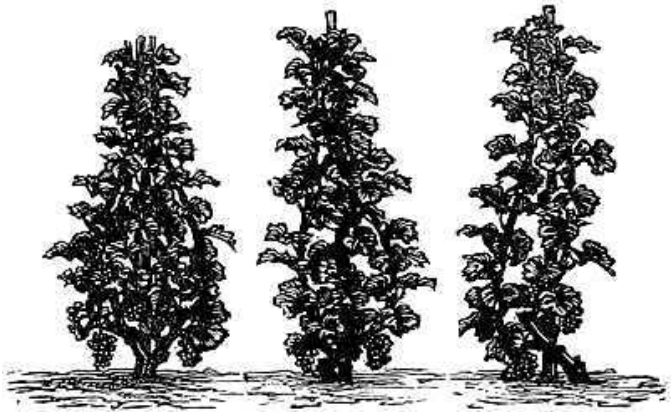
frosts—The Guyot system of roofing the vines with matting—Forms a shelter from rain, hail, and frost, and aids the ripening of the grapes—Various pests that prey upon the Champagne vines—Destruction caused by the Eumolpe, the Chabot, the Bêche, the Cochylus, and the Pyrale—Attempts made to check the ravages of the latter with the electric light.

GOOD Champagne does not rain down from the clouds, or gush out from the rocks, but is the result of incessant labour, patient skill, minute precaution, and careful observation. In the first place, the soil imparts to the natural wine a special quality which it has been found impossible to imitate in any other quarter of the globe. To the wine of Ay it lends a flavour of peaches, and to that of Avenay the savour of strawberries; the vintage of Hautvillers, though somewhat fallen from its former high estate, is yet marked by an unmistakably nutty taste; while that of Pierry smacks of the locally-abounding flint, the well-known *pierre à fusil* flavour. So, on the principle that a little leaven leavens the whole lump, the produce of grapes grown in the more favoured vineyards is added in definite proportions, in order to secure certain special characteristics, as well as to maintain a fixed standard of excellence.

While it is admitted that climate is not without its influence in imparting a delicate sweetness and aroma, combined with finesse and lightness, to the wine, some authorities maintain that to the careful selection of the vines best suited to the soil and temperature of the district the excellence of genuine Champagne is mainly to be ascribed.

Four descriptions of vines are chiefly cultivated in

the Champagne, three of them yielding black grapes, and all belonging to the pineau variety, from which the grand Burgundy wines are produced, and so styled from the clusters taking the conical form of the pine. The first is the franc pineau, the plant doré of Ay, with its closely-jointed shoots and small leaves, producing squat bunches of small round grapes, with thickish skins of a bluish-black tint, and sweet and refined in flavour. The next is the plant vert doré, with its leaves of vivid green, more robust and more productive than the former, but yielding a less generous wine, and the berries of which, growing in compact pyramidal bunches, are dark and oval, very thin-skinned, and remarkably sweet and juicy. The third variety, extensively planted in the vineyards of Verzy and Verzenay, is the plant gris, or burot, as it is styled in the Côte d'Or, a somewhat delicate vine, whose fruit has a brownish tinge, and yields a light and perfumed wine. The remaining species is a white grape known as the épinette, a variety of the pineau blanc, and supposed by some to be identical with the chardonnet of Burgundy, which yields the famous wine of Montrachet. It is met with all along the Côte d'Avize, notably at Cramant, the delicate and elegant wine of which ranks immediately after that of Ay and Verzenay. The épinette is a prolific bearer, and its round transparent golden berries, which hang in somewhat straggling clusters amongst its dark-green leaves, are both juicy and sweet. It ripens, however, much later than either of the black varieties.



TYPES OF THE CHAMPAGNE VINES IN BEARING.

There are several other species of vines cultivated in the Champagne vineyards, notably the common meunier, or miller, prevalent in the valley of Epernay, which bears black grapes, and takes its name from the young leaves appearing to have been sprinkled with flour. This variety being more hardy than the franc pineau is replacing the latter on the lower parts of the slopes, which are the most exposed to frosts—a regrettable circumstance, as it impairs the quality of the wine. There are also the black and white gouais; the meslier, a prolific white variety yielding a wine of fair quality; the black and white gamais, the leading grape in the Mâconnais, and chiefly found in some of the Vertus vineyards; together with the tourlon, the marmot, the cohéras, the plant doux, and half a score of others.

The land in the Champagne, as in other parts of France, is minutely subdivided, and it has been estimated that the 40,000 acres of vines are divided amongst no less than 16,000 proprietors. A few of the principal Champagne firms are large owners of vineyards; and as the value of the soil has more than

quadrupled within the last thirty years, even the smallest peasant proprietors have cause for congratulation.[407] These latter cultivate their vineyards themselves; while the larger landowners employ labourers, termed *forains* when coming from a distance and working by the week for their lodging, food, and from 20 to 30 francs wages, or *tâcherons* when paid by the job. The last-mentioned class usually contract to cultivate and dress an arpent of vines, exclusive of the vintage, at from 8*l.* to 12*l.* per annum.

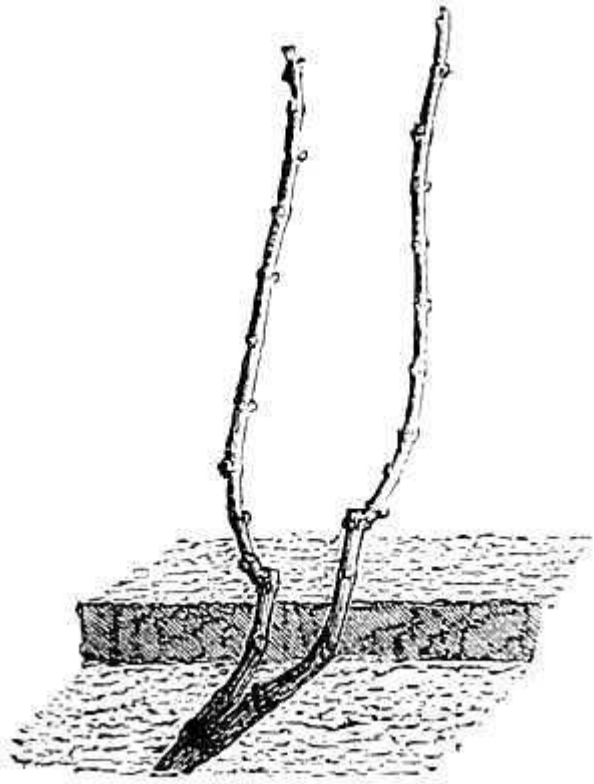


MANURING THE NEWLY-PLANTED YOUNG VINES.

In the Champagne the old rule holds good—poor soil, rich product, grand wine in moderate quantity. The soil of the vineyards is chalk, with a mixture of silica and light clay, combined with a varying proportion of oxide of iron. Many of the best have a substratum of stones and sand, and a thin superstratum of vegetable earth. The ruddier the soil, and consequently the more impregnated with

ferruginous earth, the better suited it is found to the cultivation of black grapes; whilst the gray or yellowish soils, such as abound in the Côte d'Avize, are preferable for the white varieties.

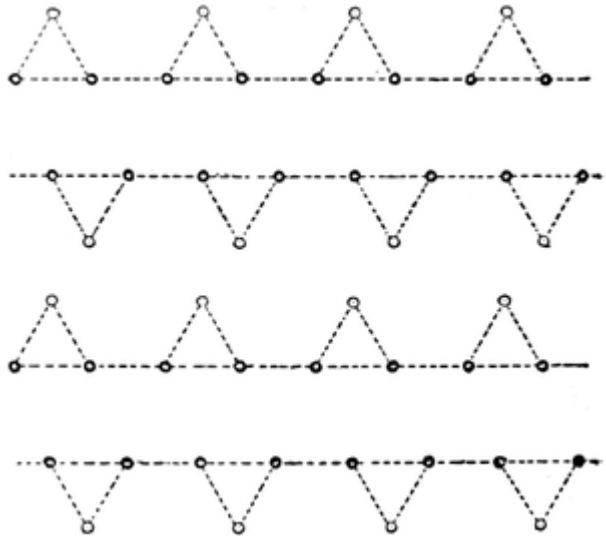
The vines are almost invariably planted on rising ground, the lower slopes, which seldom escape the spring frosts, producing the best wines. The vines are placed very close together, there often being as many as six within a square yard, and the result is that they reciprocally impoverish each other. Planting takes place between November and April, the vine-growers of the River being usually in advance of those of the Mountain in this operation. Plants two or three years old and raised in nurseries are usually made use of. These are placed either in holes or trenches. The roots have a little earth sprinkled over them, to which a liberal supply of manure or compost is added, and the holes having been filled up and trodden, the vines are pruned down to a couple of buds above the ground.



VINE PREPARED FOR 'PROVINAGE.'

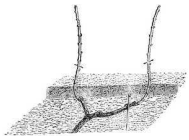
In the course of two or three years they are ready for the operation of 'provinage,' or layering, a method of multiplication universally practised in the Champagne. This consists in burying in a trench, from six to eight inches deep dug on one side of the plant, two or more of the principal shoots, left when the vine was pruned for this especial purpose. The whole of the two-years'-old wood is thus buried, and the ends of the shoots of one-year-old, which are left above ground, are cut down to the second bud. The shoots thus laid underground are dressed with a light

manure, and in course of time take root and form new vines, which bear during their second year. This operation is performed simultaneously with the 'bêchage' in the early spring, and is annually repeated until the vine is five years old, the plants thus being in a state of continual progression; a system which accounts for the juvenescent aspect of the Champagne vineyards, where none of the wood of the vines showing above ground is more than three years old.

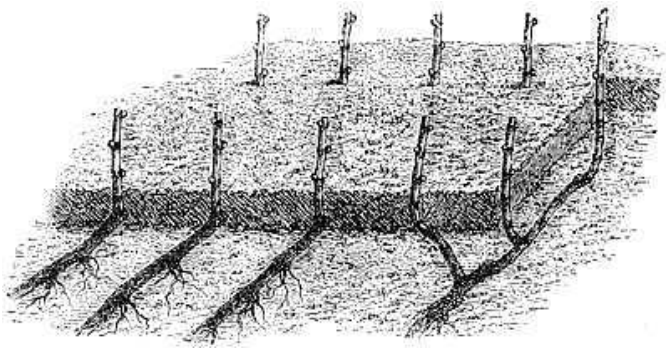


PLAN OF 'PROVINAGE À L'ÉCART' IN A NEWLY-PLANTED VINEYARD.

The two principal plans adopted in provining are styled the 'écart' and the 'avance.' In the first, which is usually followed in newly-planted vineyards, the two shoots are carried forward to the right and left—so as to form the two base points of an equilateral triangle, of which the point of departure is the summit—and are maintained in this position by the aid of wooden or iron pegs. In the 'provinage à l'avance' both shoots are carried forward in the same direction, and sometimes a variation embodying the two systems is employed.

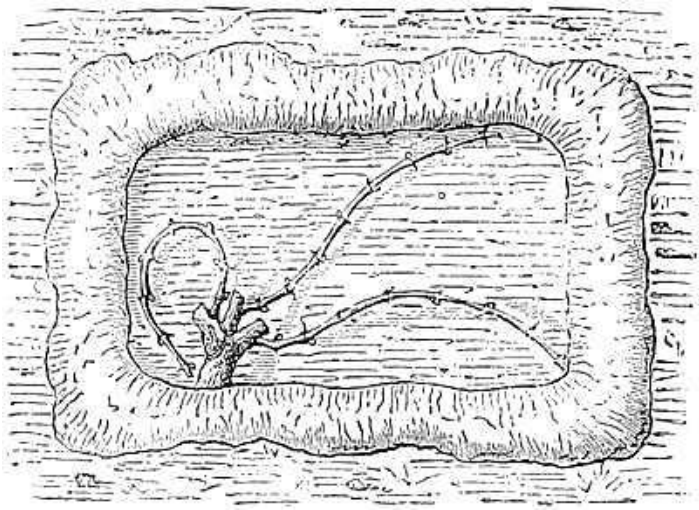


PROVINAGE À L'ÉCART.



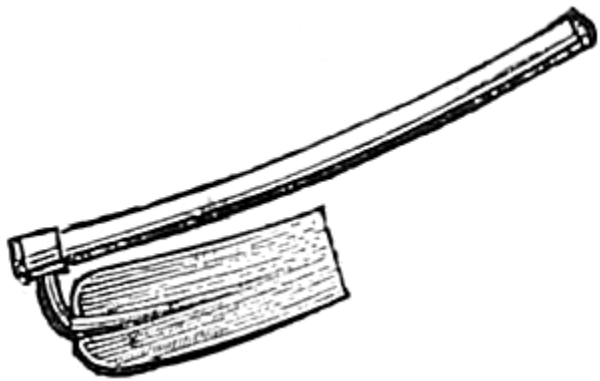
PROVINAGE À L'AVANCE.

When the vine has attained its fifth year it is allowed to rest for a couple of years, and then the provining is resumed, the shoots being dispersed in any direction throughout the vineyard, so as to fill up vacancies. The plants remain in this condition henceforward, merely requiring to be renewed from time to time by judicious provining. For instance, it is sometimes found necessary to bend one of the shoots round into a circle, so that its end may issue from the ground at the point occupied by the parent stock. The system of provinage is sometimes carried to excess in the Champagne, with a view of increasing the yield of wine, which suffers, however, in quality. The network of roots, too, renders the various operations of cultivation difficult and dangerous, as they are liable to be injured by the short-handled hoe in universal use among the Champenois vine-dressers.

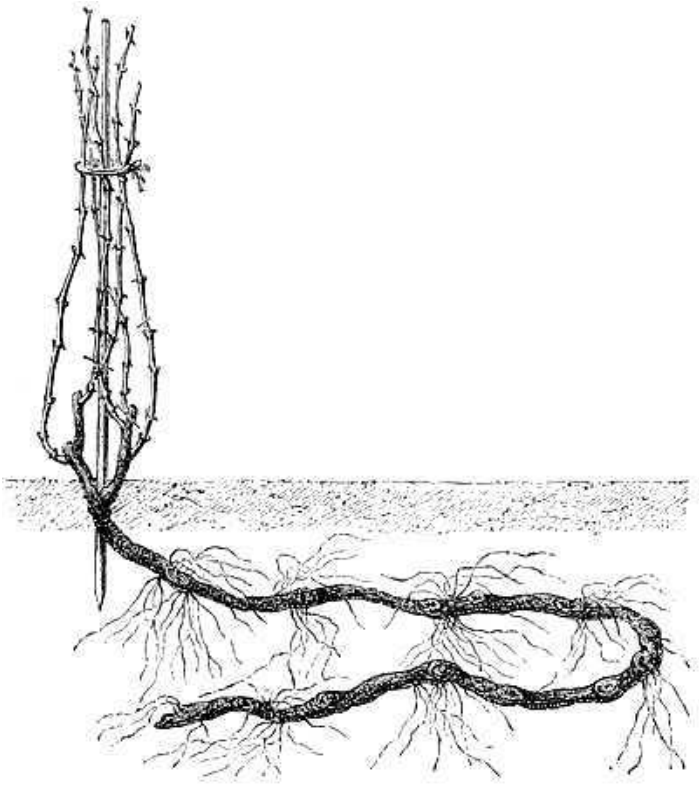


TRIPLE 'PROVINAGE' TO REPLACE THE PARENT STOCK.

Viticulturists inclined to make experiments have tried the system of arranging the vines in transverse and longitudinal lines, quincunxes, &c., or have replaced their vine-stakes with iron wires supported by wooden pickets. Some of these experiments have proved successful, although none of them are as yet in general use.



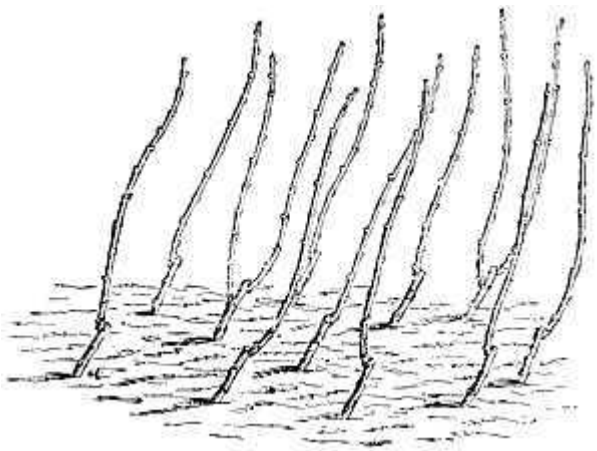
VINE DRESSER'S HOE.



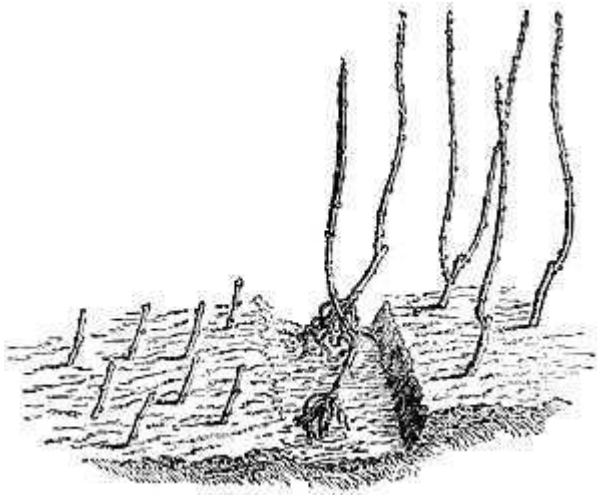
VINE PRIOR TO THE FEBRUARY PRUNING, SHOWING THE EXTENT OF ROOT.

The first operation of importance carried out during the year in the vineyards is the ‘taille,’ or pruning, which takes place in February, and consists in cutting away the superfluous shoots, simply leaving one—or, if it is intended to multiply by provinage, two—on each stock. This is followed about March or April by the ‘bêchage,’ or ‘hoyerie’—that is, the digging round the roots of the vine—with which is combined the provinage. A trench being opened, as already noted, and the vine laid bare to the roots, it is bent down so that, on filling up the trench with

earth and manure, the stock is entirely covered and only the new wood appears above ground. This new wood is then shortened back, and the stakes intended for the support of the vines are fixed in the ground. These stakes are set up in the spring of the year by men or women, the former of whom force them into the ground by pressing against them with their chest, which is protected with a shield of wood. The women use a mallet, or have recourse to a special appliance, in working which the foot plays the principal part. The latter method is the least fatiguing, and in some localities is practised by the men. An expert labourer will set up as many as 5000 stakes in the course of the day. When of oak these stakes cost sixty francs the thousand; and as the close system of plantation followed in the Champagne renders the employment of no less than 24,000 stakes necessary on every acre of land, the cost per acre of propping up the vines amounts to upwards of 57 *l.*, or more than treble what it is in the Médoc and quadruple what it is in Burgundy. The stakes last only some fifteen years, and their renewal forms a serious item in the vine-grower's budget.



VINES IN FEBRUARY AFTER THE 'TAILLE.'



THE 'BÊCHAGE' OF THE VINES.



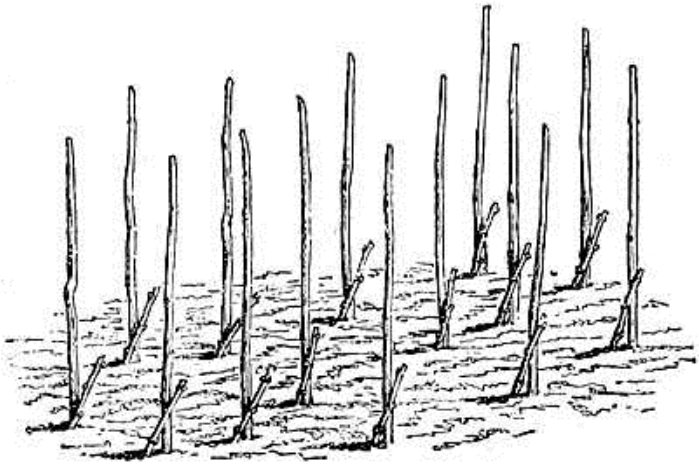
PUTTING STAKES TO THE VINES IN THE SPRING.



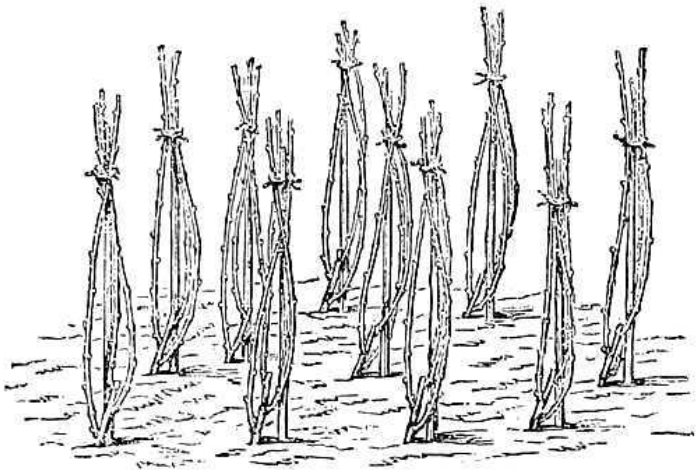
APPARATUS FOR FIXING VINE-STAKES.



UNSTACKING THE VINE-STAKES.



NEWLY-STAKED VINES AFTER THE 'BÊCHAGE.'



VINES IN AUTUMN AFTER THE VINTAGE.

In May or June, after the vines have been hoed around their roots, they are secured to the stakes, and their tops are broken off at a shoot to prevent them from growing above the regulation height, which is ordinarily from 30 to 33 inches. They are liberally manured with a kind of compost formed of the loose friable soil termed ‘cendre’—dug out from the sides of the hills, and of supposed volcanic origin —mixed with animal and vegetable refuse. The vines are shortened back while in flower, and in the course of the summer the ground is hoed a second and a third time, the object being, first, to destroy the superficial roots of the vines and force the plants to live solely on their deep roots; and secondly, to remove all pernicious weeds from round about them. After the third hoeing, which takes place in the middle of August, the vines are left to themselves until the period of the vintage, excepting that some growers remove a portion of the leaves in order that the grapes may receive the full benefit of the sun,

and raise up those bunches that rest upon the ground. The vintage over, the stakes supporting the vines are pulled up later in the autumn and stacked in compact masses, styled ‘moyères,’ with their ends out of the ground, or else ‘en chevalet,’ the vine, which is left curled up in a heap, remaining undisturbed until the winter, when the earth around it is loosened. In the month of February following the vine is pruned and subsequently sunk into the earth, as already described, so as to leave only the new wood above ground. Owing to the vines being planted so closely together they naturally starve one another, and numbers of them perish. Whenever this is the case, or the stems chance to get broken during the vintage, their places are filled up by provining.



STACKING STAKES ‘EN CHEVALET.’



STACKING STAKES IN A 'MOYÈRE.'

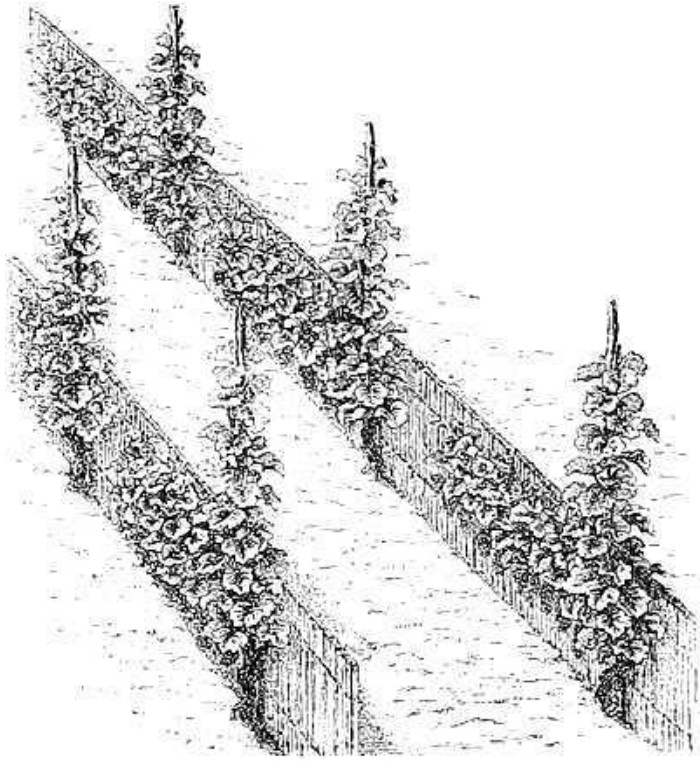
The vignerons of the Champagne regard the numerous stakes which support the vines as affording some protection against the white frosts of the spring. To guard against the dreaded effects of these frosts, which invariably occur between early dawn and sunrise, and the loss arising from which is estimated to amount annually to 25 per cent, some of the cultivators place heaps of hay, fagots, dead leaves, &c., about twenty yards apart, taking care to keep them moderately damp. When a frost is feared the heaps on the side of a vineyard whence the wind blows are set light to, whereupon the dense smoke which rises spreads horizontally over the vines, producing the same result as an actual cloud, intercepting the rays of the sun, warming the atmosphere, and converting the frost into dew. Among other methods adopted to shield the vines from frosts is the joining of branches of broom together in the form of a fan, and afterwards fastening them to the end of a pole, which is placed obliquely in the ground, so that the fan may incline

over the vine and protect it from the sun's rays. A single labourer can plant, it is said, as many as eight thousand of these fans in the ground during a long day.

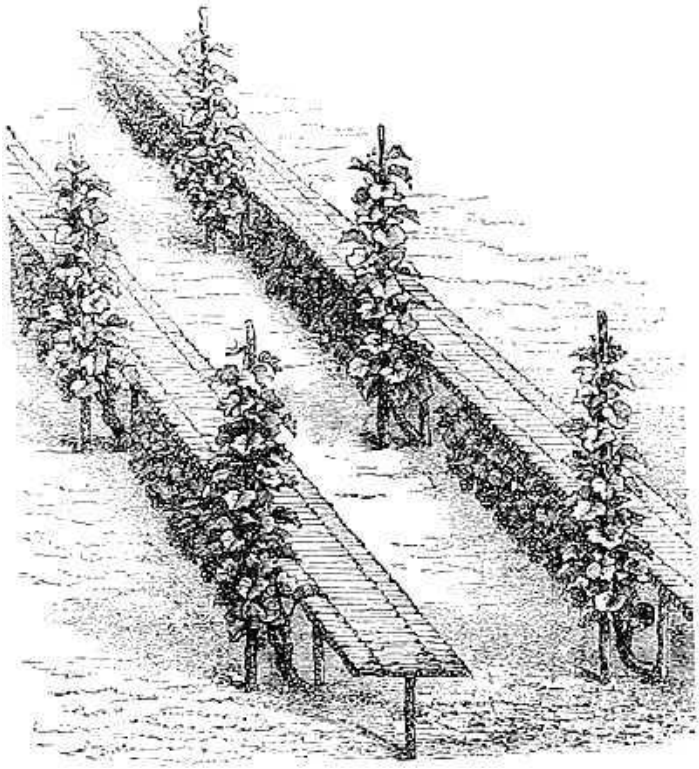


UNROLLING MATTING FOR ROOFING THE VINES WITH.

Dr. Guyot's system of roofing the vines with straw matting, to protect them alike against frosts and hailstorms, is very generally followed in low situations in the Champagne, the value of the wine admitting of so considerable an expense being incurred. This matting, which is made about a foot and a half in width, and in rolls of great length, is fastened either with twine or wire to the vine-stakes; and it is estimated that half a dozen men can fix nearly 11,000 yards of it, or sufficient to roof over 2 ½ acres of vines, during an ordinary day. To carry out the system properly, a double row of tall and short stakes connected with iron wires has to be provided. The matting can then be used as a shelter to the young vines in spring, as a south wall to aid the ripening of the grapes in summer, and as a protection against rain and autumn frosts.



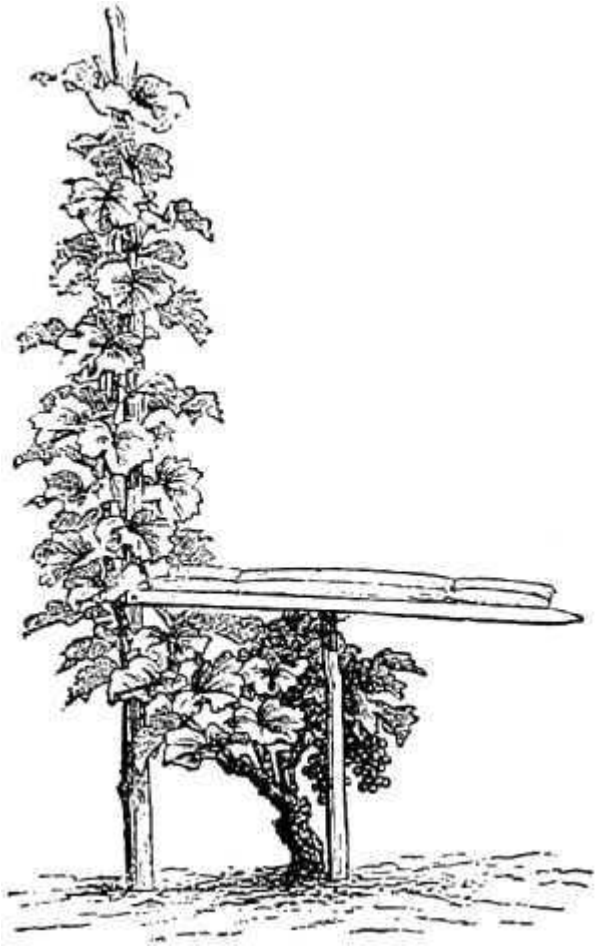
MATTING ARRANGED TO AID THE RIPENING OF THE GRAPES.



MATTING ARRANGED TO PROTECT THE VINES AGAINST AUTUMN FROSTS.

Owing to the system of cultivation by rejuvenescence, and the constant replenishing of the soil by well-compounded manures, the Champenois wine-growers entertain great hopes that their vineyards will escape the ravages of the phylloxera vastatrix. They certainly deserve such an immunity, for, according to Dr. Plonquet of Ay, they are already the prey of no less than fifteen varieties of insects, which feed upon the leaves, stalks, roots, or fruit of the vines. One of the most destructive of these is the eumolpe, gribouri, or écrivain as it is popularly

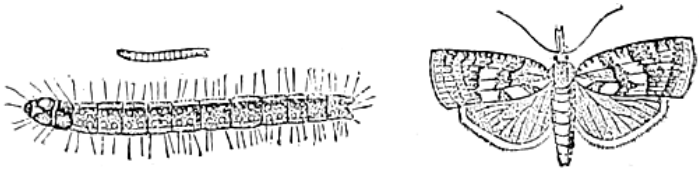
styled, from the traces it leaves upon the vine-leaves bearing some resemblance to lines of writing. It is a species of beetle, the larvæ of which pass the winter amongst the roots of the vine, and in the spring attack the young leaves and buds, their ravages often proving fatal to the plant. Then there is the chabot, which has caused great destruction at Verzy and Verzenay; the attelabe, cunche, or bêche, which rolls up the leaves of the vine like cigars, and seems to be identical with the hurebet or urbec of the Middle Ages; and the cochylis, teigne, or vintage-worm, which develops into a white-and-black butterfly, producing in the course of the year two generations of larvæ, having the form of small red caterpillars, one of which attacks the blossoms of the vine, while the second pierces and destroys the grapes themselves. The list of foes further comprises the altise, a kind of beetle allied to the gribouri; the liset or coupe-bourgeon, a tiny worm assailing the first sprouting shoots; and the hanneton or cockchafer.



MATTING ARRANGED TO KEEP OFF RAIN OR HAIL.

The greatest havoc, however, appears to be wrought by the pyrale, a species of caterpillar, which feeds on the young leaves, flowers, and shoots until the vine is left completely bare. The larva of this insect, after passing the winter either in the crevices of the stakes or in the cracks in the bark of the vine, emerges in the spring, devours leaves, buds, and shoots

indifferently, and eventually becomes transformed into a small yellow-and-brown butterfly, which deposits its eggs amongst the bunches of grapes in July. Between 1850 and 1860 the vineyards of Ay were devastated by the pyrale, which, like the locusts of Scripture, spared no green thing; and all the efforts made to rid them of this scourge proved ineffectual until the wet and cold weather of 1860 put a stop to the insect's ravages.[408] More recently it was discovered that its attacks could be checked by sulphurous acid, or by scalding the stakes and the vine-stocks with boiling water during the winter. Nevertheless, it appeared impossible to check its destructiveness at Ay, where it made its reappearance in 1879, and caused an immense amount of damage. On this occasion an ingenious gentleman, M. Testulat Gaspar, was seized with the idea of combating the pyrale by means of the electric light. His theory was, that on a powerful light being exhibited in a central position at midnight amongst the vineyards, with a number of tin reflectors distributed in every direction around, the butterflies, roused from slumber, would wing their way in myriads towards the latter, when their flight could be arrested by sheets of muslin stretched between poles, smeared with honey and baited with a dash of Champagne liqueur. The theory was put to the test in August 1879, amongst the vineyards between Dizy and Ay, where the pyrale was committing the greatest ravages. The light was turned on, and the butterflies rose 'in millions;' but they failed to flock to the reflectors, and the honey-smeared muslin proved quite useless to secure the few which came in contact with it.



THE PYRALE.

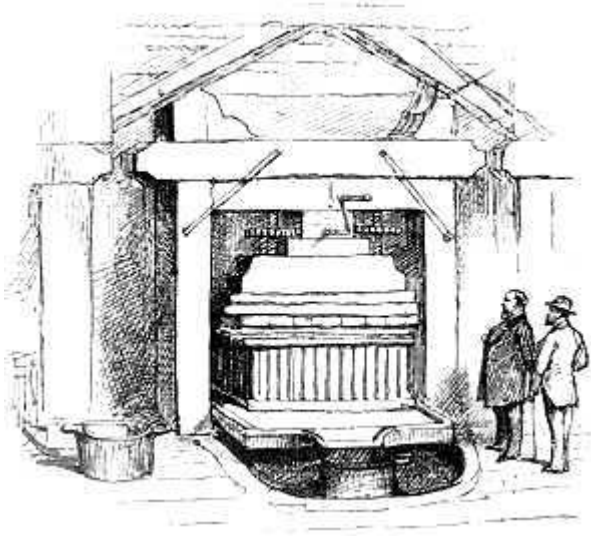


A VINTAGE SCENE IN THE CHAMPAGNE.

IV.
THE VINTAGE IN THE CHAMPAGNE.

Period of the Champagne vintage—Vintagers summoned by beat of drum—Early morning the best time for plucking the grapes—Excitement in the neighbouring villages at vintage-time—Vintagers at work—Mules employed to convey

the gathered grapes down the steeper slopes—The fruit carefully examined before being taken to the wine-press—Arrival of the grapes at the vendangeoir—They are subjected to three squeezes, and then to the 'rébêche'—The must is pumped into casks and left to ferment—Only a few of the vine-proprietors in the Champagne press their own grapes—The prices the grapes command—Air of jollity throughout the district during the vintage—Every one is interested in it, and profits by it—Vintagers' fête on St. Vincent's-day—Endless philandering between the sturdy sons of toil and the sunburnt daughters of labour.



WINE-PRESS IN THE CHAMPAGNE.

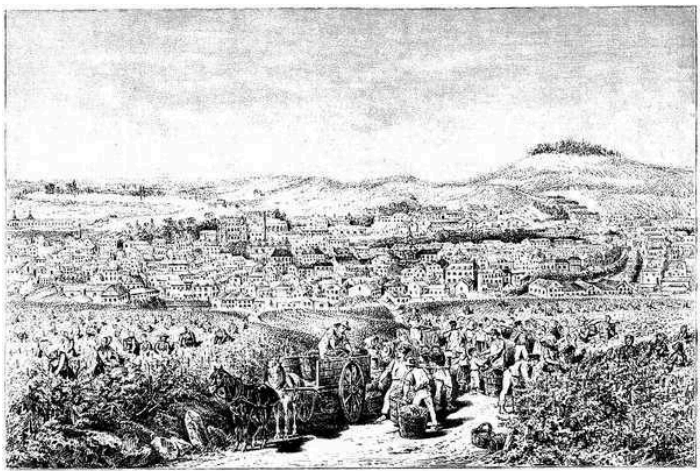
WHEN the weather has been exceedingly propitious, the vintage in the Champagne commences as early as the third week in September, and in good average years the pickers set to work during the first week of October. If, however, the summer has been an indifferent one, and only an inferior vintage is

looked forward to, it is scarcely before the latter half of October that the gathering of the grapes is proceeded with. There is no vintage-ban in the Champagne, as in Burgundy and other parts of France; but, as a rule, the growers of Ay and of the neighbouring slopes commence operations a week or more earlier than those of the Mountain of Reims, whilst around Cramant and Avize, the white-grape region, the vintagers usually set to work when in the other districts they have nearly finished.

The pleasantest season of the year to visit the Champagne is certainly during the vintage. When this is about to commence, the vintagers—some of whom come from Sainte Menehould, forty miles distant, while others hail from as far as Lorraine—are summoned at daybreak by beat of drum in the market-places of the villages adjacent to the vineyards, and then and there a price is made for the day's labour. This, as we have already explained, is generally either a franc and a half, with food consisting of three meals, or two francs and a half, rising on exceptional occasions to three francs, without food, children being paid a franc and a half. The rate of wage satisfactorily arranged, the gangs start off to the vineyards, headed by their overseers.

The picking ordinarily commences with daylight, and the vintagers assert that the grapes gathered at sunrise always produce the lightest and most limpid wine. Moreover by plucking the grapes when the early morning sun is upon them, they are believed to yield a fourth more juice. Later on in the day, too, spite of all precautions, it is impossible to prevent some of the detached grapes from partially fermenting, which frequently suffices to give a slight excess of colour to the must, a thing especially to be

avoided in a high-class Champagne. When the grapes have to be transported in open baskets for some distance to the press-house, jolting along the road either in carts or on the backs of mules, and exposed to the torrid rays of a bright autumnal sun, the juice expressed from the fruit, however dexterously the latter may be squeezed in the press, is occasionally of a positive purple tinge, and consequently useless for conversion into Champagne.



THE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF EPERNAY.

At vintage-time everywhere is bustle and excitement; every one is big with the business in hand. In these ordinarily quiet little villages nestling amidst vine clad hollows, or perched half-way up a slope tinted from base to summit with richly-variegated hues, there is a perpetual pattering of sabots and a rattling and bumping of wheels over the roughly-paved streets. The majority of the inhabitants are afoot: the feeble feminine half, baskets on arm, thread their way with the juveniles through the rows of vines

planted half-way up the mountain, and all aglow with their autumnal glories of green and purple, crimson and yellow; while the sturdy masculine portion are mostly passing to and fro between the press-houses and the wine-shops. Carts piled up with baskets, or crowded with peasants from a distance on their way to the vineyards, jostle the low railway-trucks laden with brand-new casks, and the somewhat rickety cabriolets of the agents of the big Champagne houses, who are reduced to clinch their final bargain for a hundred or more pièces of the peerless wine of Ay or Bouzy, Verzy or Verzenay, beside the reeking wine-press.



Dotting the steep slopes like a swarm of huge ants are a crowd of men, women, and children, the men, in blue blouses or stripped to their shirt-sleeves, being for the most part engaged in carrying the baskets to and fro and loading the carts; whilst the women, in closely-fitting neat white caps, or wearing old-fashioned unbleached straw-bonnets of the contemned coalscuttle type, resembling the ‘sun-bonnet’ of the Midland counties, together with the children, are intent on stripping the vines of their

luscious-looking fruit. They detach the grapes with scissors or hooked knives, technically termed ‘serpettes,’ and in some vineyards proceed to remove all damaged, decayed, or unripe fruit from the bunches before placing them in the baskets which they carry on their arms, and the contents of which they empty from time to time into a larger basket resembling an ass’s pannier in shape, numbers of these being dispersed about the vineyard for the purpose, and invariably in the shade. When filled the baskets are carried by a couple of men to the roadside, along which dwarf stones carved with initials, and indicating the boundaries of the respective properties, are encountered every eight or ten yards, into such narrow strips are the vineyards divided. Large carts with railed open sides are continually passing backwards and forwards to pick these baskets up; and when one has secured its load it is driven slowly to the neighbouring pressoir, so that the grapes may not be in the least degree shaken, such is the care observed throughout every stage of the process of Champagne manufacture. When the vineyard slopes are very steep—as, for instance, at Mareuil—and the paths do not admit of the approach of carts, mules, equipped with panniers and duly muzzled, are employed to convey the gathered fruit to the press-house.





In many vineyards the grapes are inspected in bulk instead of in detail before being sent to the wine-press. The hand-baskets, when filled, are brought to a particular spot, where their contents are minutely examined by some half-dozen men and women, who pluck off the bruised, rotten, and unripe berries, and fling them aside into a separate basket. In other vineyards we came upon parties of girls, congregated round a wicker sieve perched on the top of a large tub by the roadside, engaged in sorting the grapes, pruning away the diseased stalks, and picking off all the doubtful berries. The latter were let fall through the interstices of the sieve, while the sound fruit was deposited in large baskets standing beside the sorters, and which, as soon as they were filled, were conveyed to the pressoir. When the proprietor is of an economic turn he usually has the refuse grapes

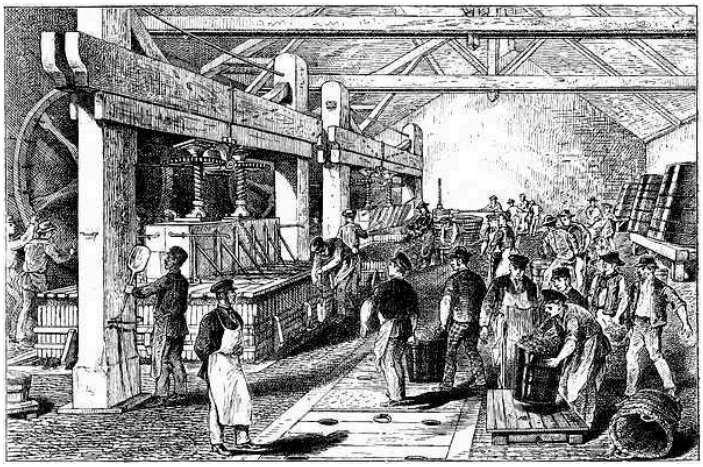
pressed for wine for home consumption. Spite of the minute examination to which the grapes are subjected, a sharp eye will frequently discover in the heart of what looks like a regular and well-grown bunch a grape that is absolutely rotten, and capable of infecting its companions when the whole are heaped up together in the wine-press.



ARRIVAL OF THE GRAPES AT THE PRESS-HOUSE.

Carts laden with grapes are continually arriving at the pressoirs, discharging their loads and driving off for fresh ones. The piled-up baskets, marked with the names of the vineyard-owners whose grapes they contain, are temporarily stored under a shed in a cool place, and are brought into the pressoir from time to time as required. In the district of the River the grapes are weighed, while in that of the Mountain they are measured, before being emptied on to the floor of the press. In some places the latter is of the old-fashioned type, resembling the ordinary cider-press; but usually powerful presses of modern invention, worked by a large fly-wheel requiring four

sturdy men to turn it, are employed. The grapes are spread over the floor of the press in a compact mass, and in some rare cases are lightly trodden by a couple of men with their naked feet before being subjected to mechanical pressure, which is again and again repeated, only the first squeeze giving a high-class wine, and the second and third a relatively inferior one. After three pressures the grapes are usually worked about with peels, and subjected to a final squeeze known as the 'rébêche,' which produces a sort of *piquette*, given to the workmen to drink, but in many instances forming the habitual, and indeed only, beverage of the economically-inclined peasant proprietor.



THE VINTAGE IN THE CHAMPAGNE: A WINE-PRESS AT WORK.

The must filters through a wicker basket into the reservoir beneath, whence, after remaining a certain time to allow of its ridding itself of the grosser lees, it is pumped through a gutta-percha tube into the casks. The wooden stoppers of the bungholes, instead

of being fixed tightly in the apertures, are simply laid over them, and after the lapse of ten or twelve days fermentation usually commences, and during its progress the must, which is originally of a pale-pink tint, fades to a light-straw colour. The wine usually remains undisturbed until Christmas, when it is drawn off into fresh casks and delivered to the purchaser.



One peculiarity of the Champagne district is that, contrary to the prevailing practice in the other wine-producing regions of France, where the owner of even a single acre of vines will crush his grapes himself, only a limited number of vine-proprietors press their own grapes. The large Champagne houses, possessing vineyards, always have their pressoirs in the neighbourhood, and other large vine-proprietors press the grapes they grow; but the multitude of small cultivators invariably sell the produce of their vineyards to one or other of the former at a certain rate, either by weight or else by caque, a measure

estimated to hold sixty kilogrammes (equal to 132 lb. avoirdupois) of grapes. The price which the fruit fetches varies of course according to the quality of the vintage and the requirements of the manufacturers; but the average may be taken at about 80 centimes per kilogramme, equivalent to rather more than 3½ *d.* per lb.[409]



If in the Champagne the picturesque rejoicings immortalised in the Italian vintage scenes of Léopold Robert are lacking, and if the grapes, instead of being trodden to the blithe accompaniment of flute and fiddle, as in some parts of France, are pressed in more quiet fashion, a pleasant air of jollity nevertheless pervades the district at the season of the vintage. Every one participates in the interest which this excites. It influences the takings of all the

artificers and all the tradespeople, and brings grist to the mill of the baker and the bootmaker, as well as to the café and cabaret. The contending interests of capital and labour are, moreover, singularly satisfied, the vintagers being content at getting their two francs and a half a day, and the men at the pressoirs their three francs and their food; the vineyard proprietor reaping the return of the time, care, and money expended upon his patch of vines, and the Champagne manufacturer acquiring raw material on sufficiently satisfactory terms, the which, when duly guaranteed by his name and brand, will bring to him both fame and fortune.

Should the vintage be a scanty one, the plethoric *commissionnaires-en-vins* will wipe their perspiring foreheads with satisfaction when they have at last secured the full number of hogsheads they had been instructed to buy—at a high figure maybe; still this is no disadvantage to them, as their commission mounts up the higher. And even the thickest-skulled among the small vine-proprietors, who make all their calculations on their fingers, see at a glance that, although the crop may be no more than half an average one, they are gainers, thanks to the ill-disguised anxiety of the agents to secure all the wine they require, which has the effect of sending prices up to nearly double those of ordinary years, and this with only half the work in the vineyard and at the winepress to be done.

The vintage in the Champagne comes to a close without any of those festivals which still linger in the department of the Gironde. On the 22d of January, the fête of St. Vincent, the patron saint of vine-growers, it is customary, however, for one of the proprietors in each village to pay for a mass and give

a breakfast to his relatives and friends, at which he presents a bouquet to one of the guests, who, in his turn, is expected to pay for the mass and give the breakfast the year following. On the same day the proprietors entertain their workpeople, who, after having eaten and drunk their fill, wind up the day with song and dance, leading to no end of innocent philandering between the sturdy sons of toil and the sunburnt daughters of labour. On these occasions the famous vintage song is sometimes heard:

‘Vendangeons et vive la France,
Le monde un jour avec nous trinquera.’





THE DISGORGING, LIQUEURING, CORKING, STRINGING, AND WIRING OF CHAMPAGNE.

V.
THE PREPARATION OF CHAMPAGNE.



The treatment of Champagne after it comes from the wine-press—The racking and blending of the wine—The proportions of red and white vintages composing the 'cuvée'—Deficiency and excess of effervescence—Strength and form of Champagne bottles—The 'tirage' or bottling of the wine—The process of gas-making commences—Details of the origin and development of the effervescent properties of Champagne—The inevitable breakage of bottles which ensues—This remedied by transferring the wine to a lower temperature—The wine stacked in piles—Formation of sediment—Bottles placed 'sur pointe' and daily shaken to detach the deposit—Effect of this occupation on those incessantly engaged in it—The present system originated by a workman of Madame Clicquot's—'Claws' and 'masks'—Champagne cellars—Their construction and aspect—Raw recruits for the 'Regiment de Champagne'—Transforming the 'vin brut' into Champagne—Disgorging and liqueuring the wine—The composition of the liqueur—Variation in

the quantity added to suit diverse national tastes —The corking, stringing, wiring, and amalgamating—The wine's agitated existence comes to an end—The bottles have their toilettes made—Champagne sets out on its beneficial pilgrimage round the world.

THE special characteristic of Champagne is that its manufacture only commences where that of other wines ordinarily ends. No one would recognise in the still brut fluid—which, after being duly racked and fined, has somewhat the taste and colour of an acrid Rhine wine, with a more or less pronounced bitter flavour—that exhilarating essence which is capable of raising the most depressed spirits, and imparting gaiety to the dismallest gatherings. Much as Champagne may stand indebted to Nature, soil, climate, and species of vine, the sparkling fluid has contracted a far greater debt towards man, to whose incessant labour, patient skill, and minute precautions it owes that combination of qualities which causes it to be so highly prized.

In the preceding chapter we left the newly-expressed must flowing direct from the press into capacious reservoirs, whence it is drawn off into large vats, where it clears itself by depositing its mucous lees, usually within twenty-four hours. It is then transferred to new or perfectly clean casks, holding some forty gallons each, in which a sulphur match has been previously burnt. These casks are not filled quite up to the bunghole, which is generally covered with a vine-leaf kept in its place by a piece of tile. The bulk of the newly-made wine is left to repose at the vendangeoirs until the commencement of the following year; still, when the vintage is over, numbers of long narrow carts laden with casks of

newly-expressed must may be seen rolling along the dusty highways, bound for those towns and villages in the department of the Marne where the manufacture of Champagne is carried on, and where the leading firms have their establishments. Chief amongst these is the cathedral city of Reims, after which comes the rising town of Epernay, stretching to the very verge of the river; then Ay, nestling between the vine-clad slopes and the Marne canal, with the neighbouring village of Mareuil; next Pierry; and finally Avize, in the centre of the white-grape district southwards of Epernay. Châlons, owing to its distance from the vineyards, does not usually draw its supply of wine until the new year.

In the vast celliers of the manufacturers' establishments, where a temperature of about 60 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit usually prevails, the wine undergoes its first fermentation, entailing a loss of about 7 ½ per cent, and lasting from a fortnight to a month, according as to whether the wine be *mou*—that is, rich in sugar—or the reverse. In the former case fermentation naturally lasts much longer than when the wine is *vert* or green. This active fermentation is converted into latent fermentation by transferring the wine to a cooler cellar, as it is essential it should retain a certain proportion of its natural saccharine to insure its future effervescence. The casks have previously been completely filled, and their bungholes tightly stopped, a necessary precaution to guard the wine from absorbing oxygen, the effect of which would be to turn it yellow, and cause it to lose some of its lightness and perfume. After being racked and fined—an operation generally performed about the third week in December—the produce of the different vineyards is ready for mixing together in accordance with the traditional

theories of the various manufacturers; and should the vintage have been an indifferent one, a certain proportion of old reserved wine of a good year enters into the blend.



The mixing is usually effected in gigantic vats holding at times as many as 12,000 gallons each, and having fan-shaped appliances inside, which, on being worked by handles, insure a complete amalgamation of the wine. This process of marrying wine on a gigantic scale is technically known as making the *cuvée*. Usually four-fifths of wine obtained from black grapes, and now of a pale-pink hue, are tempered by one-fifth of the juice of white ones. It is necessary that the first should comprise a more or less powerful dash of the finer growths both of the Mountain of Reims and of the River; while, as regards the latter, one or other of the delicate vintages of the Côte d'Avize is essential to the perfect *cuvée*. The aim is to combine and develop the special qualities of the

respective crus, body and vinosity being secured by the red vintages of Bouzy and Verzenay, softness and roundness by those of Ay and Dizy, and lightness, delicacy, and effervescence by the white growths of Avize and Cramant. The proportions are never absolute, but vary according to the manufacturer's style of wine and the taste of the countries which form his principal markets. In the opinion of some clever amalgamators, a blend comprising one-third of the vintages of Sillery, Verzenay, and Bouzy, one-third of those of Mareuil, Ay, and Dizy, and the remaining third composed of the produce of Pierry, Cramant, and Avize, constitutes the wine of Champagne *par excellence*. Others not less expert declare that a simple mixture of the Ay, Pierry, and Cramant vintages furnishes a perfect wine. As when this blending takes place the wine is only imperfectly fermented and exceedingly crude, the reader may imagine the delicacy and discrimination of palate requisite to judge of the flavour, finesse, and bouquet which the *cuvée* is likely eventually to develop.



These, however, are not the only matters to be considered. There is, above everything, the effervescence, which depends upon the quantity of carbonic acid gas the wine already contains, and the further quantity it is likely to develop, which depends upon the amount of its natural saccharine. After the bottling, if the gas be present in excess, there will be a shattering of bottles and a flooding of cellars; while, on the other hand, if there be a paucity, the corks will refuse to pop, and the wine to sparkle aright in the glass. The amount of saccharine in the *cuvée* has therefore to be accurately ascertained by means of a glucometer; and should it fail to reach the required standard, as is the case at times when the season has been wet and cold and the vintage a poor one, the deficiency is made up by

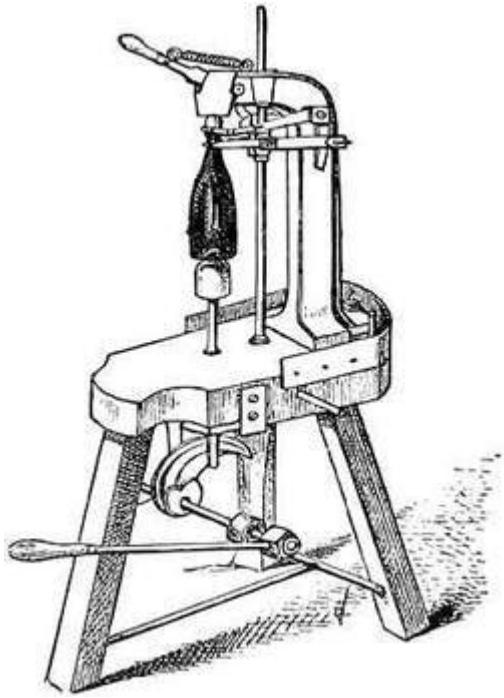
the addition of the purest sugar-candy. If, on the other hand, there be an excess of saccharine, the only thing to be done is to defer the final blending and bottling of the wine until the superfluous saccharine matter has been absorbed by fermentation in the cask.

The *cuvée* completed, the blended wine, which in its present condition gives to the uninitiated palate no promise of the exquisite delicacy and aroma it is destined to develop, is drawn off again into casks for further treatment. This comprises fining with some gelatinous substance, usually isinglass, made into a jelly and strained through a 'tammy;' while, as a precaution against ropiness and other maladies, liquid tannin, derived from nut-galls, catechu, or grape husks and pips, is at the same time frequently added to supply the place of the natural tannin, which has departed from the wine with its reddish hue at the epoch of its first fermentation. If at the expiration of a month the wine has not become perfectly clear and limpid, it is racked off the lees, and the operation of fining is repeated.



The operation of bottling the wine next ensues, when the scriptural advice not to put new wine into old bottles is rigorously followed. For the tremendous pressure of the gas engendered during the subsequent fermentation of the wine is such that the bottle becomes weakened, and can never be safely trusted again.[410] It is because of this pressure that the Champagne bottle is one of the strongest made, as indicated by its weight, which is almost a couple of pounds. To insure this unusual strength, it is necessary that the sides should be of equal thickness and the bottom of a uniform solidity throughout, in order that no particular expansion may ensue from sudden changes of temperature. The neck must, moreover, be perfectly round and widen gradually towards the shoulder. In addition—and this is of the utmost consequence—the inside ought to be perfectly smooth, as a rough interior causes the gas to make efforts to escape, and thus renders an

explosion imminent. The composition of the glass, too, is not without its importance, as on one occasion a manufactory established for the production of glass by a new process turned out Champagne bottles charged with alkaline sulphurets, and the consequence was that an entire *cuvée* was ruined by their use, through the reciprocal action of the wine and these sulphurets. The acids of the former disengaged hydrosulphuric acid, and instead of Champagne the result was a new species of mineral water.



MACHINE FOR FIXING THE AGRAFES.

Most of the bottles used for Champagne come from the factories of Loivre (which supplies the largest

quantity), Folembray, Vauxrot, and Quiquengrogne, and they cost on the average from 28 to 33 francs the hundred.[411] They are generally tested by a practised hand, who, by knocking them sharply together, professes to be able to tell, from the sound that they give, the substance of the glass and its temper, though occasionally a special machine, subjecting them to hydraulic pressure, is had recourse to.

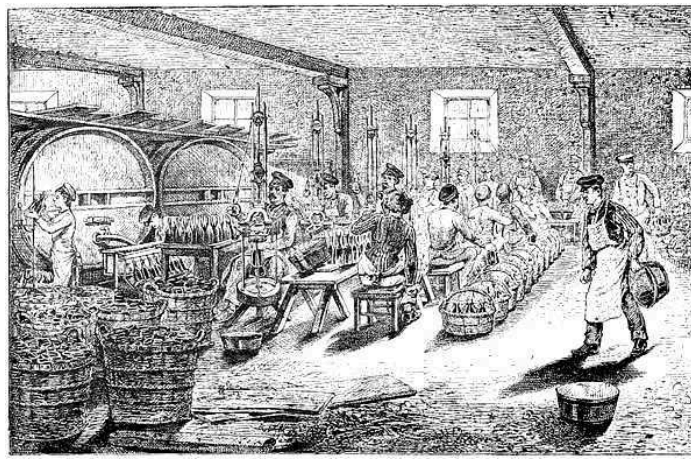
The operation of washing, which takes place immediately preceding the bottling of the wine, is invariably performed by women, who at the larger establishments accomplish it with the aid of machines, provided at times with a revolving brush, although small glass beads are generally used by preference. Each bottle after being washed is minutely examined, to make certain of its perfect purity, and is then placed neck downwards in a tall basket to drain.



With the different Champagne houses the mode of bottling the wine, which may take place any time between April and August, varies in some measure, still the *tirage*, as this operation is called, is ordinarily effected as follows: The wine, after a preliminary test as to its fitness for bottling, is emptied from the casks into vats or tuns of varying capacity in the *salle du tirage*. From these it flows through pipes into oblong reservoirs, each provided with a row of syphon-taps, on to which the bottles are slipped, and from which the wine ceases to flow directly the bottles become filled. Men or lads remove the full bottles, replacing them by empty ones, while other hands convey them to the corkers, whose guillotine machines are incessantly in motion. Speed in the process is of much importance, as during a single day the wine may undergo a notable change. From the corkers the bottles are passed on to the *agrafeurs*, who secure the corks by means of an iron clip termed an agrafe; and they are afterwards conveyed either to a spacious room above-ground known as a cellier or to a cool vault underground, according to the number of atmospheres which the wine may indicate.

With reference to these atmospheres, it should be explained that air compressed to half its volume acquires twice its ordinary force, and to a quarter of its volume quadruple this force—hence the phrase of two, four, or more atmospheres. The exact degree of pressure is readily ascertained by means of a manometer, an instrument resembling a pressure-gauge, with a hollow screw at the base, which is driven through the cork of the bottle. A pressure of 5 ¾ atmospheres constitutes what is styled a ‘grand mousseux,’ and the wine exhibiting it may be safely conveyed to the coolest subterranean depths, for no doubt need be entertained as to its future

effervescent properties. Should the pressure, however, scarcely exceed four atmospheres, it is advisable to keep the wine in a cellier above-ground, that it may more rapidly acquire the requisite sparkling qualities. If fewer than four atmospheres are indicated, it would be necessary to pour the wine back into the casks again, and add a certain amount of cane-sugar to it; but such an eventuality very rarely happens, thanks to the scientific formulas and apparatus, which enable the degree of pressure the wine will show to be determined beforehand to a nicety. Still mistakes are sometimes made, and there are instances where charcoal fires have had to be lighted in the cellars to encourage the latent effervescence to develop itself.[412]



THE TIRAGE OR BOTTLING OF CHAMPAGNE.

The bottles are first placed in a horizontal position, the side to be kept uppermost being indicated by a daub of whitewash, and are stacked in rows of varying length and depth, one above the other, to about the height of a man, with narrow laths

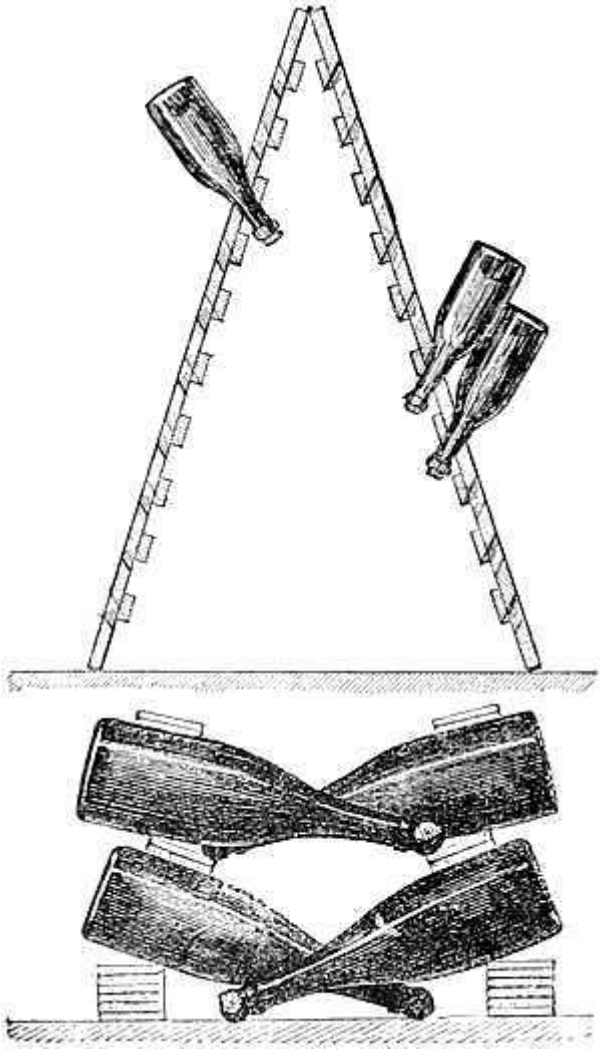
between them. Thus they will spend the summer, providing all goes well; but in about three weeks' time the process of gas-making inside the bottles is at its height, and a period of considerable anxiety to the Champagne manufacturer ensues, through his dread lest an undue number of them should burst from the expansion of the carbonic acid gas generated in the wine. The glucometer notwithstanding, it is impossible to check a certain amount of breakage, especially when a hot season has caused the grapes, and consequently the raw wine, to be sweeter than usual. Moreover, when once *casse* or breakage sets in on a large scale, the temperature of the cellar is raised by the volume of carbonic acid gas let loose, which is not without its effect on the remaining bottles. Not only does the increased temperature unduly accelerate fermentation, but the mere shock of one bottle exploding often starts such of its neighbours as are predisposed that way, in addition to the direct havoc wrought by the heavier fragments of flying glass. The only remedy is the instant removal of the wine to a lower temperature whenever this is practicable.



A manufacturer of the pre-scientific days of the last century relates how one year, when the wine was rich and strong, he only preserved 120 out of 6000 bottles; and it is not long since that 120,000 out of 200,000 were destroyed in the cellars of a well-known Champagne firm. M. Mauméné, moreover, relates that in 1850 he was called in to consult about the checking of a *casse*, which had already reached 96 per cent.[413] Over-knowing purchasers affect to select a wine which has exploded in the largest proportion in the cellars, as being well up to the mark as regards its effervescence, and are in the habit of making inquiries as to its performances in this direction.

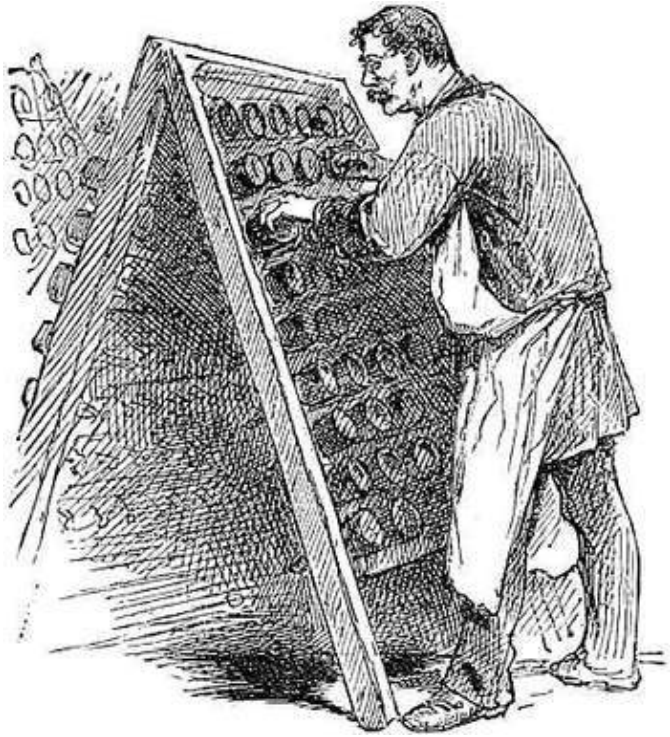


It is evident that, in spite of the teachings of science, the bursting of Champagne bottles has not yet been reduced to a minimum, for whereas in some cellars it averages 7 and 8 per cent, and rises to 15 when the pressure is unusually strong, in others it rarely exceeds 2½ or 3. The period between May and September is that in which the greatest destruction takes place. In the month of October, the first and severest breakage being over, the newly-bottled wine is definitively stacked in the cellars in piles from two to half a dozen bottles deep, from six to seven feet high, and frequently a hundred feet or upwards in length. Usually the bottles remain in their horizontal position, in which they gradually develop two essential qualities, that of effervescing well and that of travelling satisfactorily, for about eighteen or twenty months, though some firms, who pride themselves upon shipping perfectly matured wines, leave them thus for double this space of time. During this period the temperature to which the wine is exposed is, as far as practicable, carefully regulated; for the risk of breakage, though greatly diminished, is never entirely at an end.



By this time the fermentation is over; but in the interval, commencing from a few days after the bottling of the wine, a loose dark-brown sediment has been forming, which has now settled on the lower side of the bottle, and to get rid of which is a delicate and tedious task. As the time approaches for

preparing the wine for shipment, the bottles are placed *sur pointe*, as it is termed—that is to say, slantingly in racks with their necks downwards, the inclination being increased from time to time to one more abrupt.[414] The object of this change in their position is to cause the sediment to leave the side of the bottle where it has gathered. Afterwards it becomes necessary to twist and turn it and coagulate it, as it were, until it forms a kind of muddy ball, and eventually to get it well down into the neck of the bottle, so that it may be finally expelled with a bang when the temporary cork is removed and the proper one adjusted. To accomplish this the bottles are sharply turned in one direction every day for at least a month or six weeks, the time being indefinitely extended until the sediment shows a disposition to settle near the cork. The younger the wine the longer the period necessary for the bottles to be shaken, new wine often requiring as much as three months. Only a thoroughly practised hand can give the right amount of revolution and the requisite degree of slope; and in some of the cellars men were pointed out to us who had acquired such dexterity as to be able at a pinch to shake with their two hands as many as 50,000 bottles in a single day, whilst 30,000 to 40,000 is by no means an uncommon performance.



Some of these men have spent thirty or forty years of their lives engaged in this perpetual task. Fancy being entombed all alone day after day in vaults which are invariably dark and gloomy, and often cold and dank, and being obliged to twist sixty to seventy of these bottles every minute throughout the day of ten hours! Why, the treadmill and the crank, with their periodical respites, must be pastime compared to this maddeningly monotonous occupation, which combines hard labour, with the wrist, at any rate, with next to solitary confinement. One can understand these men becoming gloomy and taciturn, and affirming that they sometimes see devils hovering over the bottle-racks and frantically shaking the bottles beside them, or else grinning at

them as they pursue their humdrum task. Still it may be taken for granted that the men who reach this stage are accustomed to drink freely of raw spirits, as an antidote to the damp to which they are exposed, and merely pay the penalty of their over-indulgence.



In former times the bottles used to be placed with their heads downwards on tables pierced with holes, from which they had to be removed and agitated. At a still earlier date the process was more or less successfully accomplished by holding the bottles upside down by the neck, tapping them at the bottom to detach the sediment, and then, after shaking them well up, laying them on their sides until the operation was repeated. In 1818, however, a man named Müller, in the employment of Madame Clicquot, suggested that the bottles should remain in the tables whilst being shaken, and further that the

holes should be cut obliquely, so that they might recline at varying angles. His suggestions were privately adopted by Madame Clicquot; but eventually the improved plan got wind, and the system which he initiated now prevails throughout the Champagne.[415]



When the bottles have gone through their regular course of shaking, they are examined before a lighted candle to ascertain whether the deposit has all fallen on to the cork, and the wine has become perfectly clear. Sometimes it happens that, twist these men

never so wisely, the deposit, instead of becoming flaky or granular, refuses to stir, and takes the shape of a bunch of threads technically called a ‘claw,’ or an adherent membrane styled a ‘mask.’ When this is the case an attempt is made to start it by tapping the part to which it adheres with a piece of iron, the result being frequently the sudden explosion of the bottle in the workman’s hands. By way of precaution, therefore, the operator protects his face with a wire mask, or by gigantic wire spectacles, which give to him a ghoul-like aspect. Frequently it is found impossible to detach the ‘mask’ from the side of the bottle, and in this case the only thing that remains is to pour the wine back again into the cask, with the view of mixing it in some future *cuvée*.[416]



The cellars of the Champagne manufacturers are very varied in character. The wine that has been grown on the chalky hills is left to develop itself in vaults burrowed out of the calcareous strata which underlie the entire district. In excavating these cellars the sides and roofs are frequently worked smooth and regular as finished masonry. The larger ones are composed of a number of spacious and lofty galleries, sometimes parallel with each other, but often ramifying in various directions, and evidently constructed on no definite plan. They are of one, two, and, in rare instances, of three stories, and now

and then consist of a series of parallel galleries communicating with each other, lined with masonry, and with their stone walls and vaulted roofs resembling the crypt of some conventual building. Others of ancient date are less regular in their form, being merely so many narrow, low, winding corridors, varied, perhaps, by recesses hewn roughly out of the chalk, and resembling the brigands' cave of melodrama; while a certain number of the larger cellars at Reims are simply abandoned quarries, the broad and lofty arches of which are suggestive of the nave and aisles of some Gothic church. In these varied vaults, lighted by solitary lamps in front of metal reflectors, or by the flickering tallow candles which we carry in our hands, we pass rows of casks filled with last year's vintage or reserved wine of former years, and piles after piles of bottles of *vin brut* in seemingly endless sequence—squares, so to speak, of raw recruits for the historically famous 'Regiment de Champagne'[417]—awaiting their turn to be thoroughly drilled and disciplined. These are varied by bottles reposing neck downwards in racks at different degrees of inclination, according to the progress their education has attained. Reports caused by exploding bottles now and then assail the ear, and as the echo dies away it becomes mingled with the rush of the escaping wine, cascading down the pile, and finding its way across the sloping sides of the floor to the narrow gutter in the centre. The dampness of the floor and the shattered fragments of glass strewn about show the frequency of this kind of accident.

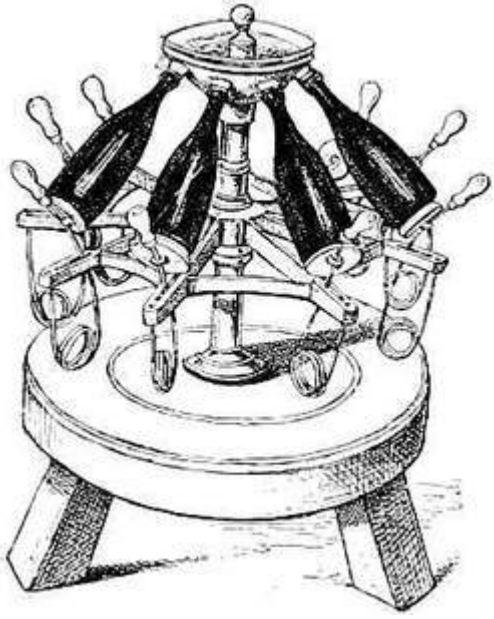


DETACHING THE 'MASK' FROM THE SIDES OF THE BOTTLES.

In these subterranean galleries we frequently come upon parties of workmen engaged in transforming the perfected *vin brut* into Champagne. Viewed at a distance while occupied in their monotonous task, they present in the semi-obscurity a series of picturesque Rembrandt-like studies. One of the end figures in each group is engaged in the important process of *dégorgement*, which is performed when the deposit, of which we have already spoken, has satisfactorily settled in the neck of the bottle. Baskets full of bottles with their necks downwards are placed beside the operator, who stands before a cask set on end, and having a large oval opening in front. This nimble-fingered manipulator seizes a bottle, raises it for a moment before the light to test the clearness of the wine and the subsidence of the deposit; holds it horizontally in his left hand, with the neck directed towards the opening already mentioned; and with a jerk of the steel hook which he holds in his right

hand loosens the agrafe securing the cork. Bang goes the latter, and with it flies out the sediment and a small glassful or so of wine, further flow being checked by the workman's finger, which also serves to remove any sediment yet remaining in the bottle's neck. Like many other clever tricks, this looks very easy when adroitly performed, though a novice would probably allow the bottle to empty itself by the time he discovered that the cork was out. Yet such is the dexterity acquired by practice that the average amount of wine, foam, and deposit ejected by this operation does not exceed one-fourteenth of the contents of the bottle. Occasionally a bottle bursts in the *dégorgeur's* hand, and his face is sometimes scarred from such explosions. The sediment removed, the *dégorgeur* slips a temporary cork into the bottle, or places the latter in a machine provided with fixed gutta-percha corks and springs for securing the bottles firmly in their places. The wine is now ready for the important operation of the *dosage*, upon the nature and amount of which the character of perfected Champagne, whether it be dry or sweet, light or strong, very much depends.[418]





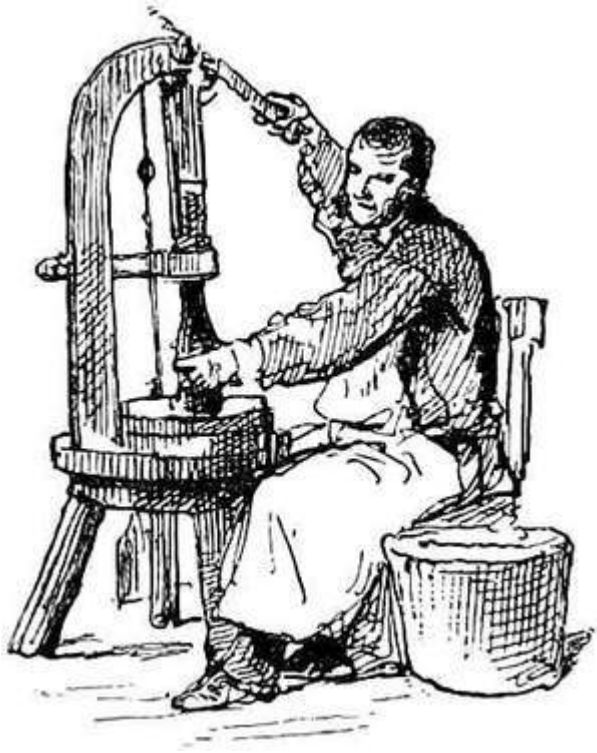
Different manufacturers have different recipes for the composition of this syrup, all more or less complex in character, and varying with the quality of the wine and the country for which it is intended; but the genuine liqueur consists of nothing but old wine of the best quality, to which a certain amount of sugar-candy and perhaps a dash of the finest cognac spirit has been added.[419] The saccharine addition varies according to the market for which the wine is destined: thus the high-class English buyer demands a dry Champagne, the Russian a wine sweet and strong as 'ladies' grog,' and the Frenchman and German a sweet light wine. To the extra-dry Champagnes a modicum dose is added, while the so-called '*brut*' wines receive no more than from one to three per cent of liqueur.[420]

In establishments wedded to old-fashioned usages the dose is administered with a tin can or ladle; but more generally an ingenious machine which regulates the percentage of liqueur to a nicety is employed. The bottle being usually nearly full when passed to the *doseur*, he, when a heavy percentage of liqueur has to be administered, is constrained, under the old system, to pour out some of the wine to make room for it, and this surplus in many cases is afterwards transformed into the well-known *tisane de Champagne*. As soon as the *dosage* is accomplished, the bottle is passed to another workman known as the *égaliseur*, who fills it up with pure wine, frequently with a part of that which has been poured out by the *doseur*, to the requisite level for corking. In the event of a pink Champagne being required, the wine thus added will be red, although manufacturers of questionable reputation sometimes employ the solution of elderberries, known as *teinte de Fismes*, to impart that once-favourite roseate hue which has

been compared to the glow of fading sunlight on a crystal stream.



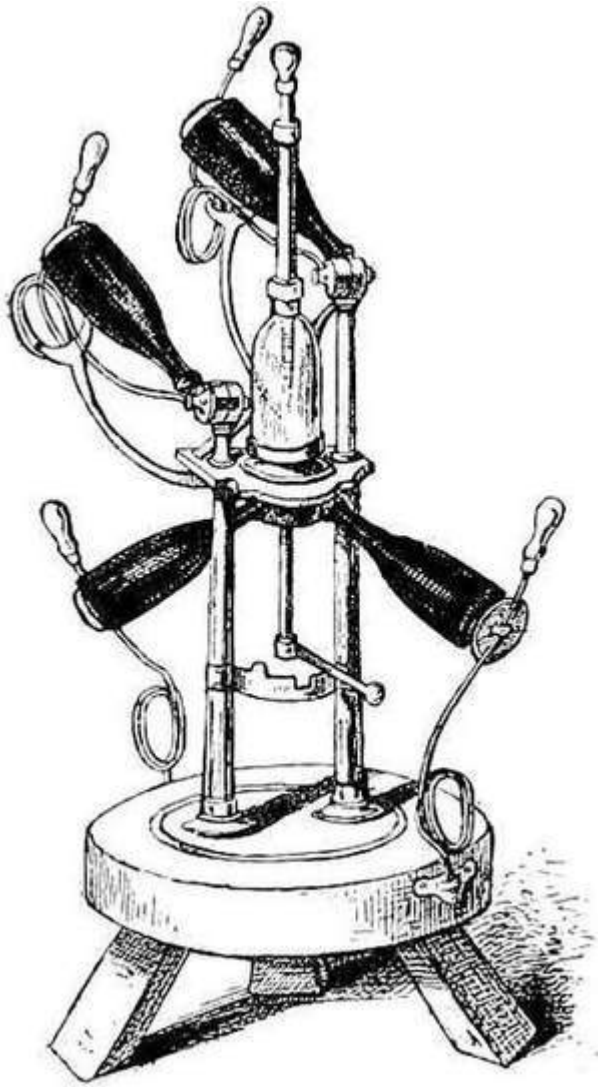
THE DOSEUR.



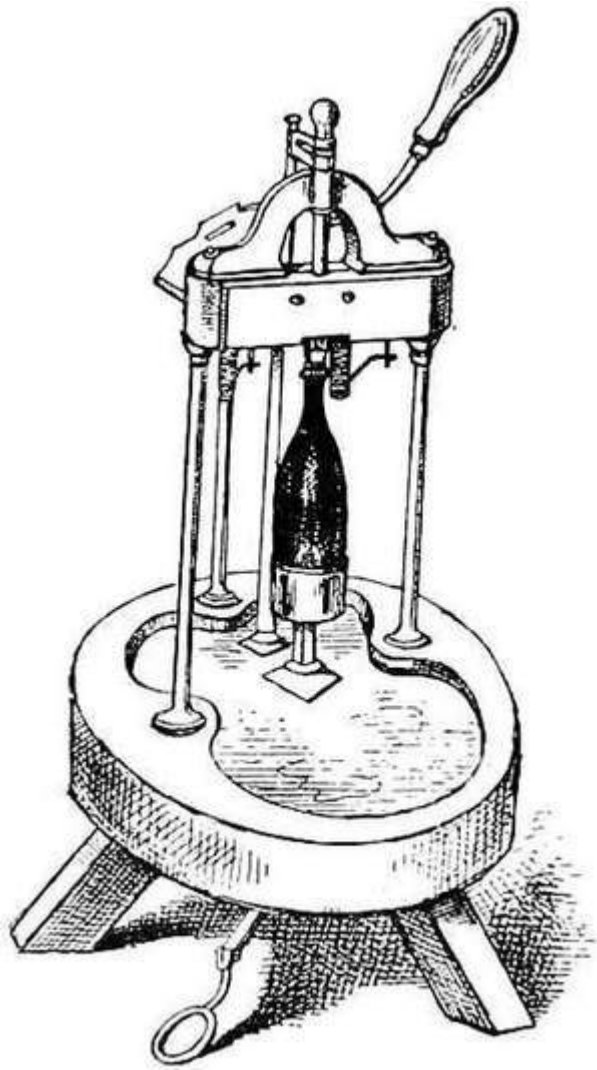
THE CORKER.



THE METTEUR DE FIL.



DOSING MACHINE.



CORKING MACHINE.

The *égaliseur* in his turn hands the bottle to the corker, who places it under a machine furnished with a pair of claws (so as to compress the cork to a size

sufficiently small to allow it to enter the neck of the bottle) and a suspended weight, which in falling drives it home. These corks, principally obtained from Catalonia and Andalucia, are bound to possess a close and regular fibre and perfect elasticity. They form no unimportant item in the Champagne manufacturer's budget, costing upwards of twopence each, and are delivered in huge sacks resembling hop-pockets. Previous to being used they are either boiled in wine or soaked in a solution of tartar, or else they have been steamed by the cork merchants, in order to prevent their imparting a bad flavour to the wine, and to hinder any leakage. They are commonly handed warm to the corker, who dips them into a small vessel of wine before making use of them. Some firms, however, prepare their corks by subjecting them to cold-water *douches* a day or two beforehand. The *ficeleur* receives the bottle from the corker, and with a twist of the fingers secures the cork with string, at the same time rounding its hitherto flat top, at a rate which allows from a thousand to twelve hundred bottles to pass through his hands in course of the day. The *metteur de fil* next affixes the wire with like celerity;[421] and then the final operation is performed by a workman seizing a couple of bottles by the neck and whirling them round his head, as though engaged in the Indian-club exercise, in order to secure a perfect amalgamation of the wine and the liqueur.



The final manipulation accomplished, the agitated course of existence through which the wine has been passing at last comes to an end, and the bottles are conveyed to another part of the establishment, where they repose for several days, or even weeks, in order that the mutual action of the wine and the liqueur upon each other may be complete. When the time arrives for despatching them, they are confided to feminine hands to have their dainty toilettes made, and are tastefully labelled, and are either capsuled, or else have their corks and necks imbedded in sealing-wax or swathed in gold or silver foil, whereby they are rendered presentable at the best-

appointed tables. All that now remains is to wrap them up in coloured tissue-paper, to slip them into straw envelopes, or encircle them with wisps of straw, and pack them either in cases or baskets for despatch to all quarters of the civilised globe.



It is thus that Champagne sets out on its beneficial pilgrimage to promote the spread of mirth and light-

heartedness, to drive away dull care and foment good-fellowship, to comfort the sick and cheer the sound. Wherever civilisation penetrates, Champagne sooner or later is sure to follow; and if Queen Victoria's morning drum beats round the world, its beat is certain to be echoed before the day is over by the popping of Champagne corks. Nowadays the exhilarating wine graces not merely princely but middle-class dinner-tables, and is the needful adjunct at every *petit souper*, as well as the stimulant to the wildest revels in all the gayer capitals of the world. It gives a flush to beauty at garden-parties and picnics, sustains the energies of the votaries of Terpsichore until the hour of dawn, and imparts to many a young gallant the necessary courage to declare his passion. It enlivens the dullest of *réunions*, brings smiles to the lips of the sternest cynics, softens the most irascible tempers, and loosens the most taciturn tongues.

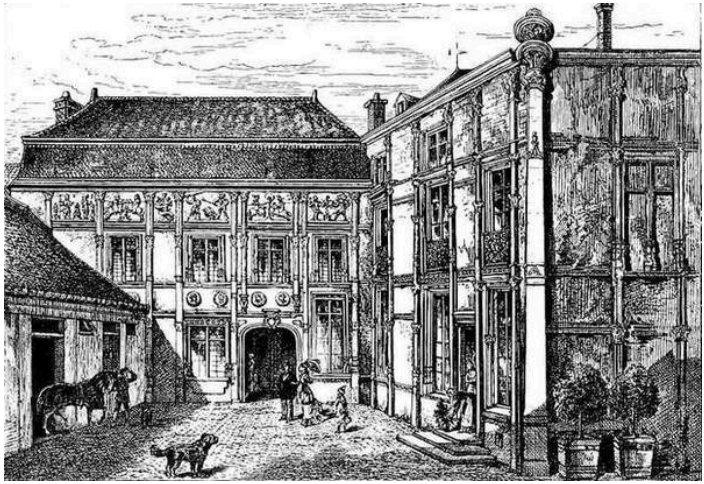
The grim Berliner and the gay Viennese both acknowledge the exhilarating influence of the wine. Champagne sparkles in crystal goblets in the great capital of the North, and the Moslem wipes its creamy foam from his beard beneath the very shadow of the mosque of St. Sophia; for the Prophet has only forbidden the use of wine, and of a surety—Allah be praised!—this strangely-sparkling delicious liquor, which gives to the true believer a foretaste of the joys of Paradise, cannot be wine. At the diamond-fields of South Africa and the diggings of Australia the brawny miner who has hit upon a big bit of crystallised carbon, or a nugget of virgin ore, strolls to the 'saloon' and shouts for Champagne. The mild Hindoo imbibes it quietly, but approvingly, as he watches the evolutions of the Nautch girls, and his partiality for the wine has already enriched the Anglo-Bengalee vocabulary and London slang with

the word ‘simkin.’ It is transported on camel-backs across the deserts of Central Asia, and in frail canoes up the mighty Amazon. The two-sworded Daimio calls for it in the tea-gardens of Yokohama, and the New Yorker, when not rinsing his stomach by libations of iced water, imbibes it freely at Delmonico’s.

Wherever the Romans died they left traces behind them in their quaint funeral urns; wherever the civilised man of the nineteenth century has set his foot—at the base of the Pyramids and at the summit of the Cordilleras, in the mangrove swamps of Ashantee and the gulches of the Great Lone Land, in the wilds of the Amoor and on the desert isles of the Pacific—he has left traces of his presence in the shape of the empty bottles that were once full of the sparkling vintage of the Marne. They are strewn broadcast over the face of the globe, literally from Indus to the Pole. The crews of the Alert and the Discovery left them on the ice-bound verge of the paleocrystic sea; the French expeditionary columns have scattered them within the limits of the Great Sahara. In the lodges of the red man they are found playing the part of a great medicine, and in the huts of the negro they assume all the importance due to a big fetish. Stanley, arriving fainting and exhausted at the mouth of the Congo, hailed with joy the foil-tipped flask that the hospitable merchants who answered his appeal for succour had despatched; and as he quaffed its contents, recalled how he and Livingstone, when thousands of miles from any other European, had emptied a bottle of sparkling Champagne together on the night of their memorable meeting at Ujiji. And when, after the battle of Ulundi, the victorious British troops occupied Cetewayo’s kraal, they found within the sable

potentate's private chamber several empty Champagne bottles, the contents of which, it is to be presumed, he had quaffed the night before to the success of his followers. In the Transvaal too, during the negotiations for an armistice, Sir Evelyn Wood regaled the Boer delegates with Champagne. On a subsequent occasion, the latter were unable to return the compliment, excusing themselves by suggestively remarking, 'We don't take such things with us when we go to fight.'





RENAISSANCE HOUSE AT REIMS, IN WHICH MADAME CLICQUOT RESIDED.

VI.
REIMS AND ITS CHAMPAGNE ESTABLISHMENTS.

The city of Reims—Its historical associations—The Cathedral—Its western front one of the most splendid conceptions of the thirteenth century—The sovereigns crowned within its walls—Present aspect of the ancient archiepiscopal city—The woollen manufactures and other industries of Reims—The city undermined with the cellars of the great Champagne firms—Reims hotels—Gothic house in the Rue du Bourg St. Denis—Renaissance house in the Rue de Vesle—Church of St. Jacques: its gateway and quaint weathercock—The Rue des Tapissiers and the Chapter Court—The long tapers used at religious processions—The Place des Marchés and its

ancient houses—The Hôtel de Ville—Statue of Louis XIII.—The Rues de la Prison and du Temple—Messrs. Werlé & Co., successors to the Veuve Clicquot-Ponsardin—Their offices and cellars on the site of a former Commanderie of the Templars—Origin of the celebrity of Madame Clicquot's wines—M. Werlé and his son—Remains of the Commanderie—The forty-five cellars of the Clicquot-Werlé establishment—Our tour of inspection through them—Ingenious dosing machine—An explosion and its consequences—M. Werlé's gallery of paintings—Madame Clicquot's Renaissance house and its picturesque bas-reliefs—The Werlé vineyards and vendangeoirs.



HEAD OF BACCHUS IN THE COURTYARD

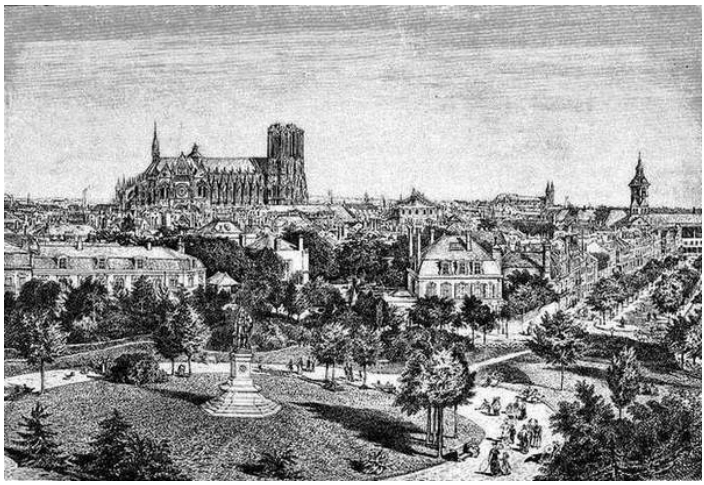
OF THE HÔTEL DU LION D'OR.

THE ancient city of Reims is pleasantly situate in a spacious natural basin, surrounded by calcareous hills, for the most part planted with vines. It is fertile in historical associations, rich in archæological treasures, and at the same time able to claim the respect more readily accorded in the nineteenth century to a busy and prosperous commercial centre. Indeed, its historical, archæological, and commercial importance is in advance of its actual political situation, for administratively it only ranks as a simple subprefecture in the department of the Marne. The student of history can hardly afford to neglect a city so intimately associated with the story of monarchy in France, and one which has witnessed the coronations of a long series of sovereigns, beginning with Clovis and ending with Charles X. From the day when the 'proud Sicamber' bent his neck at the adjuration of St. Remi, and vowed to adore that which he had burnt and to burn that which he had adored, down to the time when the future exile of Holyrood had his forehead touched by Jean Baptiste Antoine de Latil with the remnant of the 'sacred pomatum' so miraculously saved from revolutionary hands, few of the titular rulers of the country have failed to honour it with their presence. As the Durocortorum of Cæsar, the residence of Charlemagne, the seat of the great Ecclesiastical Councils of the twelfth century, the stronghold of the League, and the scene of one of the first Napoleon's most brilliant feats of arms during the campaign of 1813–14, it has also earned for itself a conspicuous place in history. To Englishmen it is, perhaps, most noteworthy as having successfully checked the victorious advance of the third Edward after Cressy,

and witnessed the apogee of that meteoric career, which began in the inn-yard at Domremi and ended in the market-place at Rouen, the career of Jeanne la Pucelle. Nor must it be forgotten that Reims sheltered the childhood of Mary Stuart, and saw the heralds of England hurl solemn defiance at Henri II. in the Abbey of St. Remi, at the command of Mary Tudor.

To the archæologist as to the ordinary sightseer, the chief attractions presented by Reims consist in its numerous ecclesiastical edifices, some still serving the purpose for which they were originally erected, others long since converted to secular usages. Most conspicuous among them is the cathedral church of Notre Dame, the stately basilica in which the sovereigns of France were wont to be crowned. This superb monument of Gothic architecture was commenced in 1210, upon the plans of Robert de Coucy, by Archbishop Alberic de Humbert. It was completed at the commencement of the fourteenth century, and though the original design was somewhat modified—owing, it is said, to the contributions of the faithful not coming in with sufficient rapidity—it remains a marvel of strength, admirably combined with grace. The exterior is extremely fine; and the western face, with its elaborately ornate portal, has been described as ‘one of the most splendid conceptions of the thirteenth century.’[422] Amidst the almost bewildering multiplicity of ornament, the triple porch, surmounted by a group representing the Coronation of the Virgin, the great rose window, flanked by colossal effigies of David and Goliath, and the range of statues known as the Gallery of the Kings, running across the façade near its summit, are conspicuous. The interior, although fine, and containing many

objects of interest, is less impressive, while the plundered treasury can still boast of many quaint and curious relics of bygone times. But the chief interest centres in the fact of the surrounding walls having witnessed so many scenes of stately pomp and pageantry. St. Louis, Philip the Fair, Philip of Valois, the unfortunate John the Good, Charles the Simple, and Charles the Victorious, with Joan of Arc, standard in hand, by his side; the wily Louis XI., Louis the Father of his People, the magnificent Francis I., and his scarcely less magnificent son, the young husband of Mary Queen of Scots; the savage Charles IX., Henri III., with his protest that the crown hurt him, Louis the Just, the Roi Soleil himself, Louis the Well-Beloved, the hapless Louis Seize, and Charles X., have all knelt here in turns whilst the crown was placed on their heads, the sword girded to their sides, and the oriflamme waved above them.



GENERAL VIEW OF REIMS, 1880.

Many of the most famous cities of the Middle Ages are mere fossilised representatives of former

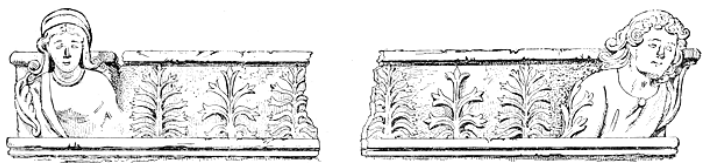
grandeur, but with Reims the case is otherwise. If somewhat fallen from its former high estate, politically speaking—though it should be remembered that Troyes was the titular capital of the Champagne when the province was ruled by independent Counts—its material prosperity has augmented. Round the nucleus of narrow and often tortuous streets, representing the old archiepiscopal city—the 'Little Rome' of the twelfth century—a network of spacious thoroughfares and broad boulevards has spread itself, and the life and movement of a busy manufacturing population are not lacking. In addition to the wine trade, which of course employs, both directly and indirectly, a large number of hands, Reims is one of the most important seats of the woollen manufacture in France, and the industrial element forms a very important factor amongst its inhabitants. In addition to the flannels, merinoes, blankets, trouserings, shawls, &c., that are annually produced, to the value of from thirty to forty million of francs, there is also a considerable production of gingerbread, biscuits, and dried pears, enjoying a wide-spread reputation.



GOTHIC DOORWAY IN THE RUE DU BOURG ST. DENIS, REIMS.

The cellars of the great Champagne manufacturers of Reims are scattered in all directions over the historical old city. They undermine its narrowest and most insignificant streets, its broad and handsome boulevards, and on the eastern side extend beyond

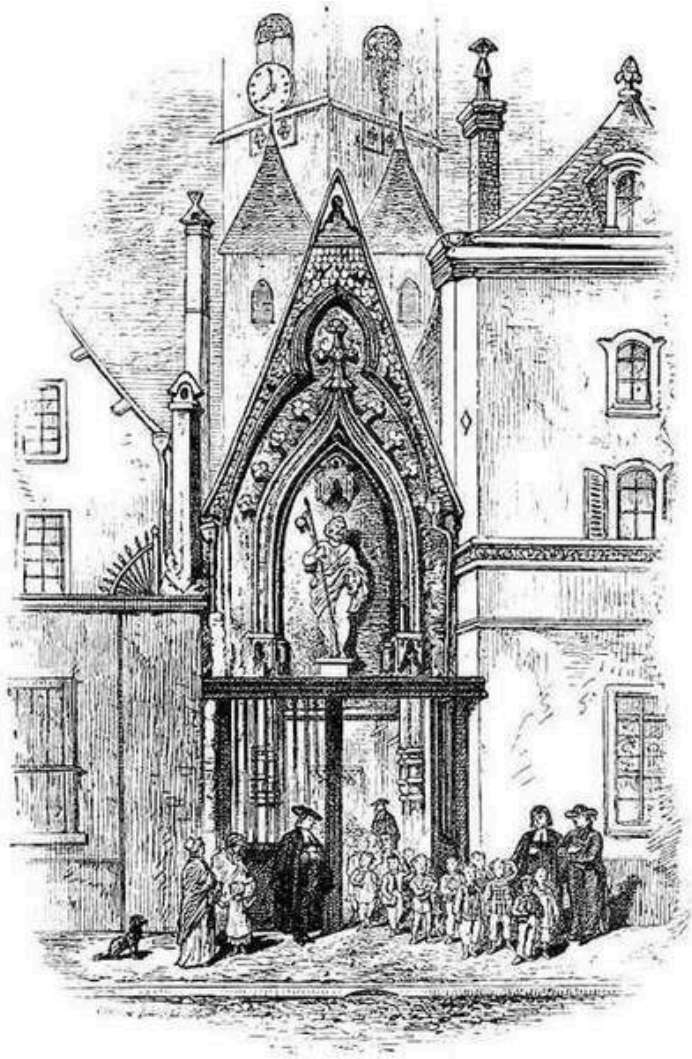
its more distant outskirts. In whichever direction we may elect to proceed when visiting the principal Champagne establishments, our starting-point will necessarily be the vicinity of the Cathedral, for it is here that all the hotels are situated. Facing the great western doorway of the ancient Gothic edifice is the Hôtel Lion d'Or, formerly the Hôtel Petit Moulinet, where the allied sovereigns sojourned on their way to Paris in 1814, and Napoleon rested on his flight after the battle of Waterloo. Close by is the Hôtel Maison Rouge, with the commemorative tablet on its renovated façade setting forth that in the year 1429, at the coronation of Charles VII. in this hostelry, then named the Striped Ass, the father and mother of Jeanne Darc were lodged at the expense of the city council. Almost facing is the newly-erected Grand Hôtel, and on the north-western side of the Cathedral is the Hôtel de Commerce, the resort, as its name implies, of most of the commercial travellers frequenting the capital of the Champagne. The visitor to Reims, be his object business or pleasure, is bound to put up at one or other of these four hostelries, and hence the starting-point of his peregrinations is necessarily the same.



FRIEZE OF OLD HOUSE IN THE RUE DE VESLE, REIMS.

Proceeding along the Rue Tronçon Ducoudray, we reached the Rue de Vesle, where the Palais de Justice and the new theatre are situated. In the adjacent Rue du Bourg St. Denis is an old house—the ground-floor of which is a wine-shop styled Buvette du Théâtre—

notable for its antique Gothic doorway, containing, within the upper portion of the arch, the bas-relief of a man fighting with a bear. There is a tradition that on this spot formerly stood a hospital dedicated to St. Hubert, and intended for the reception of persons wounded when hunting, or who might have chanced to be bitten by mad dogs. In the Rue de Vesle is another old house with an ornamental frieze surmounting its façade, which looks on to one of the entrances of the Church of St. Jacques. This edifice, originally erected at the close of the twelfth century, is hemmed in on all sides by venerable-looking buildings, while above them rises its tapering steeple, surmounted by a mediæval weathercock in the form of an angel. The interior of the church presents a curious jumble of architectural styles from early Gothic to late Renaissance. One noteworthy object of art which it contains is a life-size crucifix carved by Pierre Jacques, a Remois sculptor of the days of the Good King Henri, and from an anatomical point of view a perfect *chef-d'œuvre*.

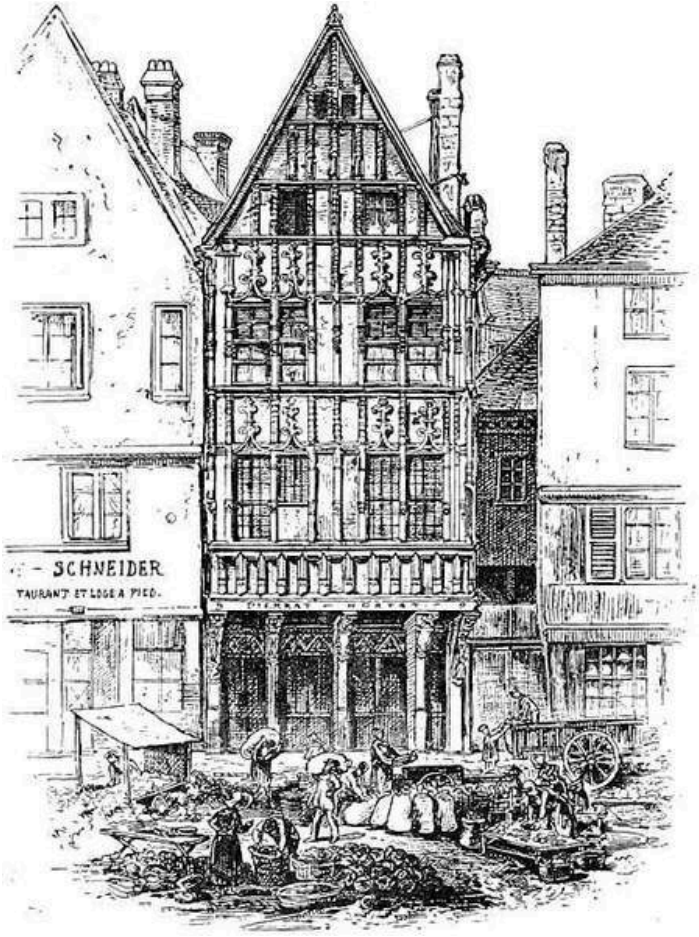


GATEWAY OF THE CHURCH OF ST. JACQUES, REIMS.



WEATHERCOCK OF THE CHURCH OF ST. JACQUES.

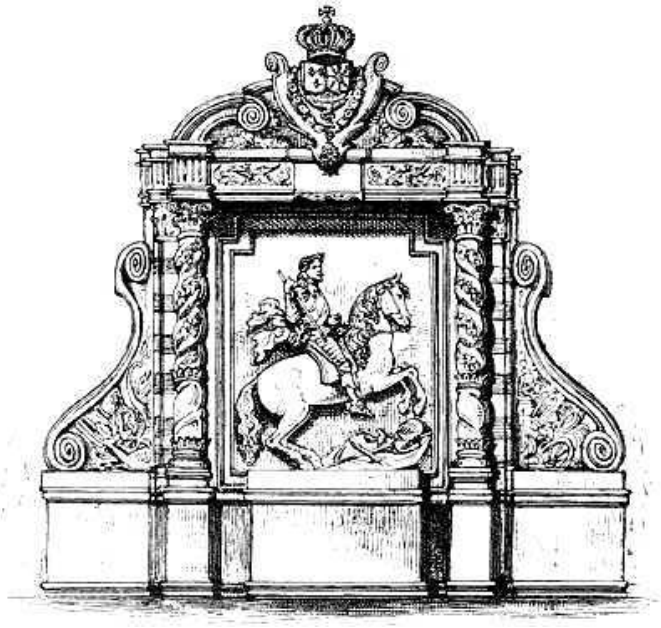
The Rue de Vesle merges into the Rue des Tapissiers, where in former times the carpet manufacturers of Reims had their warehouses. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the carpets of Reims were as famous in France as those of Aubusson are to-day, but subsequently they began to decline. Half-way up this street—where, by the way, in 1694 the first numbers of the *Gazette de France*, the oldest existing French newspaper, were printed, the news being duly forwarded from Paris—we pass the ancient gateway leading to the chapter-court of the Cathedral. Within the court a weekly market of small wares is now held; but in the days when the archbishops, dukes, and peers of Reims wielded sovereign sway in the capital of the Champagne, this open space was a *champ clos*, where trials by battle took place. The surrounding buildings comprised residences for various ecclesiastics connected with the Cathedral, together with a small farm whence these epicurean priests derived their supply of fresh milk and fatted capons. According to ancient custom, the inhabitants of the houses facing the chapter-gateway were required to keep their doors and windows open on days of religious processions, the tapers carried by the clergy on these occasions being of such immoderate length that it was necessary to incline them, and run them into the doors and windows of the houses opposite when the bearers passed under the archway.



GOTHIC HOUSE IN THE MARKET-PLACE, REIMS.

At the end of the Rue des Tapissiers is the handsome Place Royale, connected with the Place des Marchés by a broad rectangular street lined with lofty edifices in the modern Parisian style of architecture. A break ensues in this range of massive-looking buildings as we enter the ancient Place des Marchés, the forum of Roman Reims, and to-day bordered more or less by

houses of a mediæval character, remarkably well preserved. Principal among these is a Gothic timber-house of the fifteenth century, with its projecting upper stories supported by elaborately-carved corbels, and its entire façade enriched with mouldings and finials, and with columns and capitals overlaid with sculptured ornaments.



STATUE OF LOUIS XIII. ON THE HÔTEL DE VILLE, REIMS.

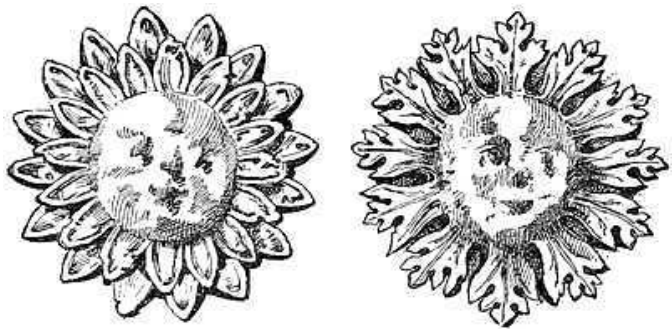
Some little distance beyond the Place des Marchés is the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, which derives all its interest from the handsome-looking edifice in the florid Italian style of the early part of the seventeenth century which gives it its name. The façade of this building is profusely decorated with Ionic, Doric, and Corinthian columns, and on the pediment above the principal entrance is a bas-relief

equestrian statue of Louis XIII., whom the Latin inscription beneath fulsomely characterises as 'the just, the pious, the victorious, the clement, the beloved of his people, the terror of his enemies, and the delight of the world,' and to whom 'the senate and inhabitants of Reims have raised this imperishable trophy.' Some century and a half later, however, the imperishable trophy got hurled down and shattered into fragments by the populace, and its vacant place was only filled by the present statue in the year 1818.

To the right of the Place is the Chambre des Notaires of Reims, raised on the site of the ancient *présidial*, or court of justice, where the city magistrates used to be elected during the Middle Ages, and to which a chapel and a prison were attached. The latter building evidently gave its name to the adjoining Rue de la Prison, the gloomy-looking houses of which—of a more massive character than the gabled structures of the market-place and the Rue de l'Etape—with their formidably-barred windows, possible relics of the religious wars, seem to frown, as it were, upon the passer-by. In a narrow tortuous street leading from this thoroughfare Messrs. Werlé & Co., the successors of the famous Veuve Clicquot-Ponsardin, have their offices and cellars, on the site of a former Commanderie of the Templars; and strangers passing by this quiet spot would scarcely imagine that under their feet hundreds of busy hands are incessantly at work, disgorging, dosing, shaking, corking, storing, wiring, labelling, capsuling, waxing, tinfoiling, and packing hundreds of thousands of bottles of Champagne destined for all parts of the civilised world.

The house of Clicquot, established in the year 1798

by the husband of La Veuve Clicquot-Ponsardin, who died in 1866, in her 89th year, was indebted for much of the celebrity of its wine to the lucky accident of the Russians occupying Reims in 1814 and 1815, and freely requisitioning the sweet Champagne stored in the widow's capacious cellars. Madame Clicquot's wines were slightly known in Russia prior to this date; but the officers of the invading army, on their return home, proclaimed their merits throughout the length and breadth of the Muscovite Empire, and the fortune of the house was made. Madame Clicquot, as every one knows, amassed enormous wealth, and succeeded in marrying both her daughter and granddaughter to counts of the *ancien régime*.



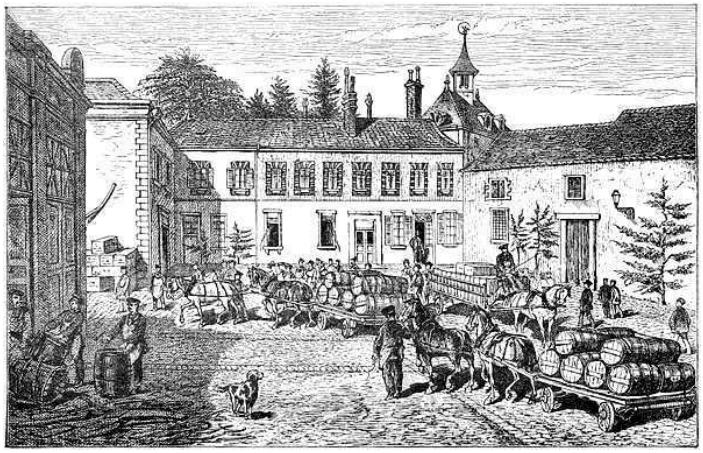
HEADS OF PHŒBUS AND BACCHUS.

The present head of the firm is M. Werlé, who comes of an old Lorraine family although born in the ancient free imperial town of Wetzlar on the Lahn, where Goethe lays the scene of his 'Sorrows of Werther,' the leading incidents of which really occurred there. M. Werlé entered the establishment which he has done so much to raise to its existing position so far back as the year 1821. His care and skill, exercised for nearly two-thirds of a century,

have largely contributed to obtain for the Clicquot brand that high repute which it enjoys to-day all over the world. M. Werlé, who has long been naturalised in France, was for many years Mayor of Reims and President of its Chamber of Commerce, as well as one of the deputies of the Marne to the Corps Législatif. He enjoys the reputation of being the richest man in Reims, and, like his late partner, Madame Clicquot, he has also secured brilliant alliances for his children, his son, M. Alfred Werlé, having married the daughter of the Duc de Montebello, while his daughter espoused the son of M. Magne, Minister of Finance under the Second Empire.

Half-way down the narrow Rue du Temple is an ancient gateway, on which may be traced the half-effaced sculptured heads of Phœbus and Bacchus. Immediately in front is a green *porte-cochère* forming the entrance to the Clicquot-Werlé establishment, and conducting to a spacious trim-kept courtyard, set off with a few trees, with some extensive stabling and cart-sheds on the left, and on the right hand the entrance to the cellars. Facing us is an unpretending-looking edifice, where the firm has its counting-houses, with a little corner tower surmounted by a characteristic weathercock consisting of a figure of Bacchus seated astride a cask beneath a vine-branch, and holding up a bottle in one hand and a goblet in the other. The old Remois Commanderie of the Knights Templars existed until the epoch of the Great Revolution, and today a few fragments of the ancient buildings remain adjacent to the ‘celliers’ of the establishment, which are reached through a pair of folding-doors and down a flight of stone steps. The date of the foundation of this Commanderie is uncertain, but it is known that a Templar’s church

occupied a portion of the site in 1170. In 1311 both the church and the Commanderie passed into possession of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, which held them until the epoch of the Revolution. Formerly the *échevins* of Reims used to be elected in the ancient hall of the Commanderie, which at one period was a sanctuary for debtors, and also for criminals. Early in the present century the buildings were sold and demolished.



THE CLICQUOT-WERLÉ ESTABLISHMENT AT REIMS.



After being furnished with lighted candles, we set out on our tour of inspection of the Clicquot-Werlé establishment, entering first of all the vast cellar of St. Paul, where the thousands of bottles requiring to be daily shaken are reposing necks downward on the large perforated tables which crowd the apartment. It is a peculiarity that each of the Clicquot-Werlé cellars—forty-five in number, and the smallest among them a vast apartment—has its special name. In the adjoining cellar of St. Matthew other bottles are similarly arranged, and here wine in cask is likewise stored. We pass rows of huge tuns, each holding its twelve or thirteen hundred gallons of fine reserved wine designed for blending with more youthful growths; next, are threading our way between seemingly endless piles of hogsheads filled with later vintages, and anon are passing smaller casks containing the syrup with which the *vin préparé*

is dosed. At intervals we come upon some square opening in the floor through which bottles of wine are being hauled up from the cellars beneath in readiness to receive their requisite adornment before being packed in baskets or cases, according to the country to which they are destined to be despatched. To Russia the Clicquot Champagne is sent in cases containing sixty bottles, while the cases for China contain as many as double that number.



Arms of the Dauphins of France.



A

DEVICES FROM THE COMMANDERIE AT REIMS



REMAINS OF THE COMMANDERIE AT REIMS.

The ample cellarage which the house possesses has enabled M. Werlé to make many experiments which firms with less space at their command would find it difficult to carry out on the same satisfactory scale. Such, for instance, is the system of racks in which the

bottles repose while the wine undergoes its diurnal shaking. Instead of these racks being, as is commonly the case, at almost upright angles, they are perfectly horizontal, which, in M. Werlé's opinion, offers a material advantage, inasmuch as the bottles are all in readiness for disgorging at the same time, instead of the lower ones being ready before those above, as is the case when the ancient system is followed, owing to the uppermost bottles getting less shaken than the others.

After performing the round of the celliers we descend into the *caves*, a complete labyrinth of gloomy underground corridors excavated in the bed of chalk which underlies the city, and roofed and walled with solid masonry, more or less blackened by age. In one of these cellars we catch sight of rows of workpeople engaged in the operation of dosing, corking, securing, and shaking the bottles of wine which have just left the hands of the *dégorgeur* by the dim light of half-a-dozen tallow-candles. The latest invention for liqueuring the wine is being employed. Formerly, to prevent the carbonic acid gas escaping from the bottles while the process of liqueuring was going on, it was necessary to press a gutta-percha ball connected with the machine, in order to force the escaping gas back. The new machine, however, renders this unnecessary, the gas, by its own power and composition, forcing itself back into the wine.

In the adjoining cellar of St. Charles are stacks of bottles awaiting the manipulation of the *dégorgeur*; while in that of St. Ferdinand men are engaged in examining other bottles before lighted candles, to make certain that the sediment is thoroughly dislodged, and the wine perfectly clear before the disgorgement is effected. Here, too, the corking,

wiring, and stringing of the newly-disgorged wine are going on. Another flight of steps leads to the second tier of cellars, where the moisture trickles down the dank dingy walls, and save the dim light thrown out by the candles we carried, and by some other far-off flickering taper, stuck in a cleft stick, to direct the workmen, who with dexterous turns of their wrists, give a twist to the bottles, all is darkness. On every side bottles are reposing in various attitudes, the majority in huge square piles on their sides, others in racks slightly tilted; others, again, almost standing on their heads, while some, which through overinflation have come to grief, litter the floor and crunch beneath our feet. Tablets are hung against each stack of wine indicating its age, and from time to time a bottle is held up before the light to show us how the sediment commences to form, or to explain how it eventually works its way down the neck of the bottle, and finally settles on the cork. Suddenly we are startled by a loud report, resembling a pistol-shot, which reverberates through the vaulted chamber, as a bottle close at hand explodes, dashing out its heavy bottom as neatly as though it had been cut by a diamond, and dislocating the necks and pounding-in the sides of its immediate neighbours. The wine trickles down, and eventually finds its way along the sloping sides of the slippery floor to the narrow gutter in the centre.



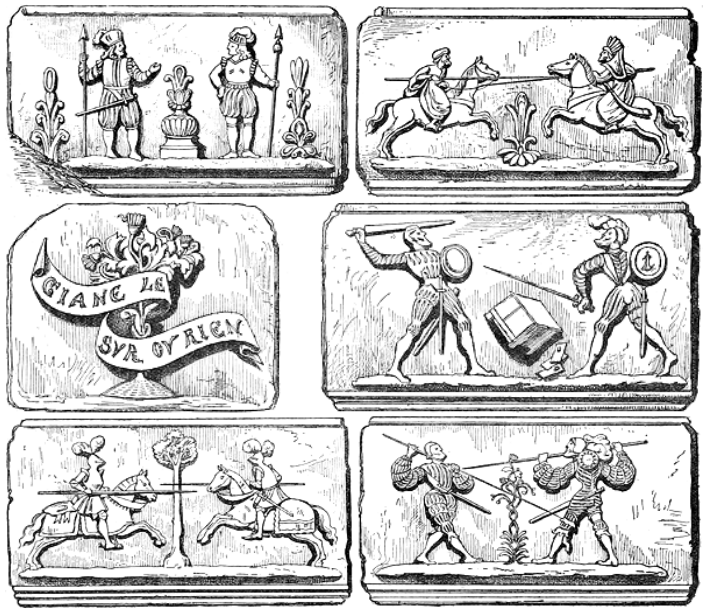
MADAME VEUVE CLICQUOT AT EIGHTY YEARS OF AGE (From the painting by Léon Coignet).

Ventilating shafts pass from one tier of cellars to the other, enabling the temperature in a certain measure to be regulated, and thereby obviate an excess of breakage. M. Werlé estimates that the loss in this

respect during the first eighteen months of a cuvée amounts to 7 per cent, but subsequently is considerably less. In 1862 one Champagne manufacturer lost as much as 45 per cent of his wine by breakages. The Clicquot cuvée is made in the cave of St. William, where 120 hogsheads of wine are hauled up by means of a crane, and discharged into the vat daily as long as the operation lasts. The tirage, or bottling of the wine, ordinarily commences in the middle of May, and occupies fully a month.

M. Werlé's private residence is close to the establishment in the Rue du Temple, and here he has collected a small gallery of high-class modern paintings by French and other artists, including Meissonier's 'Card-players,' Delaroche's 'Beatrice Cenci on her way to Execution,' Fleury's 'Charles V. picking up the brush of Titian,' various works by the brothers Scheffer, Knaus's highly-characteristic *genre* picture, 'His Highness on a Journey,' and several fine portraits, among which is one of Madame Clicquot, painted by Léon Coignet, when she was eighty years of age, and another of M. Werlé by the same artist, regarded as a *chef-d'œuvre*. Before her father's death Madame Clicquot used to reside in the Rue de Marc, some short distance from the cellars in which her whole existence centred, in a handsome Renaissance house, said to have had some connection with the row of palaces that at one time lined the neighbouring and then fashionable Rue du Tambour. This, however, is extremely doubtful. A number of interesting and well-preserved bas-reliefs decorate one of the façades of the house looking on to the court. The figures are of the period of François Premier and his son Henri II., who inaugurated his reign with a comforting edict for the Protestants, ordaining that blasphemers were to have their

tongues pierced with red-hot irons, and heretics to be burnt alive, and who had the ill-luck to lose his eye and life through a lance-thrust of the Comte de Montgomerie, captain of his Scotch guards, whilst jousting with him at a tournament held in honour of the marriage of his daughter Isabelle with the gloomy widower of Queen Mary of England, of sanguinary fame.



The first of these bas-reliefs represents two soldiers of the Swiss guard, the next a Turk and Slav tilting at each other, and then comes a scroll entwined round a thistle, and inscribed with this enigmatical motto: 'Giane le sur ou rien.' In the third bas-relief a couple of passionate Italians are winding up a gambling dispute with a hand-to-hand combat, in the course of which table and cards have got canted over; the fourth presents us with two French knights, armed *cap-à-pie*, engaged in a tourney; while in the fifth and

last a couple of German lansquenets essay their gladiatorial skill with their long and dangerous weapons. Several years back a tablet was discovered in one of the cellars of the house, inscribed 'Ci-gist vénérable religieux maistre Pierre Derclé, docteur en théologie, jadis prieur de céans. Priez Dieu pour luy. 1486,' which would almost indicate that the house had originally a religious character, although the warlike spirit of the bas-reliefs decorating it renders any such supposition with regard to the existing building untenable. We should mention that the spaces above the *porte cochère*, and the window by its side, are occupied by four medallions, which present that curious mingling of classic and contemporary styles for which the epoch of the Renaissance was remarkable.



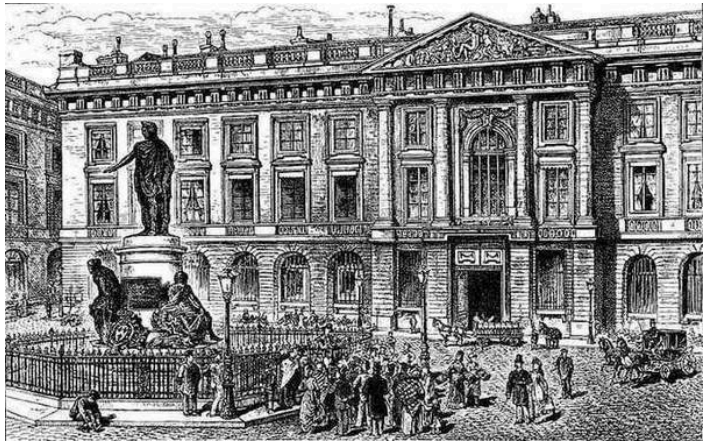
MEDALLIONS FROM MADAME CLICQUOT'S HOUSE.

The Messrs. Werlé own numerous acres of vineyards, comprising the very finest situations in the well-known districts of Verzenay, Bouzy, Le Mesnil, and Oger, at all of which places they have vendangeoirs or pressing-houses of their own. Their establishment at Verzenay contains seven presses, that at Bouzy eight, at Le Mesnil six, and at Oger two, in addition to which grapes are pressed under their own supervision at Ay, Avize, and Cramant, in

vendangeoirs belonging to their friends.

Since the death of Madame Clicquot the legal style of the firm has been ‘Werlé & Co., successors to Veuve Clicquot-Ponsardin,’ the mark, of which M. Werlé and his son are the sole proprietors, still remaining ‘Veuve Clicquot-Ponsardin,’ while the corks of the bottles are branded with the words ‘V. Clicquot-P. Werlé,’ encircling the figure of a comet. The style of the wine—light, delicate, elegant, and fragrant—is familiar to all connoisseurs of Champagne. What, however, is not equally well known is that within the last few years the firm, in obedience to the prevailing taste, have introduced a perfectly dry wine of corresponding quality to the richer wine which made the fortune of the house, and gave enduring fame to the Clicquot brand.





THE PLACE ROYALE AT REIMS.

VII.
REIMS AND ITS CHAMPAGNE ESTABLISHMENTS *(continued)*.

The house of Louis Roederer founded by a plodding German named Schreider—The central and other establishments of the firm—Ancient house in the Rue des Elus—The gloomy-looking Rue des Deux Anges and prison-like aspect of its houses—Inside their courts the scene changes—Handsome Renaissance house and garden, a former abode of the canons of the Cathedral—The Place Royale—The Hôtel des Fermes and the statue of the 'wise, virtuous, and magnanimous Louis XV.'—Birthplace of Colbert in the Rue de Cérès—Quaint Adam and Eve gateway in the Rue de l'Arbalète—Heidsieck & Co.'s central establishment in the Rue de Sedan—Their famous 'Monopole' brand—The firm founded in the last century—Their extensive cellars inside and

outside Reims—The matured wines shipped by them—The Boulevard du Temple—M. Ernest Irroy's cellars, vineyards, and vendangeoirs—Recognition by the Reims Agricultural Association of his plantations of vines—His wines and their popularity at the best London clubs—Various Champagne firms located in this quarter of Reims—The Rue du Tambour and the famous House of the Musicians—The Counts de la Marck assumed former occupants of the latter—The Brotherhood of Minstrels of Reims—Périnet & Fils' establishment in the Rue St. Hilaire—Their cellars of three stories in solid masonry—Their soft, light, and delicate wines—A rare still Verzenay—The firm's high-class Extra Sec.



THE house of Louis Roederer, originally founded by a plodding German named Schreider, was content to pursue the sleepy tenor of its way for some years—until indeed it suddenly felt prompted to lay siege to the Muscovite connection of La Veuve Clicquot-Ponsardin, and secure a market for its wine at Moscow and St. Petersburg. It next opened up the United States, and finally introduced its brand into England. The house possesses cellars in various parts of Reims, and has its offices in one of the oldest quarters of the city—namely, the Rue des Elus, or ancient Rue des Juifs, where the old synagogue formerly stood, and the records of which date as far back as 1103.

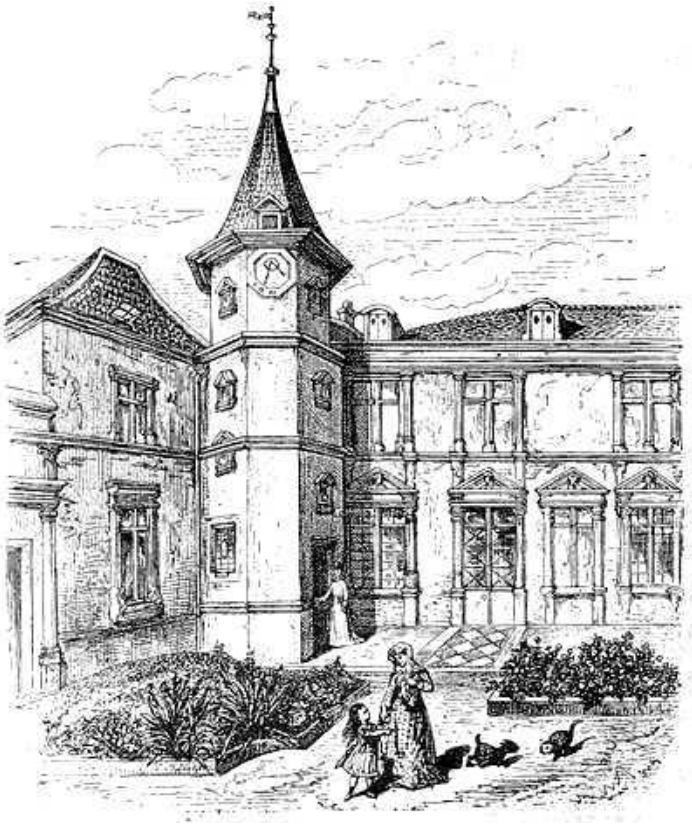
At the corner of this street, and abutting on the Place des Marchés, is a curious old house, the overhanging upper stories of which are supported by huge massive carved brackets, decorated with figures more or less quaint in design. M. Louis Roederer's offices in the Rue des Elus are at the farther end of a courtyard, beyond which is found a second court, where carts laden with cases of Champagne seem to indicate that some portion of the shipping business of the house is here carried on. Several requests made by us for permission to visit M. Louis Roederer's establishments having been refused, it is only of their external appearance that we are competent to speak. One of them, in the Boulevard du Temple, is distinguished by a rather imposing façade, and has a carved head of Bacchus surmounting its *porte-cochère*; while the principal establishment, a picturesque range of buildings of considerable extent, is situated in the neighbouring Rue de la Justice.

Leading from the Rue des Elus into the Rue de Vesle

is a gloomy-looking ancient street known as the Rue des Deux Anges, all the houses of which have their windows secured by iron gratings, and their massive doors thickly studded with huge nails. These prison-like façades, which in all probability refer to the epoch of the religious wars, succeed each other in lugubrious monotony along either side of the way; but gain admittance to their inner courts, and quite a different scene presents itself. In one notable instance, looking on to a pleasant little flower-garden, we found a small but charming Renaissance house, with its windows ornamented with elaborate mouldings, and surmounted by graceful sculptured heads, while at one corner there rose up a tower with a sun-dial displayed on its front. In this and in an adjoining house the canons of the cathedral were accustomed to reside in the days when something like four-fifths of the city were the property of the Church.



OLD HOUSE AT THE CORNER OF THE RUE DES ÉLUS AND THE PLACE DES MARCHÉS, REIMS.



RENAISSANCE HOUSE IN THE RUE DES DEUX ANGES, REIMS.

Proceeding along the Rue de Vesle and the neighbouring Rue des Tapissiers, we find ourselves once more in the Place Royale, the principal side of which is occupied by the once notable Hôtel des Fermes, where, in the days of the *ancien régime*, the farmers-general of the Champagne were accustomed to receive the revenues of the province. A bronze statue rises in the centre of the Place, which from its Roman costume and martial bearing might be taken

for some hero of antiquity, did not the inscription on the pedestal apprise us that it is intended for the ‘wise, virtuous, and magnanimous Louis XV.,’ a misuse of terms which has caused a Transatlantic Republican to characterise the monument as a brazen lie. Leading out of the Place Royale is the Rue de Cérès, in which there is a modernised sixteenth-century house claiming to be the birthplace, on the 29th August 1619, of Jean Baptiste Colbert, son of a Reims wool-merchant, and the famous minister who did so much to consolidate the finances of the State which the royal voluptuary, masquerading at Reims in Roman garb, afterwards made such dreadful havoc of.



HEADS SURMOUNTING THE PRINCIPAL WINDOWS OF THE RENAISSANCE HOUSE IN THE RUE DES DEUX ANGES.



JEAN BAPTISTE COLBERT
(From a portrait of the time).

We again cross the Place des Marchés, at the farther end of which, on the left-hand side, is the Rue de l'Arbalète, notable for a curious Renaissance gateway, with its pediment supported by two life-size figures, which the Rémois, for no very sufficient reason, have popularly christened Adam and Eve. Beyond the Place des Marchés and the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, and at no great distance from the Clicquot-Werlé establishment, is the narrow winding Rue de Sedan, where the old-established firm of

Heidsieck & Co., which has secured a high-class reputation in both eastern and western hemispheres for its famous Monopole and Dry Monopole brands, has its central offices. The original firm dates back to 1785, when France was struggling with those financial difficulties that a few years later culminated in that great social upheaving which kept Europe in a state of turmoil for more than a quarter of a century. Among the archives of the firm is a patent, bearing the signature of the Minister of the Prussian Royal Household, appointing Heidsieck & Co. purveyors of Champagne to Frederick William III. The Champagne-drinking Hohenzollern *par excellence*, however, was the son and successor of the preceding, who, from habitual over-indulgence in the exhilarating sparkling beverage during the last few years of his reign, acquired the *sobriquet* of King Clicquot.



ADAM AND EVE GATEWAY, RUE DE L'ARBALÈTE, REIMS.

On passing through the large *porte-cochère* giving entrance to Messrs. Heidsieck's principal establishment, one finds oneself in a small courtyard, with the surrounding buildings overgrown with ivy and venerable vines. On the left is a dwelling-house enriched with elaborate mouldings and cornices, and at the farther end of the court is the entrance to the

cellars, surmounted by a sun-dial bearing the date 1829. The latter, however, is no criterion of the age of the buildings themselves, as these were occupied by the firm at its foundation, towards the close of the last century. We are first conducted into an antiquated-looking low cellier, the roof of which is sustained with rude timber supports, and here bottles of wine are being labelled and packed, although this is but a mere adjunct to the adjacent spacious packing-room, provided with its loading platform and communicating directly with the public road. At the time of our visit this hall was gaily decorated with flags and inscriptions, the day before having been the fête of St. Jean, when the firm entertain the people in their employ with a banquet and a ball, at which the choicest wine of the house liberally flows. From the packing-room we descend into the cellars, which, like all the more ancient vaults in Reims, have been constructed on no regular plan. Here we thread our way between piles after piles of bottles, many of which, having passed through the hands of the disgorger, are awaiting their customary adornment. The lower tier of cellars is mostly stored with *vin sur pointe*, and bottles with their necks downward are encountered in endless monotony along a score or more of long galleries. The only variation in our lengthened promenade is when we come upon some solitary workman engaged in his monotonous task of shaking his 30,000 or 40,000 bottles per diem.

The disgorging at Messrs. Heidsieck's takes place, in accordance with the good old rule, in the cellars underground, where we noticed large stocks of wine three and five years old, the former in the first stage of *sur pointe*, and the latter awaiting shipment. It is a specialty of the house to ship only matured wine,

which is necessarily of a higher character than the ordinary youthful growths, for a few years have a wonderful influence in developing the finer qualities of Champagne. At the time of our visit, in the spring of 1877, when the English market was being glutted with the crude full-bodied wine of 1874, Messrs. Heidsieck were continuing to ship wines of 1870 and 1872, beautifully rounded by keeping, and of fine flavour and great delicacy of perfume. Of these thoroughly matured wines the firm had fully a year's consumption on hand.

Messrs. Heidsieck & Co. have a handsome modern establishment in the Rue Coquebert—a comparatively new quarter of the city, where Champagne establishments are the rule—the courtyard of which, alive with workmen at the time of our visit, is broad and spacious, while the surrounding buildings are light and airy, and the cellars lofty, regular, and well ventilated. In a large cellier here, where the tuns are ranged side by side between the rows of iron columns supporting the roof, the firm make their cuvée. Here, too, the bottling of their wine takes place, and considerable stocks of high-class reserve wines and more youthful growths are stored ready for removal when required by the central establishment. The bulk of Messrs. Heidsieck's reserve wines, however, repose in the outskirts of Reims, near the Porte Dieu-Lumière, in one of the numerous abandoned chalk quarries, which of late years the Champagne manufacturers have discovered are capable of being transformed into admirable cellars.

In addition to shipping a rich and a dry variety of the Monopole brand, of which they are sole proprietors, Messrs. Heidsieck export to this country a rich and a

dry Grand Vin Royal. It is, however, to their famous Monopole wine, and especially to the dry variety, which must necessarily comprise the finest growths, that the firm owe their principal celebrity.

Few large manufacturing towns like Reims—which is one of the most important of those engaged in the woollen manufacture in France—can boast of such fine promenades and such handsome boulevards as the capital of the Champagne. As the ancient fortifications of the city were from time to time razed, their site was levelled and generally planted with trees, so that the older quarters of Reims are almost encircled by broad and handsome thoroughfares, separating the city, as it were, from its outlying suburbs. In or close to the broad Boulevard du Temple, which takes its name from its proximity to the site of the ancient Commanderie of the Templars, various Champagne manufacturers, including M. Louis Roederer, M. Ernest Irroy, and M. Charles Heidsieck, have their establishments; while but a few paces off, in the neighbouring Rue Coquebert, are the large and handsome premises of Messrs. Krug & Co.



M. ERNEST IRROY'S ESTABLISHMENT AT REIMS.

The offices of M. Ernest Irroy, who is known in Reims not merely as a large Champagne grower and shipper, but also as a distinguished amateur of the fine arts, taking a leading part in originating local exhibitions and the like, are attached to his private residence, a handsome mansion flanked by a large and charming garden in the Boulevard du Temple. The laying out of this sylvan oasis is due to M. Varé, the head gardener of the city of Paris, who contributed so largely to the picturesque embellishment of the Bois de Boulogne. M. Irroy's establishment, which comprises a considerable range of buildings grouped around two courtyards, is immediately adjacent, although its principal entrance is in the Rue de la Justice. The vast celliers, covering an area of upwards of 3000 square yards, and either stocked with wine in cask or used for packing and similar purposes, afford the requisite space for carrying on a most extensive business. The cellars beneath comprise three stories, two of which are solidly roofed and lined with masonry, while the lowermost one is excavated in the chalk. They are admirably constructed on a symmetrical plan, and their total surface is very little short of 7000 square yards. Spite of the great depth to which these cellars descend, they are perfectly dry, the ventilation is good, and their temperature moreover is remarkably cool, one result of which is that M. Irroy's loss from breakage never exceeds four per cent per annum. M. Irroy holds a high position as a vineyard proprietor in the Champagne, his vines covering an area of nearly ninety acres. At Mareuil and Avenay he owns some twenty-five acres, at Verzenay and Verzy about fifteen, and at Ambonnay and Bouzy close upon fifty

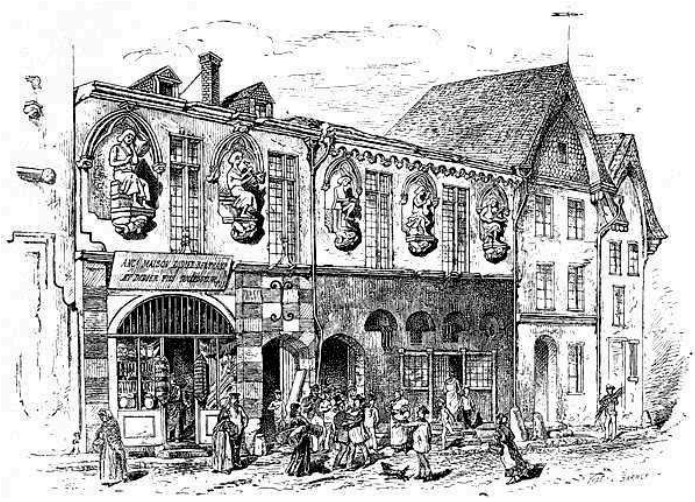
acres. His father and his uncle, whose properties he inherited or purchased, commenced some thirty years ago to plant vines on certain slopes of Bouzy possessing a southern aspect, and he has followed their example with such success both at Bouzy and Ambonnay, that the Reims Agricultural Association in 1873 conferred upon him a silver-gilt medal for his plantations of vines, and in 1880 presented him with a *coupe d'honneur*. M. Irroy owns vendangeoirs at Verzenay, Avenay, and Ambonnay; and at Bouzy, where his largest vineyards are, he has built some excellent cottages for his labourers. He has also constructed a substantial bridge over the ravine which, formed by winter torrents from the hills, intersects the principal vineyard slopes of Bouzy.

M. Ernest Irroy's wines, prepared with scrupulous care and rare intelligence, have been known in England for some years past, and are steadily increasing in popularity. They are emphatically connoisseurs' wines. The best West-end clubs, such as White's, Arthur's, the old Carlton, and the like, lay down the cuvées of this house in good years as they lay down their vintage ports and finer clarets, and drink them, not in a crude state, but when they are in perfection—that is, in five to ten years' time. M. Irroy exports to the British colonies and to the United States the same fine wines which he ships to England.

Several well-known Champagne firms have their establishments in this quarter of Reims. In addition to those already mentioned, we may instance G. H. Mumm & Co., who are located in the Rue Andrieux, only a short distance from the grand triumphal arch known as the Gate of Mars, by far the most important Roman remain of which the Champagne

can boast. Within a stone's throw of this arch there formerly stood the ancient château of the Archbishops of Reims, demolished close upon three centuries ago. In the Rue de Mars, a winding ill-paved thoroughfare leading from the Gate of Mars to the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, Jules Mumm & Co., an offshoot from the once famous firm of P. A. Mumm & Co., are installed; while in a massive and somewhat pretentious-looking house, dating back to the time of Louis Quatorze, in a corner of the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, Ruinart Père et Fils, who claim to rank as the oldest existing Champagne establishment, have their offices. The late Vicomte de Brimont, the recent head of the firm, was a collateral descendant of the Dom Ruinart, whose remains repose nigh to those of the illustrious Dom Perignon in the abbey church of Hautvillers. From the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville we proceed through the narrow Rue du Tambour, originally a Roman thoroughfare, and during the Middle Ages the locality where the nobility of Reims principally had their abodes. Half-way up this street stands the famous House of the Musicians, one of the most interesting architectural relics of which the capital of the Champagne can boast. It evidently dates from the early part of the fourteenth century, but by whom it was erected is unknown. Some ascribe it to the Knights Templars, others to the Counts of Champagne, while others suppose it to have been the residence of the famous Counts de la Marck, who in later times diverged into three separate branches, the first furnishing Dukes of Cleves and Jülich to Germany, and Dukes of Nevers and Counts of Eu to France; while the second became Dukes of Bouillon and Princes of Sedan, titles which passed to the Turennes when Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, Vicomte de Turenne, married the

surviving heiress of the house. The third branch comprised the Barons of Lumain, allied to the Hohenzollerns. Their most famous member slew Louis de Bourbon, Archbishop of Liège, and flung his body into the Meuse; and subsequently became celebrated as the Wild Boar of the Ardennes, of whom all readers of *Quentin Durward* will retain a lively recollection.

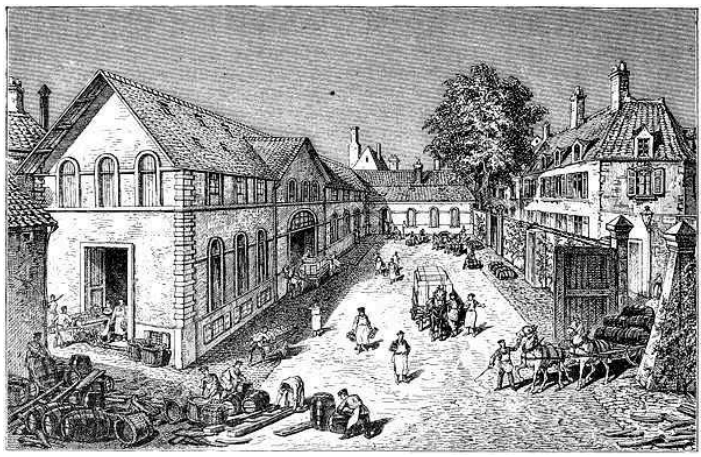


THE HOUSE OF THE MUSICIANS IN THE RUE DU TAMBOUR, REIMS.

To return, however, to the House of the Musicians. A probable conjecture ascribes the origin of the quaint mediæval structure to the Brotherhood of Minstrels of Reims, who in the thirteenth century enjoyed a considerable reputation, not merely in the Champagne, but throughout the North of France. The house takes its present name from five seated statues of musicians, larger than life-size, occupying the Gothic niches between the first-floor windows, and resting upon brackets ornamented with grotesque heads. It is thought that the partially-damaged figure on the left-hand side was originally playing a drum and a species of clarionet. The next one evidently has the remnants of a harp in his raised hands. The third or central figure is supposed merely to have held a hawk upon his wrist; whilst the fourth seeks to extract harmony from a dilapidated bagpipe; and the fifth, with crossed legs, strums complacently away

upon the fiddle. The ground-floor of the quaint old tenement is to-day an oil and colour shop, the front of which is covered with chequers in all the tints of the rainbow.

Leading from the Rue du Tambour is the Rue de la Belle Image, thus named from a handsome statuette of the Virgin, which formerly decorated a corner niche; and beyond is the Rue St. Hilaire, where Messrs. Barnett et Fils, trading under the designation of Périnet et Fils, and the only English house engaged in the manufacture of Champagne, have an establishment which is certainly as perfect as any to be found in Reims. Above-ground are several large store-rooms, where vintage-casks and the various utensils common to a Champagne establishment are kept; and a capacious cellier, upwards of one hundred and fifty feet in length, with its roof resting on massive timber supports. Here new wine is stored preparatory to being blended and bottled; and in the huge tun, holding nearly three thousand gallons, standing at the further end, the firm make their cuvée; while adjacent is a room where stocks of corks and labels, metal foil, and the like are kept.



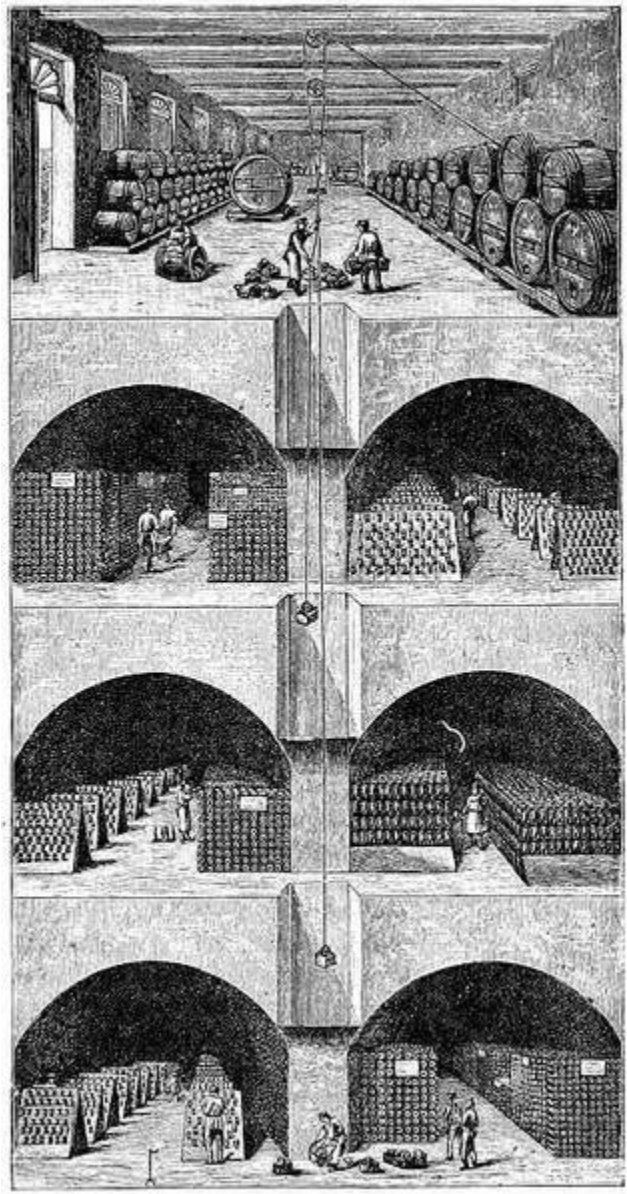
MESSRS. PÉRINET ET FILS' ESTABLISHMENT IN THE RUE ST. HILAIRE, REIMS.

Underneath this building there are three stories of cellars—an exceedingly rare thing anywhere in the Champagne—all constructed in solid masonry on a uniform plan, each story comprising two wide galleries, running parallel with each other and connected by means of transverse passages. Spite of the great depth to which these cellars descend, they are perfectly dry; the ventilation, too, is excellent; and their different temperatures render them especially suitable for the storage of Champagne, the temperature of the lowest cellar being 6° Centigrade (43° Fahrenheit), or one degree Centigrade below the cellar immediately above, which in its turn is two degrees below the uppermost of all. The advantage of this is that, when the wine develops an excess of effervescence, any undue proportion of breakages can be checked by removing the bottles to a lower cellar, and consequently into a lower temperature.

The first cellars we enter are closely stacked with wine in bottle, which is gradually clearing itself by the formation of a deposit; while in an adjoining cellar on the same level the operations of disgorging, liqueuring, and corking are going on. At the end of this gallery is a spacious compartment, where a large stock of *pure Champagne* cognac of grand vintages is stored for cask and liqueur use. In the cellars immediately beneath, bottles of wine repose in solid stacks ready for the *dégorgeur*; while others rest in racks, in order that they may undergo their daily shaking. In the lowest cellars reserved wine in cask is stored, as it best retains its natural freshness and purity in a very cool place. All air is carefully excluded from the casks; any ullage is immediately

replaced; and, as evaporation is continually going on, the casks are examined every fortnight, when any deficiency is at once replenished. At Messrs. Périnet et Fils', as at all the first-class establishments, the *vin brut* is a *mélange* comprising the produce of some of the best vineyards, and has every possible attention paid to it during its progressive stages of development.

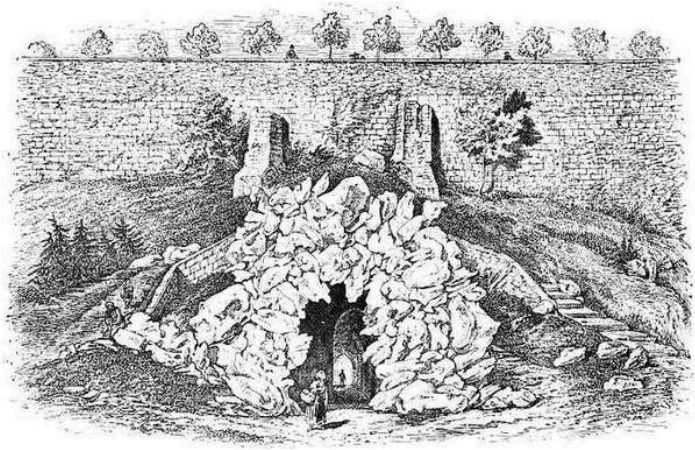
From the second tier of cellars at Messrs. Périnet et Fils' a gallery extends, under the Rue St. Hilaire, to some extensive vaults excavated beneath an adjacent building, in which the Reims Military Club is installed. These vaults, arranged in two separate stories, are eight in number, and in them we found a quarter of a million bottles of *vin brut*, reposing either in solid stacks or *sur pointe*, the latter going through their daily shaking in order to fit them for the operation of *dégorgement*. On the whole the cellars of Périnet et Fils, including the six long galleries already described, suffice for the storage of a million bottles of Champagne.



THE CELLIER AND CELLARS OF MESSRS. PÉRINET ET FILS.

Before leaving the establishment Champagnes of different years were shown to us, all of them soft, light, and delicate, and with that fine flavour and full perfume which the best growths of the Marne alone exhibit. Among several curiosities submitted to us was a still Verzenay of the year 1857, one of the most delicate wines it was ever our fortune to taste. Light in body, rich in colour, of a singularly novel and refined flavour, and with a magnificent yet indefinable bouquet, the wine was in every respect perfect. Not only was the year of the vintage a grand one, but the wine must have been made with the greatest possible care, and from the most perfect grapes, for so delicate a growth to have retained its flavour in such perfection, and preserved its brilliant ruby colour for such a length of time.

From the samples shown to us of Périnet et Fils' Champagne, we were prepared to find that at some recent tastings in London, the particulars of which have been made public, their Extra Sec took the first place at each of the three severe competitions to which it was subjected.



GROTTO BENEATH THE OLD FORTIFICATIONS OF REIMS.

VIII.
REIMS AND ITS CHAMPAGNE ESTABLISHMENTS *(continued)*.

La Prison de Bonne Semaine—Mary Queen of Scots at Reims—Messrs. Pommery & Greno's offices—A fine collection of faïence—The Rue des Anglais a former refuge of English Catholics—Remains of the old University of Reims—Ancient tower and grotto—The handsome castellated Pommery establishment—The spacious cellier and huge carved cuvée tuns—The descent to the cellars—Their great extent—These lofty subterranean chambers originally quarries, and subsequently places of refuge of the early Christians and the Protestants—Madame Pommery's splendid cuvées of 1868 and 1874—Messrs. de St. Marceaux & Co.'s new establishment in the Avenue de Sillery—Its garden-court and circular shaft—Animated scene

in the large packing hall—Lowering bottled wine to the cellars—Great depth and extent of these cellars—Messrs. de St. Marceaux & Co.'s various wines—The establishment of Veuve Morelle & Co., successors to Max Sutaine—The latter's 'Essai sur le Vin de Champagne'—The Sutaine family formerly of some note at Reims—Morelle & Co.'s cellars well adapted to the development of sparkling wines—The various brands of the house—The Porte Dieu-Lumière.



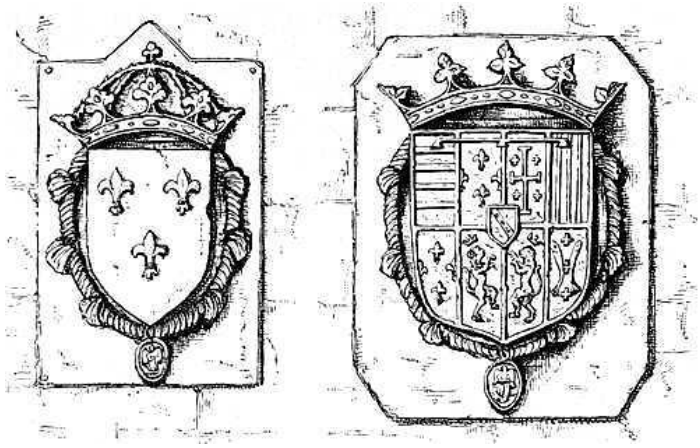
HEAD OVERSEER AT POMMERY AND GRENO'S.

NIGH the cathedral of Reims, and in the rear of the archiepiscopal palace, there runs a short narrow

street known as the Rue Vauthier le Noir, and frequently mentioned in old works relating to the present capital of the Champagne. The discovery of various pillars and statues, together with a handsome Gallo-Roman altar, whilst digging some foundations in 1837, points to the fact that a Pagan temple formerly occupied the site. The street is supposed to have taken its name, however, from some celebrated gaoler, for in mediæval times here stood 'la prison de bonne semaine.' On the site of this prison a château was subsequently built, which tradition has erroneously fixed upon as the residence of the beautiful and luckless Mary Queen of Scots, in the days when her uncle, Cardinal Charles de Lorraine, was Lord Archbishop of Reims. Temple, prison, and palace have alike disappeared, and where they stood there now rises midway between court and garden a handsome mansion, the residence of Madame Pommery, head of the well-known firm of Pommery & Greno. To the left of the courtyard, which is entered through a monumental gateway, are some old buildings, let into the walls of which are a couple of sculptured escutcheons, the one comprising the arms of France, and the other those of the Cardinal de Lorraine. On the right-hand side of the courtyard are the Pommery offices, together with the manager's sanctum, replete with artistic curiosities, the walls being completely covered with remarkable specimens of faïence, including Rouen, Gien, Palissy, Delft, and majolica, collected in the majority of instances by Madame Pommery in the villages around Reims. Here we were received by M. Vasnier, who at once volunteered to accompany us to the cellars of the firm outside the city. Messrs. Pommery & Greno originally carried on business in the Rue Vauthier le Noir, where there are extensive cellars,

but their rapidly-increasing connection long since compelled them to emigrate beyond the walls of Reims.

In close proximity to the Rue Vauthier le Noir is the Rue des Anglais, so named from the English Catholic refugees, who, flying from the persecutions of our so-called Good Queen Bess, here took up their abode and established a college and a seminary. They rapidly acquired great influence in Reims, and one of their number, William Gifford, was even elected archbishop. At the end of this street, nigh to Madame Pommery's, there stands an old house erected late in the fifteenth century, with a corner tower and rather handsome Renaissance window, which formerly belonged to some of the clergy of the cathedral, and subsequently became the 'Bureau Général de la Loterie de France,' an institution abolished by the National Convention in 1793.



OLD COATS OF ARMS IN THE COURTYARD OF MADAME POMMERY'S RESIDENCE.

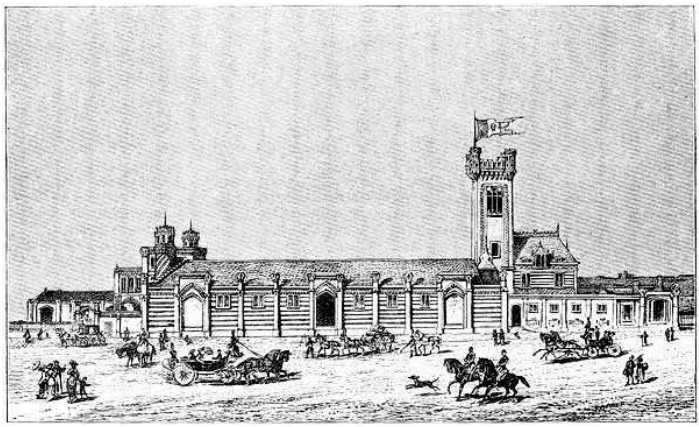


OLD HOUSE IN THE RUE DES ANGLAIS, REIMS.

The Rue des Anglais conducts into the Rue de l'Université, where a few remnants of the old University, founded by Cardinal Charles de Lorraine (1538–74), formerly attracted attention, notably a conical-capped corner tower, the sculptured ornaments at the base of which had crumbled into dust beneath the corroding tooth of Time.[423] From the Rue de l'Université our way lies along the Boulevard du Temple to the Porte Gerbert, about a mile beyond which there rises up the curious castellated structure in which the Pommery establishment is installed, with its tall towers commanding a view of the whole of Reims and its environs. As we drive up the Avenue Gerbert we

espy on the right an isolated crumbling tower, a remnant of the ancient fortifications of Reims,[424] while close at hand, and under the old city-walls, is a grotto, to which an ancient origin is likewise ascribed. In another minute we reach the open iron gates of Messrs. Pommery's establishment, flanked by a picturesque porter's lodge; and proceeding up a broad drive, we alight under a Gothic portico at the entrance to the spacious and lofty cellier. Iron girders support the roof of this vast hall, 180 feet in length and 90 feet in width, without the aid of a single column. At one end is the office and tasting-room, provided with a telegraphic apparatus and telephone, by means of which communication is carried on with the Reims bureaux. Stacked up on every side of the cellier, and often in eight tiers when empty, are rows upon rows of casks, 6000 of which contain wine of the costly vintage of 1880 sufficient for a million and a half bottles of Champagne. The temperature of this hall is carefully regulated; the windows are high up near the roof, and the sun's rays are rigidly excluded, so that a pleasant coolness pervades the building. On the left-hand side stand two huge tuns, with the monogram P. and G., surmounting the arms of Reims, carved on their heads. These are capable of containing 5500 gallons of wine, and in them the firm make their cuvée. A platform, access to which is gained by a staircase in a side aisle, runs round one of these *foudres*; and when the wine, which has been hoisted up in casks and poured through a metal trough into the *foudre*, is being blended, boys stand on this platform and, by means of a handle protruding above the cask, work the paddle-wheels placed inside, thereby securing the complete amalgamation of the wine. Adjoining are the chains and lifts worked by steam, by means of

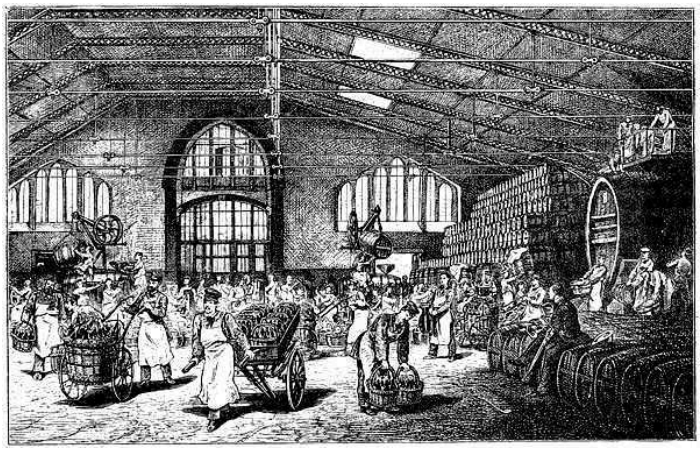
which wine is raised and lowered from and to the cellars beneath, one lift raising or lowering eight casks, whether full or empty, in the space of a minute.



THE POMMERY AND GRENO ESTABLISHMENT IN THE OUTSKIRTS OF REIMS.

At the farther end of the hall a Gothic door, decorated with ornamental ironwork, leads to the long broad flight of steps, 116 in number, and nearly twelve feet in width, conducting to the suite of lofty subterranean chambers, where bottles of *vin brut* repose in their hundreds of thousands in slanting racks or solid piles, passing leisurely through those stages of development necessary to fit them for the *dégorgeur*. Altogether there are 130 large shafts, 90 feet in depth and 60 feet square at their base, which were originally quarries, and are now connected by spacious galleries. This side of Reims abounds with similar chalk quarries, commonly believed to have served as places of refuge for the Protestants at the time of the League and after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes; and it is even conjectured that the

early Christians—the followers of St. Sixtus and St. Sinicus—here hid themselves from their persecutors. Since the cellars within the city have no longer sufficed for the storage of the immense stocks required through the development of the Champagne trade, these vast subterranean galleries have been successfully utilised by various firms. Messrs. Pommery, after filling up the chambers above the water level, proceeded to excavate the connecting tunnels, shore up the cracking arches, and repair the flaws in the chalk with masonry, finally converting these abandoned quarries into magnificent cellars for the storage of Champagne. No less than 60,000 *l.* was spent upon them and the castellated structure aboveground. Several millions of bottles of Champagne can be stored in these capacious vaults, the area of which is nearly 450,000 square feet.



INTERIOR OF MESSRS. POMMERY AND GRENO'S CELLIER.

Madame Pommery made a great mark with her splendid cuvées of 1868 and 1874, the result being that her brand has become widely popular, and that it invariably realises exceptionally high prices.

On leaving Messrs. Pommery's we retrace our steps down the Avenue Gerbert, bordered on either side with rows of plane-trees, until we reach the treeless Avenue de Sillery, where Messrs. de St. Marceaux & Co.'s new and capacious establishment is installed. Simple and without pretension, the establishment, which covers an area of upwards of 18,000 feet, is distinguished for its perfect appropriateness to the industry for which it was designed. The principal block of building is flanked by two advanced wings enclosing a garden-court, set off with flowers and shrubs, and from the centre of which rises a circular shaft, covered in with glass, and admitting light and air to the cellars below. In the building to the left the wine is received on its arrival from the vineyard, and here are ranged large quantities of casks replete with the choice crus of Verzenay, Ay, Cramant, and Bouzy, while thousands of bottles ready for labelling are stacked in massive piles at the end of the packing-hall in the corresponding wing of the establishment. Here, too, a tribe of workpeople are arraying the bottles with gold and silver headdresses, and robing them in pink paper, while others are filling, securing, marking, and addressing the cases or baskets destined to Hong-Kong, San Francisco, Yokohama, Bombay, London, New York, St. Petersburg, Berlin, or Paris.



THE PACKING-HALL OF MESSRS. DE ST. MARCEAUX AT REIMS.

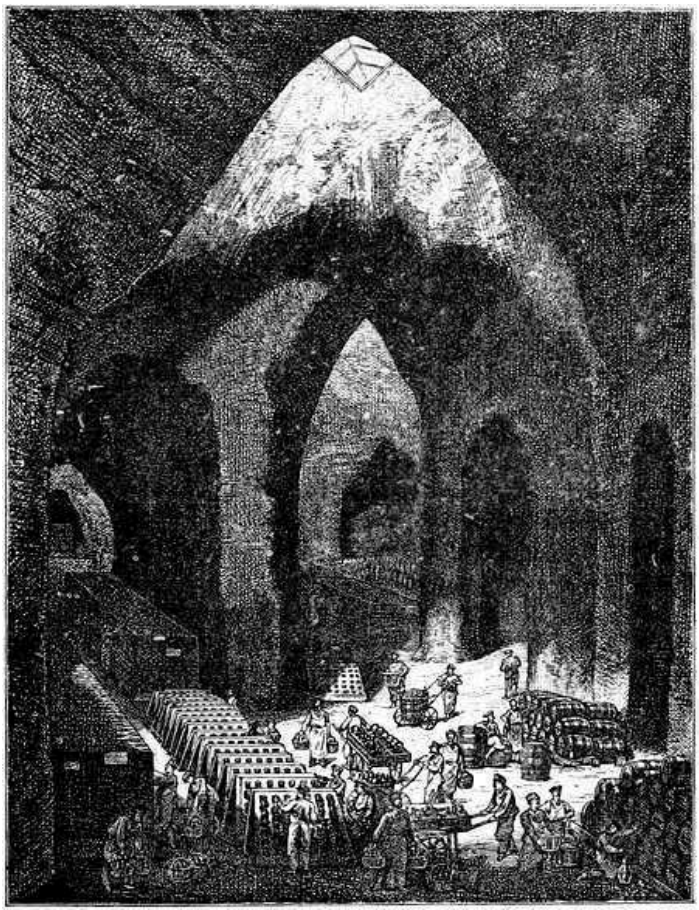
The wine in cask, stored in the left-hand wing, after having been duly blended in an enormous vat, is drawn off into bottles, which are then lowered down a shaft to the second tier of cellars by means of an endless chain, on to which the baskets of bottles are swiftly hooked. The workman engaged in this duty, in order to guard against his falling down the shaft, has a leather belt strapped round his waist, by means of which he is secured to an adjoining iron column. We descended into the lower cellars down a flight of ninety-three broad steps—a depth equal to the height of an ordinary six-storied house—and found no less than four-and-twenty galleries excavated in the chalk, devoid of masonry supports, and containing upwards of a million bottles of Champagne. These galleries vary in length, but are of uniform breadth, and allow either for a couple of racks with wine *sur pointe*, or stacks of bottles, in four row's on either side, with ample passage-room down the centre.

The upper range of cellars comprises two large arched galleries of considerable breadth, one of which contains wine in wood and wine *sur pointe*, while the other is stocked with bottles of wine heads downward, ready to be delivered into the hands of the *dégorgeur*.

MM. de St. Marceaux & Co. have the honour of supplying the King of the Belgians, the President of the French Republic, and several German potentates with an exceedingly delicate Champagne known as the Royal St. Marceaux. The same wine is popular in Russia and other parts of Europe, just as the Dry Royal of the firm is much esteemed in the United States. The brand of the house most appreciated in this country is its Carte d'Or, a very dry wine, the extra superior quality of the firm, which secured the first place at a recent Champagne competition in England.

Some little distance beyond the remnants of the ancient fortifications of Reims, skirting the Butte de St. Nicaise, is the establishment of Veuve Morelle & Co., successors to Veuve Max Sutaine & Co. This house was founded in 1823 by the late M. Maxime Sutaine, who, like several other notabilities in the Reims wine trade, was as familiar with art and science as with the special industry to which he had devoted himself. An amateur painter of no mean skill, he showed himself thoroughly at home in the biographical and critical notices on artists and art in his native province which he produced. His name, however, is chiefly identified in literature with his *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*.[425] This work may be regarded as the first attempt to collect the scattered materials relating to the history of Champagne wine, and to deal with them in a critical spirit. Though

necessarily imperfect, its value is undoubtedly great, and it has been frequently quoted from in the present volume. The family of Sutaine long held an honourable position at Reims, the name of one of M. Max Sutaine's immediate ancestors, who filled the position of lieutenant of the city in 1765, appearing on the bronze slab at the base of the statue of Louis XV. in the Place Royale, erected during that year.



THE CELLARS OF MAX SUTAINE AND CO. IN THE CHEMIN DE LA PROCESSION, REIMS.

The cellars of the firm of Veuve Morelle & Co., successors to Max Sutaine & Co., are very extensive; and while more than usually picturesque in appearance, are in every respect admirably adapted for the rearing and development of the delicate wines of the Champagne. These cellars, hewn out of the chalk, are of great depth. The firm has been careful to adhere to the good traditions of its predecessors in the composition of its cuvées, and at the same time to avoid those errors which experience and the resources of modern science have made manifest. Its rule is only to send out wines of a good cru, and never before they are thoroughly matured, thereby avoiding the shipment of young wines. The chief kinds bearing the brand of Max Sutaine & Co. are Vin Brut (of great years), Extra Dry, Creaming Sillery, and Bouzy for England, Sillery Sec for Russia, and Verzenay and Cabinet for Germany and Belgium.

It should be mentioned that of late years the abandoned quarries, so numerous on this side of the city, have been largely utilised by the Reims Champagne manufacturers as cellars for the storage of their wines. Beyond the firms that have been already alluded to as possessing cellars in this direction, there remain to be enumerated Messrs. Kunkelmann & Co., Ruinart Père et Fils, the Goulets, Jules Champion, Théophile Roederer, &c. The cellars of several of the last named are immediately outside the Porte Dieu-Lumière, near which is a seventeenth-century house having let into its face a curious bas-relief, of evidently much earlier date, the subject of which has been a source of considerable perplexity to local antiquaries.

A like cloud enshrouds the origin of the name of Dieu-Lumière, bestowed upon the fortified gate

formerly standing here, and originally erected during the fourteenth century, when, the circle of the ramparts having been carried round the Bourg de St. Remi so as to unite it to the old city, the Porte St. Nicaise was walled up.[426] Like the other portals of Reims, it has no lack of historical associations. Its vaulted roof resounded with the trampling of barbed war-steeds when, on the 16th July 1429, Charles the Victorious swept beneath it into the city, with Joan of Arc by his side and the steel-clad chivalry of France at his back.[427] The year 1583 saw its keys handed to the Duc de Guise, and the green flag of the League, with its device 'Auspice Christo,' hoisted above it; and twenty-three years later, as Henri Quatre rode through it amidst shouts of welcome, the jesting remark, 'I had no idea I was so well beloved at Reims,' was the only attempt at revenge made by the easy-going Béarnais on the population who had so long flouted his authority. Rebuilt in 1620, it witnessed the triumphant return of Grandpré's cavalry and the Rémois militia, after their victory over Montal and his Spaniards at La Pompelle in 1657, and the successful assault of the renegade Saint Priest, whose Cossacks entered the walls at this point in 1814, and gave way to the most brutal excesses. Nor must it be forgotten that Marie Louise passed through this gate *en route* for Paris, on which occasion its summit was crowned with elaborate allegorical devices supported by cupids weaving garlands of flowers; or that for several centuries the relics of St. Timotheus and his companions were annually carried through it on Whit-Monday by the clergy of Reims, escorted by a procession of pilgrims, to the scene of the martyrdom of these early Christians at La Pompelle.



BAS-RELIEF NEAR THE PORTE DIEU-LUMIÈRE.



IX.
EPERNAY.

The connection of Epernay with the production of wine of remote date—The town repeatedly burnt and plundered—Hugh the Great carries off all the wine of the neighbourhood—Vineyards belonging to the Abbey of St. Martin in the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries—Abbot Gilles orders the demolition of a wine-press which infringes the abbey's feudal rights—Bequests of vineyards in the fifteenth century—Francis I. bestows Epernay on Claude Duke of Guise in 1544—The Eschevins send a present of wine to their new seigneur—Wine levied for the king's camp at Rethel and the strongholds of the province by the Duc de Longueville—Epernay sacked and fired on the approach of Charles V.—The Charles-Fontaine vendangeoir at Avenay—Destruction of the immense pressoirs of the Abbey of St. Martin—The handsome Renaissance entrance to the church of Epernay—Plantation of the 'terre de siége' with vines in 1550—Money

and wine levied on Epernay by Condé and the Duke of Guise—Henri Quatre lays siege to Epernay—Death of Maréchal Biron—Desperate battle amongst the vineyards—Triple talent of the 'bon Roy Henri' for drinking, fighting, and love-making—Verses addressed by him to his 'belle hôtesse' Anne du Puy—The Epernay Town Council make gifts of wine to various functionaries to secure their good-will—Presents of wine to Turenne at the coronation of Louis XIV.—Petition to Louvois to withdraw the Epernay garrison that the vintage may be gathered in—The Duke and Duchess of Orleans at Epernay—Louis XIV. partakes of the local vintage at the maison abbatiale on his way to the army of the Rhine—Increased reputation of the wine of Epernay at the end of the seventeenth century—Numerous offerings of it to the Marquis de Puisieux, Governor of the town—The Old Pretender presented at Epernay with twenty-four bottles of the best—Sparkling wine sent to the Marquis de Puisieux at Sillery, and also to his nephew—Further gifts to the Prince de Turenne—The vintage destroyed by frost in 1740—The Epernay slopes at this epoch said to produce the most delicious wine in Europe—Vines planted where houses had formerly stood—The development of the trade in sparkling wine—A 'tirage' of fifty thousand bottles in 1787—Arthur Young drinks Champagne at Epernay at forty sous the bottle—It is surmised that Louis XVI., on his return from Varennes, is inspired by Champagne at Epernay—Napoleon and his family enjoy the hospitality of Jean Remi Moët—King Jerome of Westphalia's true prophecy with regard to the Russians and Champagne—Disgraceful conduct of the Prussians and Russians at Epernay in 1814—The Mayor offers them the free run of his cellars—Charles X., Louis Philippe, and Napoleon III. accept the 'vin d'honneur' at

Epernay—The town occupied by German troops during the war of 1870–1.



IF Reims be the titular capital of the Champagne wine-trade, Epernay can boast of containing the establishments of some of the most eminent firms engaged therein. Its connection with the production of the wines of Champagne is of the remotest. The vineyards stretching for miles around the ancient Sparnacum claim indeed an antiquity far exceeding that of any existing portion of the town itself, which, despite the remote date of its foundation, and the fact that it was a place of considerable importance as early as 445, presents a thoroughly modern aspect. Unlike Reims—so rich in the remains of antiquity—it possesses no mementoes of the days when its lord Eulogius gave it to St. Remi,[428] and he in turn bequeathed it to the Church.

The reason is simple, for the history of Epernay may

be briefly summed up in the words—fire, pestilence, and pillage. From the days when misfortune first overtook it, after the division of the Frankish monarchy on the death of Clovis, it has been burnt down on half a dozen occasions, repeatedly depopulated by the plague, and captured and sacked times out of number. The contending sovereigns of Austrasia and Neustria alternately obtained forcible possession of it, and the rival counts of Paris and Vermandois snatched it repeatedly from each other's hold, like hungry dogs contending for a bone; whilst the Normans, the Hungarians, the vassals of Charles of Lorraine, and the followers of Otho of Germany added their quota to the work of destruction during the long period of anarchy preceding the establishment of the Capetian race upon the throne of France. The founder of the said race, Hugh the Great, distinguished himself in 947 by plundering the town of Epernay, ravaging the surrounding country, and profiting by the fact that it was vintage-time to carry off all the wine of the neighbourhood.[429]



Even during the epoch of comparative tranquillity which prevailed up to the English invasion, Epernay became from time to time the prey of robber knights like Thomas de Marlé and rebellious nobles like Count John of Soissons; and at the commencement of the thirteenth century Count Thibault of Champagne was fain to burn it, in order to prevent it from serving as a rallying-place for the lords who had risen against Queen Blanche and her infant son Louis IX. After the battle of Poitiers it was pillaged by the partisans of Charles the Bad of Navarre; Edward the

Black Prince entered it twice as a conqueror; and John of Gaunt exacted a heavy tribute from it. In the struggles which followed the death of Henry V. of England it was again taken and re-taken, partially burnt and utterly ruined, remaining for three years absolutely depopulated after the unwelcome visit paid it by the Duke of Burgundy in 1432.

Yet during all these ravages the vineyards clothing the slopes around the town were gradually developed, chiefly by the fostering care of the good fathers of the Abbey of St. Martin. The charter of foundation of this abbey, which was endowed in 1032, makes mention of vineyards amongst its possessions, and they are also spoken of in the confirmation of donations and privileges granted by Pope Eugenius III. in 1145. Count Henry of Champagne in 1179 gave the canons of the abbey the hospital of Epernay, with the fields and vineyards belonging to it; and twenty years later, Abbot Guy purchased from Abbot Noah, of the monastery of the Chapelle aux Planches, near Troyes, the fields, vineyards, house, barn, and garden adjoining the 'ruisseau du Cotheau' at Epernay for 110 livres. In 1203, Parchasius, a canon of Laon, left by will to the abbey the 'vigne du Clozet,' which is still celebrated for the excellence of its products, at Epernay; and in 1217, Abbot Theodoric gave the 'terres de la Croix Boson' at Mardeuil to sundry of the inhabitants of that village, on the condition of planting them with vines and paying a yearly rent of fourteen hogsheads of wine obtained therefrom as vinage. Tithes of wine at Oger, Cuis, Cramant, Monthelon, &c., and the vineyards of Genselin, Beaumont, and Montfelix also figure amongst the possessions of the abbey in the thirteenth century.[430]

A certain proportion of the tithes of the ‘fields, meadows, and vineyards’ owned by the abbey at Epernay was assigned to the dependent priory in the faubourg of Igny-le-Jard by Abbot Richard de Cuys in 1365. The cultivation of the grape seems to have been carried on in even the most distant of the numerous possessions of the abbey, which drew ‘rentes de vin’ from Chatillon and Dormans; and in 1373 we find Abbot Gilles de Baronne compelling an unfortunate inhabitant of Romains, near Fismes, to demolish forthwith a wine-press he had dared to erect to the prejudice of the ‘droits seigneuriaux et bannaux’ which the abbey had over that village. The military orders had their share, too; for the Commandery of the Temple at Reims owned at Epernay at the commencement of the fourteenth century a house and some vineyards, still bearing the name of ‘Les Tempières.’ In 1419, Philippe le Maître and his wife left to the curé of Epernay a little vineyard at Montebon to pay for a yearly mass; and at a somewhat later date, Isabelle la Linotte bequeathed to the abbey the vineyard De la Ronce at Mardeuil.[431]



FRANCIS I.
(From a portrait of the time).

Indeed, the history of Epernay is most intimately connected with that of its wine, which figures throughout its records as a constant attraction to friends and foes. After the final expulsion of the English, the town gradually recovered its prosperity, and became an appanage of the Dukes of Orleans. At the commencement of the sixteenth century we find

Francis I.—to whom it had reverted on the death of Louise of Savoy—presenting it to Claude, Duke of Guise, and the eschevins resolving in 1544 that their new seigneur should be offered ‘twenty poinçons of the best wine that can be found in the cellars of the district, and that after the vintage twenty more of the new crop shall be sent to him.’[432] A levy of one hundred poinçons had already been demanded of them for the camp formed by the King at Rethel two years before; and the various strongholds of the province had been freely supplied with wine exacted from Epernay by the Duke de Longueville, lieutenant-governor of the Champagne.



THE EMPEROR CHARLES V.
(From a portrait of the time).

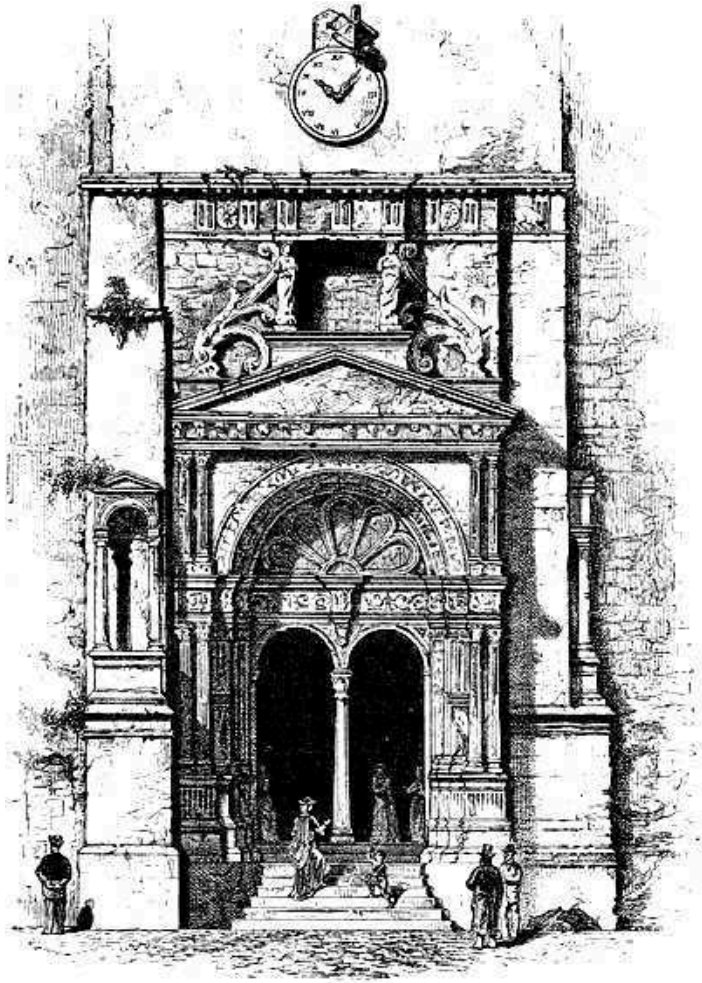


On the advance of Charles V. in 1544, the Dauphin, afterwards Henri II., following the example successfully set by Anne de Montmorency in Provence, pitilessly sacked the entire district of the Marne, in order that the enemy might find nothing to live on, and stored the product, which included an enormous quantity of wine, in Epernay. The Emperor advanced, meeting with but little opposition, and having taken up his quarters in the Abbey of Avenay, amused himself with building the vendangeoir known as Charles-Fontaine on the adjacent slope, as a testimony of his intention to make, if possible, a permanent sojourn in a province, the vinous products of which he so highly esteemed.[433] But whilst the illustrious patron of Titian and his 'swarthy grave commanders' were snugly tippling the choicest

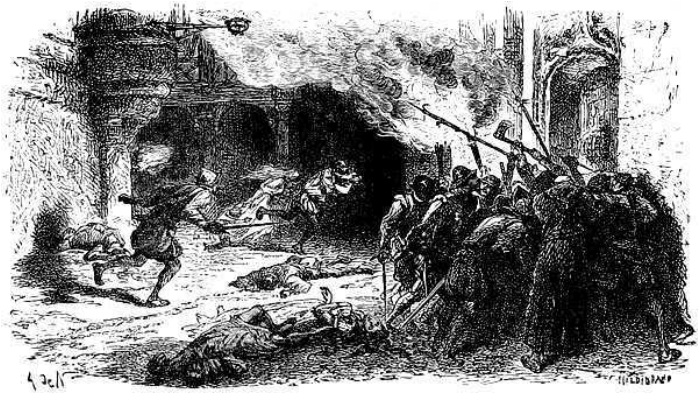
vintages contained in the abbey cellars, and his followers camped outside Epernay were waiting for the hour when they should revel at pleasure on the wine stored in the town, their hopes vanished literally in smoke. For Francis, fearing the town would be unable to hold out, had sent word to Captain Sery to burn it, and destroy the accumulated store of provisions, in order to prevent them falling into the hands of the enemy. This was accordingly done on the 3d September, and amongst the property consumed were the immense pressoirs of the Abbey of St. Martin. In this conflagration the church of Epernay was no doubt also destroyed, as the handsome Renaissance doorway—the sole ancient portion of the existing edifice—was evidently erected in the latter half of the sixteenth century. The misfortunes of the town did not cease with this calamity, for a great pestilence seems to have marked the return of the inhabitants to their ruined dwellings at the epoch of the following vintage.[434] Five years later, six arpents of the 'terre de siege' where the Spaniards had encamped were planted with vines by the Count de Nanteuil-le-Haudouin, and received the name of the Vineyard de la Plante. [435]



MARIE STUART, QUEEN OF SCOTS.



RENAISSANCE DOORWAY TO THE CHURCH OF EPERNAY.



ATTACK ON THE HUGUENOTS AT EPERNAY.



As a matter of course, the hapless fate of the town pursued it during the religious wars of the sixteenth

century. In 1567 the Huguenots, under Condé, seized on Epernay—then a portion of the appanage of the unfortunate Marie Stuart of Scotland—and exacted a ransom of 10,500 livres, towards which the Abbey of St. Martin contributed 3451 livres, partly in money and partly in wine, calculated at no more than eleven livres the queue. A higher price appears to have ruled on the recapture of the town by the Duke of Guise the same year, when the levy made consisted of 500 pièces of wine, estimated at twenty-four livres the queue.[436] Guise was driven out by the inhabitants in 1588; but after one fruitless assault, the Leaguers under Rosné succeeded in obtaining forcible possession of Epernay four years later.

On Henri Quatre laying siege in turn to Epernay in 1592, the vineyards around the town were again literally watered with blood. One notable episode of this siege was the death of Maréchal Biron, the most devoted of Henri's adherents. On the 27th July the King and Biron were returning on horseback from Damery to the camp. As they advanced up the road leading from Mardeuil to the faubourg of Igny, the wind blew off Henri's hat, adorned with the famous white plume, and Biron, picking it up, jestingly placed it upon his own head. At this moment the white plume unluckily caught the eye of Petit, the master gunner of Epernay, and he at once pointed a cannon at it from the Tour Saint Antoine. 'For the Béarnais!' he exclaimed, as he fired; and the ball carried away the head of the Maréchal, to whom Henri was speaking, and upon whose shoulder the King's hand was actually resting. 'Ah, mordieu, the dog has bitten the Béarnais!' cried the exulting gunner, believing it was the King who had fallen, and alluding to the name of the cannon, which was

known as the ‘Dog of Orleans,’ from its having been captured from the English at the siege of that city, and bearing on its breech the figure of a dog.[437]



HENRI QUATRE BEFORE EPERNAY.

The death of Maréchal Biron, and the fact that Henri was devoting quite as much attention to his ‘belle hôtesse’ at Damery, the fair Présidente Anne du Puy, as he was to the siege, encouraged St. Paul, who commanded at Reims for the League, to despatch a strong body of Walloon pikemen and musketeers to the relief of the beleaguered town. They approached by the hollow road leading from the Faubourg des Ponts Neufs to the slope of the Vignes des Capinets, and passing between the vineyards Dure Epine and Gouttes d’Or. Attacked by the Royalists, they drew up in good order in the latter spot, and prepared to defend themselves with all the stubborn valour of their race, their dense array of pikes bristling amongst the bright green leaves—for it was the close of summer, and the vines were in all the glory of their luxuriant foliage. Vainly for a long time the Royalists assailed them. Attack after attack was repulsed, till the ‘golden drops’ were turned to drops of gore; and it was not until the white plume of King

Henri came dashing on in the forefront of his choicest cavalry that the Walloons were finally broken and routed, after inflicting upon their assailants a far greater loss than they themselves sustained. The vineyard thus baptised in blood was thenceforward known as the Vigne des Sièges.[438]





Though data may be lacking to connect the ‘bon Roi Henri’ directly with the wine of Epernay, there can be no doubt that the sovereign whose triple talent for drinking, fighting, and love-making has been handed down to us in song[439] found a fair opportunity of exercising all three of these attributes during the siege. Of fighting, as we have seen, he had plenty, and, Anacreon-like, he seems to have blended love

and wine together.[440] He who, when a new-born babe, had his lips wetted in the old castle of Pau by stout Antoine de Bourbon with a cup of the generous wine of the South, and who gloried in the title of the Sieur d'Ay, was not likely to neglect the nectar vintaged on the slopes around Epernay. And probably the recollection of the raven-haired, black-eyed, bronze-skinned Bernais peasant-girls, whom tradition vows he used to woo when in the first flush of youthful manhood beneath the trellised vines of Jurançon and Gan, served by contrast to heighten the fairer charms of the blonde Anne du Puy, in whose honour he is reported to have sung:

'Morning bright,
Thy pure light
I rejoice when I see;
The fair dove
Whom I love
So, is rosy like thee.

She is fair,
None so rare,
With a waist matched by none;
By my hand
It is spanned,
And eyes bright as the sun.

Wet with new
Fallen dew,
The rose sparkles less bright;
Freer from spot
Ermine's not,
Nor is lily more white.

Fair Dupuis,
All agree,

On ambrosia is fed;
From her lip
When I sip
Nectar's perfume is shed.'[441]

At the outset of the seventeenth century Epernay had its full share in the troubles that marked the early part of the reign of Louis XIII., being taken in turn by Condé, by the Count de Soissons, acting for the malcontent nobles leagued against Richelieu in 1634, and by the King's forces the year following. The peaceful records are, however, plentiful and interesting. In 1631 we find the town council deciding to present 'six caques of white wine, the best that can be found,' to M. de Vignolles, and the same to M. d'Elbenne; and two years later protesting to the 'treasurers of France' their inability to pay 70,000 livres, demanded towards the maintenance of the army, owing to the all but total failure of the wine crop. The council were fully aware of the merits of their vintage, and of the advantages of appealing to the heart by way of the stomach. Six 'feuillettes' of the best wine were ordered to be sent in September 1636 to M. de Vaubecourt, and one to his secretary, 'to retain their good-will towards the town,' and induce the former to use his influence with a committee appointed by the King for repaying loans and advances, and also towards getting rid of the garrison. A little later the Marquis de Senneterre received a queue of wine to withdraw his troops from the town. The Maréchal de Chatillon, M. de Vaubecourt, M. de Belfonds, and the Count d'Estaing were in frequent receipt of such gifts; and it is noteworthy that amongst them figure 'two caques of wine in bottles,' sent to each of the two first at Sainte Ménéhoulde in 1639.[442]



The successful efforts of Turenne against his great rival Condé during the wars of the Fronde were encouraged by frequent presents of the wine of Epernay. As the brother of the Duc de Bouillon, to whom the town of Epernay had been given in 1643 in exchange for Sedan, and as the protector of the district against the Spaniards, he received numerous tokens of the citizens' good-will. In September 1652 twelve caques of wine were sent to him, with the result that he at once ordered his soldiers to repair the broken bridge across the Marne. In the following January a chevreuil and two caques, and in June wine, fowls, and game, were presented to him. In June 1654 it was resolved that a deputation should be sent to the coronation of Louis XIV. at Reims, 'to render the homage due to the King,' and to present 'a caque of wine in bottles' to M. de Turenne, which helped no doubt to spread the fame of the Epernay wine amongst the nobility present on that occasion.

The same social lever was applied in 1660 to the 'traitant général' of the so-called 'don gratuit' exacted on the occasion of the King's marriage, two feuillettes being proffered in order to get him to reduce the assessment. Representations made to an eschevin of Paris, despatched to Epernay in 1662 to see if there was any store of grain in the town that could be sold to benefit the starving poor of the capital, to the effect that the district was a wine-growing and not a corn country; and the despatch of a deputation in August 1666 to Louvois, to request that the garrison might be withdrawn to allow of the vintage being gathered in—the inhabitants of the surrounding country having fled to avoid sheltering soldiers,—serve to show the importance of the Epernay wine-trade. In 1671, on the passage of the Duke and Duchess of Orleans from Châlons, fruit and sweetmeats were presented to them, and wine to the lords of their suite, at a cost of 211 livres 7 sols; and two years later, Louis XIV. partook of the local vintage during his sojourn at the 'maison abbatiale,' when on his way to the army of the Rhine.

Towards the close of this century the wine grew in repute, and was eagerly sought after. In November 1677 two caques were sent to 'a person who enjoys some credit,' and who was willing to accord his protection to the town in the matter of quartering troops upon it; and the following January twelve more caques were despatched to this 'unknown,' who may have been Louvois himself. As to Roger Brulart, Marquis de Puisieux et de Sillery and Governor of Epernay, a joyous companion, if we may credit St. Simon, his appreciation of the local vintage is borne ample testimony to. In 1677 six caques of 'the best' were sent to him by the town council; but by 1691 he must have become used to larger offerings, as in

September a letter was addressed to him begging him to be satisfied with the like amount, as ‘the inhabitants could not manage more,’ and could only promise, with regard to three caques still due, that they would ‘make an effort’ to supply them the following year. Wise in their generation, they sent at the same time ‘twelve bottles of the best wine’ to his intendant, and a similar gift to his secretary; but the following year they were forced to write again that it would be impossible to supply the wine promised unless he obtained a permission to levy it.[443]

The Old Pretender, or, as he is styled in the local records, ‘Jacques Stuart III., roy d’Angleterre,’ arrived at Epernay in September 1712, and was presented with ‘twenty-four bottles of the best;’ whilst the Marquis de Puisieux, who accompanied him, was satisfied with nothing less than a ‘carteau,’ or quarter-cask. And when the latter announced his intention of paying a visit in the autumn of 1719 to Maître Adam Bertin du Rocheret, conseiller du roy and ex-president of the Grenier-à-sel at Epernay, a resolution was passed to offer him wine on his arrival, and to send ‘a hundred *flasks* of the best’ to his château of Sillery. The use of the word ‘flaçons’ clearly implies that the discoveries of Dom Perignon were being acted upon at Epernay, and that the gift in question was one of sparkling wine.



JAMES EDWARD FRANCIS STUART, THE OLD PRETENDER.

In June 1722 the Sieurs Quatresous and Chertemps, despatched to congratulate the marquis's nephew and successor, Louis Philogène Brulart, on his appointment to the governorship of the town and his marriage with Mademoiselle de Souvré, granddaughter of Louvois, took with them a similar offering. At the coronation of Louis XV., in October,

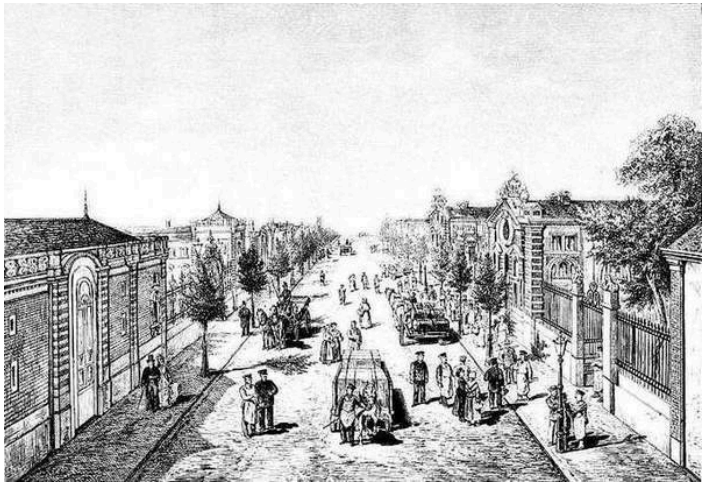
deputies were sent to compliment the Prince de Turenne, representative of his father the Duc de Bouillon, seigneur d'Epernay, and to present him with 'game, trout, and other fish,' and 'a basket of a hundred flasks of the best.' In August 1725 the bourgeois were drawn up under arms, and four dozen bottles were got ready, on the passage through the town of the Duke of Orleans, son of the late Regent, on his way to espouse, as the King's proxy, Marie Leczinska. This was, however, a sad year for the wine-growers, for ten months of incessant rain, beginning in April, not only ruined the at first promising crop entirely, but caused floods which wrought some havoc. The terrible hail-storm of 1730, which devastated the vineyards of Reims, fortunately spared those of Epernay; but a frost in October 1740 destroyed the vintage, and led to a dearness of provisions which pressed even on the most well-to-do.[444]

For the next three-quarters of a century Epernay continued quietly to profit by the yield of 'the slopes laden with vines producing the most delicious wines in Europe,' to quote the expression of Stapart, who in 1749 notes the importance of the trade in wine carried on, not only with Paris, but with foreign countries; though at the same time complaining of the decreasing size of the town, and the fact of vineyards being planted where houses had formerly stood.[445] The only events of importance were from time to time an unusually good or an uncommonly bad crop, or—as the manufacture of *vin mousseux* gradually swallowed up that of still wine—a disastrous *casse*, like the memorable one of 1776, varied by an occasional royal visit or so. By 1780, Max Sutaine notes that a single manufacturer would turn out from five to six thousand bottles of

sparkling Champagne, and exults over the fact that seven years later an enterprising firm risked a *tirage* of fifty thousand, though people at the time regarded this as something prodigious, and wondered where an outlet would be found.[446] Very likely a bottle of this identical *tirage* was 'the excellent *vin mousseux*' with which Arthur Young regaled himself, at a cost of forty sous, on the 7th July of the same year, at that 'very good inn' the Hôtel de Rohan, at Epernay.[447] At this same inn the hapless Louis XVI. stopped to dine on his return from the intercepted flight to Varennes; and when we recall his timid nature, we may fairly surmise that it was Champagne which inspired him, amidst the insults of the mob, to remind the authorities that his ancestor, Henri Quatre, had entered the town in a very different fashion, and by implication to assert that he might yet do the same.[448]

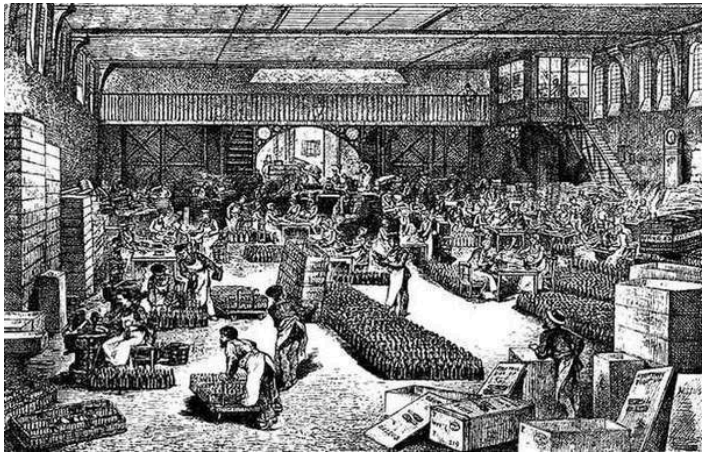
The Emperor Napoleon, the Empress Josephine, the King of Westphalia, and the other members of the Bonaparte dynasty, who from time to time visited Epernay and partook of the hospitality of Jean Remi Moët, showed a healthy appreciation of its vintage. Indeed King Jerome, in giving an order for six thousand bottles *premier cru*, remarked with a strange foresight that he would have taken more, only he was afraid that it would be the Russians after all who would come and drink it. Sure enough the eventful year 1814 witnessed the arrival at Epernay of a host of self-invited guests, all equally appreciative of the merits of Champagne, and gifted with an almost unlimited power of consumption, but entertaining insuperable objections to pay for what they consumed. The Prussians and Russians who came hither in February and March misconducted themselves in a very sad manner, burning and

pillaging houses, insulting and maltreating the inhabitants, requisitioning all the wine they could lay hands on, and drinking in a manner recalling the Bacchic exploits of Gargantua and Pantagruel. The mayor, Jean Remi Moët, moved by the state of affairs, offered the invaders the free run of his cellars rather than that they should pillage those of others, doubtless under the idea that the reputation his house would thus acquire abroad would soon enable him to retrieve the temporary loss—a proviso happily and amply realised. Beyond the facts that Epernay has profited, and continues to profit, by the ever-increasing development of the taste for sparkling wine; that Charles X., Louis Philippe, and Napoleon III. have successively favoured it with their presence, and accepted the *vin d'honneur* offered on such occasions; and that during the war of 1870–1 the town, in common with the rest of the province of Champagne, was occupied by the German invading army, there is nothing more to be said respecting its history.



THE RUE DU COMMERCE (FAUBOURG DE LA FOLIE),

EPERNAY.



THE PACKING-HALL AT MESSRS. MOËT AND CHANDON'S, EPERNAY.

X.

THE CHAMPAGNE ESTABLISHMENTS OF EPERNAY AND PIERRY.

Early records of the Moët family at Reims and Epernay—Jean Remi Moët, the founder of the commerce in Champagne wines—Extracts from old account-books of the Moëts—Jean Remi Moët receives the Emperor Napoleon, the Empress Josephine, and the King of Westphalia—The firm of Moët & Chandon constituted—Their establishment in the Rue du Commerce—The

delivery and washing of new bottles—The numerous vineyards and vendangeoirs of the firm —Their cuvée made in vats of 12,000 gallons—The bottling of the wine—A subterranean city, with miles of streets, cross-roads, open spaces, tramways, and stations—The ancient entrance to these vaults—Tablet commemorative of the visit of Napoleon I.—The original vaults known as Siberia—Scene in the packing-hall—Messrs. Moët & Chandon's large and complete staff—The famous 'Star' brand of the firm—Perrier-Jouët's château, offices, and cellars—Classification of the wine of the house—The establishment of Messrs. Pol Roger & Co.—Their large stock of the fine 1874 vintage—The preparations for the tirage—Their vast fireproof cellier and its temperature—Their lofty and capacious cellars—Pierry becomes a wine-growing district consequent upon Dom Perignon's discovery—Esteem in which the growths of the Clos St. Pierre were held—Cazotte, author of *Le Diable Amoureux*, and guillotined for planning the escape of Louis XVI. from France, a resident at Pierry—His contest with the Abbot of Hautvillers with reference to the abbey tithes of wine—The Château of Pierry —Its owner demands to have it searched to prove that he is not a forestaller of corn—The vineyards and Champagne establishment of Gé-Dufaut & Co.—The reserves of old wines in the cellars of this firm—Honours secured by them at Vienna and Paris.



THOSE magnates of the Champagne trade, Messrs. Moët & Chandon, whose famous 'Star' brand is familiar in every part of the civilised globe, and whose half-score miles of cellars contain as many million bottles of Champagne as there are millions of inhabitants in most of the secondary European States, have their head-quarters at Epernay in a spacious château—in that street of châteaux named the Rue du Commerce, but commonly known as the Faubourg de la Folie—which is approached through handsome iron gates, and has beautiful gardens in the rear extending in the direction of the River Marne. The existing firm dates from the year 1833, but the family of Moët—conjectured to have originally come from the Low Countries—had already been associated with the Champagne wine trade for well-nigh a century previously. If the Moëts came from Holland they must have established themselves in the Champagne at a very early date, for the annals of Reims record that in the fourteenth

century Jehan Moët de Mennemont, *escuier*, held a fief at Attigny from the Archbishop Richard Pique, and that in the following century Jean and Nicolas Moët were *échevins* of the city. A Moët was present in that capacity at the coronation of Charles VII. in 1429, when Joan of Arc stood erect by the principal altar of the cathedral with her sacred banner in her hand; and for having contributed to repulse an attempt on the part of the English to prevent the entrance of the Royal party into the city, the Moëts were subsequently ennobled by the same monarch. A mural tablet in the church of St. Remi records the death of D. G. Moët, Grand Prior, in 1554; and nine years later we find Nicol Moët claiming exemption at Epernay for the payment of *tailles* on the ground of his being a noble.

An old commercial book preserved in the family archives shows that in the year 1743—at the epoch when the rashness of the Duc de Grammont saved the English army under George II. from being cut to pieces at Dettingen—a descendant of the foregoing, one Claude Louis Nicolas Moët, who owned considerable vineyard property in the vicinity of Epernay, decided upon embarking in the wine trade. It is his son, however, Jean Remi Moët, born in 1758, who may be looked upon as the veritable founder of the present commerce in Champagne wines, which, thanks to his efforts, received a wonderful impulse, so that instead of the consumption of the vintages of the Marne being limited as heretofore to the privileged few, it spread all over the civilised world.



JEAN REMI MOËT.

At Messrs. Moët & Chandon's we had the opportunity of inspecting some of the old account-books of the firm, and more particularly those recording the transactions of Jean Remi Moët and his father. The first sales of sparkling wine, on May 23d, 1743, comprised 301 bottles of the vintage of 1741 to Pierre Joly, wine-merchant, *bon des douze chez le Roi*, whatever that may mean, at Paris; 120 bottles to Pierre Gabriel Baudoin, also *bon des douze*, at Paris; and a similar quantity to the Sieur Compoin, keeping the 'hotellerie ditte la pestitte Escurie,' Rue du Port-Maillart, at Nantes in Brittany. The entry specifies that the wine for Nantes is to be left at Choisy-le-Roi, and taken by land to Orleans by the carters of that

town, who are to be found at the Ecu d'Orléans, Porte St. Michel, Paris, the carriage as far as Choisy being 4 livres 10 deniers (about 4 francs) for the two half-baskets, and to Paris 3 livres 15 deniers the basket.

Between 1750 and '60 parcels of wine were despatched to Warsaw, Vienna, Berlin, Königsberg, Dantzig, Stettin, Brussels, and Amsterdam; but one found no mention of any sales to England till the year 1788, when the customers of the firm included 'Milord' Farnham, of London, and Messrs. Felix Calvert & Sylvin, who had a couple of sample-bottles sent to them, for which they were charged five shillings. In the same year Messrs. Carbonnell, Moody, & Walker (predecessors of the well-known existing firm of Carbonnell & Co.) wrote in French for two baskets, of ten dozens each, of *vin de Champagne* 'of good body, not too charged with liqueur, but of excellent taste, and not at all sparkling.' The Chevalier Colebrook, writing from Bath, also requests that 72 bottles of Champagne may be sent to his friend the Hon. John Butler, Molesworth-street, Dublin, 'who, if contented with the wine, will become a good customer, he being rich, keeping a good house, and receiving many amateurs of *vin de Champagne*.' Shortly afterwards the Chevalier himself receives 50 bottles of still wine, vintage 1783. In 1789 120 bottles of Champagne, vintage 1788, are supplied to 'Milord' Findlater, of London; and in 1790 the customers of the house include Power & Michel, of 44 Lamb-street, London, and Manning, of the St. Alban Tavern, the latter of whom is supplied on March 30th with 130 bottles of Champagne at three livres, or two 'schillings,' per bottle; while a month later Mr. Lockart, banker, of 36 Pall Mall, is debited with 360 bottles, vintage

1788, at three shillings.

In this same year M. Moët despatches a traveller to England named Jeanson, and his letters, some two hundred in number, are all preserved in the archives of the house. On the 17th May 1790 he writes from London as follows: 'As yet I have only gone on preparatory and often useless errands. I have distributed samples of which I have no news. Patience is necessary, and I endeavour to provide myself with it. How the taste of this country has changed since ten years ago! Almost everywhere they ask for dry wine, but at the same time require it so vinous and so strong that there is scarcely any other than the wine of Sillery which can satisfy them.... To-morrow I dine five miles from here, at M. Macnamara's. We shall uncork four bottles of our wine, which will probably be all right.' In May 1792 Jean Remi Moët is married, and thenceforward assumes the full management of the house. On December 20 of the year following, when the Reign of Terror was fairly inaugurated, we find the accounts in the ledger opened to this or the other 'citoyen.' The orthodox Republican formula, however, did not long continue, and 'sieur' and 'monsieur' resumed their accustomed places, showing that Jean Remi Moët had no sympathy with the Jacobin faction of the day. In 1805 he became Mayor of Epernay, and between this time and the fall of the Empire received Napoleon several times at his residence, as well as the Empress Josephine and the King of Westphalia. The Emperor, after recapturing Reims from the Allies, came on to Epernay, on which occasion he presented M. Moët with the Cross of the Legion of Honour. In 1830 the latter was arbitrarily dismissed from his mayoralty by Charles X., but was speedily reinstated by Louis Philippe, though he did

not retain his office for long, his advanced age compelling him to retire from active life in the course of 1833. At this epoch the firm, which since 1807 had been known as Moët & Co., was remodelled under the style of Moët & Chandon, the two partners being M. Victor Moët, son of the outgoing partner, and M. P. G. Chandon, the descendant of an old ennobled family of the Mâconnais, who had married M. Jean Remi Moët's eldest daughter. The descendants of these gentlemen are to-day (1880) at the head of the business, the partners being, on the one hand, M. Victor Moët-Romont and M. C. J. V. Auban Moët-Romont; and on the other, MM. Paul and Raoul Chandon de Briailles.

Facing Messrs. Moët & Chandon's offices at Epernay is a range of comparatively new buildings, with its white façade ornamented with the well-known monogram M. & C., surmounted by the familiar star. It is here that the business of blending and bottling the wine is carried on. Passing through the arched gateway, access is obtained to a spacious courtyard, where carts laden with bottles are being expeditiously lightened of their fragile contents by the busy hands of numerous workmen. Another gateway on the left leads into the spacious bottle-washing room, which from the middle of May until the middle of July presents a scene of extraordinary animation. Bottle-washing apparatus, supplied by a steam-engine with 20,000 gallons of water per diem, are ranged in fifteen rows down the entire length of this hall, and nearly 200 women strive to excel each other in diligence and celerity in their management, a practised hand washing from 900 to 1000 bottles in the course of the day. To the right of this *salle de rinçage*, as it is styled, bottles are stacked in their tens of thousands, and lads furnished with barrows,

known as *diables*, hurry to and fro, conveying these to the washers, or removing the clean bottles to the adjacent courtyard, where they are allowed to drain prior to being taken to the *salle de tirage* or bottling-room.

Before, however, the washing of bottles on this gigantic scale commences, the 'marrying' or blending of the wine is accomplished in a vast apartment, 250 feet in length and 100 feet broad, during the early spring. The casks of newly-vintaged wine, which have been stowed away during the winter months in the extensive range of cellars hewn out of the chalk underlying Epernay, where they have slowly fermented, are mixed together in due proportion in huge vats, each holding upwards of 12,000 gallons. Some of this wine is the growth of Messrs. Moët & Chandon's own vineyards, of which they possess as many as 900 acres (giving constant employment to 800 labourers and vinedressers) at Ay, Avenay, Bouzy, Cramant, Champillon, Chouilly, Dizy, Epernay, Grauves, Hautvillers, Le Mesnil, Moussy, Pierry, Saran, St. Martin, Verzy, and Verzenay, and the average annual cost of cultivating which is about £40 per acre. At Ay the firm own 210 acres of vineyards; at Cramant and Chouilly, nearly 180 acres; at Verzy and Verzenay, 120 acres; at Pierry and Grauves, upwards of 100 acres; at Hautvillers, 90 acres; at Le Mesnil, 80 acres; at Epernay, nearly 60 acres; and at Bouzy, 55 acres. Messrs. Moët & Chandon, moreover, possess vendangeoirs, or pressing-houses, at Ay, Bouzy, Cramant, Epernay, Hautvillers, Le Mesnil, Pierry, Saran, and Verzenay, in which the large number of 40 presses are installed. At these vendangeoirs no less than 5450 pièces of fine white wine, sufficient for 1,360,000 bottles of Champagne, are annually made—that is,

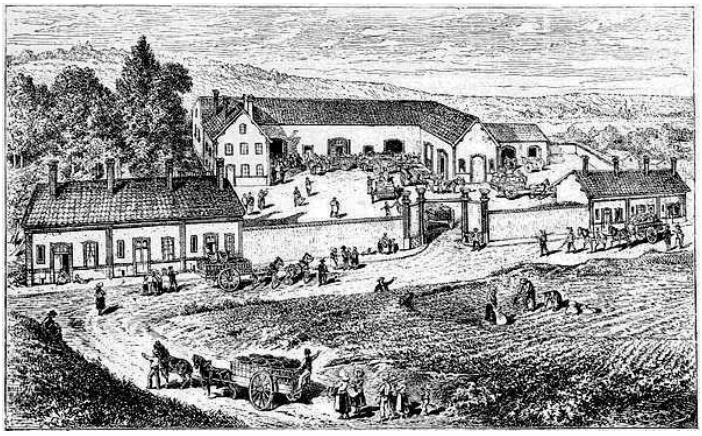
1200 pièces at Ay, 1100 at Cramant and Saran, 800 at Verzy and Verzenay, and smaller quantities at the remaining establishments. All these establishments have their celliers and their cellars, together with cottages for the accommodation of the numerous vinedressers in the employment of the firm.



WASHING BOTTLES AT MESSRS. MOËT AND CHANDON'S, EPERNAY.

Extensive as are the vineyards owned by Messrs. Moët & Chandon, the yield from them is utterly inadequate to the enormous demand which the great Epernay firm are annually called upon to supply, and large purchases have to be made by their agents from the growers throughout the Champagne. The wine thus secured, as well as that grown by the firm, is duly mixed together in such proportions as will insure lightness with the requisite vinosity, and fragrance combined with effervescence, a thorough amalgamation being effected by stirring up the wine with long poles provided with fan-shaped ends. If the vintage be indifferent in quality, the firm have scores

of huge tuns filled with the yield of more favoured seasons to fall back upon to insure any deficiencies of character and flavour being supplied.



MESSRS. MOËT AND CHANDON'S VENDANGEOIR AT BOUZY.

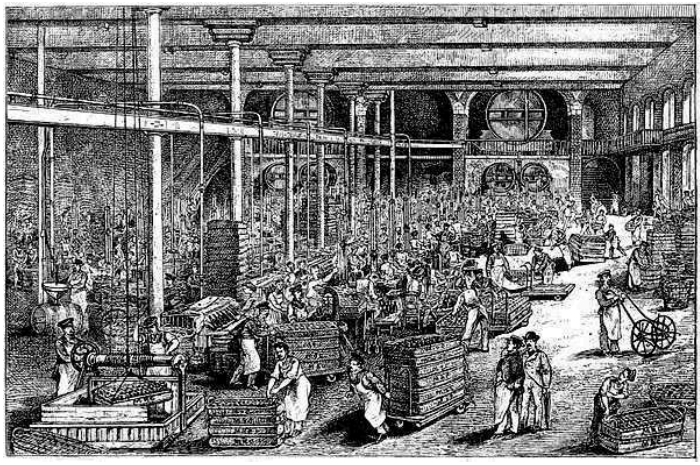
The casks of wine to be blended are raised from the cellars, half a dozen at a time, by means of a lift provided with an endless chain, and worked by the steam-engine of which we have already spoken. They are emptied, through traps in the floor of the room above, into the huge vats which, standing upon a raised platform, reach almost to the ceiling. From these vats the fluid is allowed to flow through hose into rows of casks stationed below. Before being bottled the wine reposes for a certain time; is next duly racked and again blended; and is eventually conveyed through silver-plated pipes into oblong reservoirs, each fitted with a dozen syphon-taps, so arranged that directly the bottle slipped on to one of them becomes full the wine ceases to flow.

Upwards of 200 workpeople are employed in the

salle de tirage at Messrs. Moët & Chandon's, which, while the operation of bottling is going on, presents a scene of bewildering activity. Men and lads are gathered round the syphon-taps, briskly removing the bottles as they become filled, and supplanting them by empty ones. Other lads hasten to transport the filled bottles on trucks to the corkers, whose so-called 'guillotine' machines send the corks home with a sudden thud. The corks being secured with *agrafes*, the bottles are placed in large flat baskets called *manettes*, and wheeled away on trucks, the quarts being deposited in the cellars by means of lifts, while the pints slide down an inclined plane by the aid of an endless chain, which raises the trucks with the empty baskets at the same time the full ones make their descent into the cellars. What with the incessant thud of the corking-machines, the continual rolling of iron-wheeled trucks over the concrete floor, the rattling and creaking of the machinery working the lifts, the occasional sharp report of a bursting bottle, and the loudly-shouted orders of the foremen, who display the national partiality for making a noise to perfection, the din becomes at times all but unbearable. The number of bottles filled in the course of the day naturally varies, still Messrs. Moët & Chandon reckon that during the month of June a daily average of 100,000 are taken in the morning from the stacks in the *salle de rinçage*, washed, dried, filled, corked, wired, lowered into the cellars, and carefully arranged in symmetrical order. This represents a total of two and a half million bottles during that month alone.

The bottles on being lowered into the cellars, either by means of the incline or the lifts, are placed in a horizontal position, and, with their uppermost side daubed with white chalk, are stacked in layers from

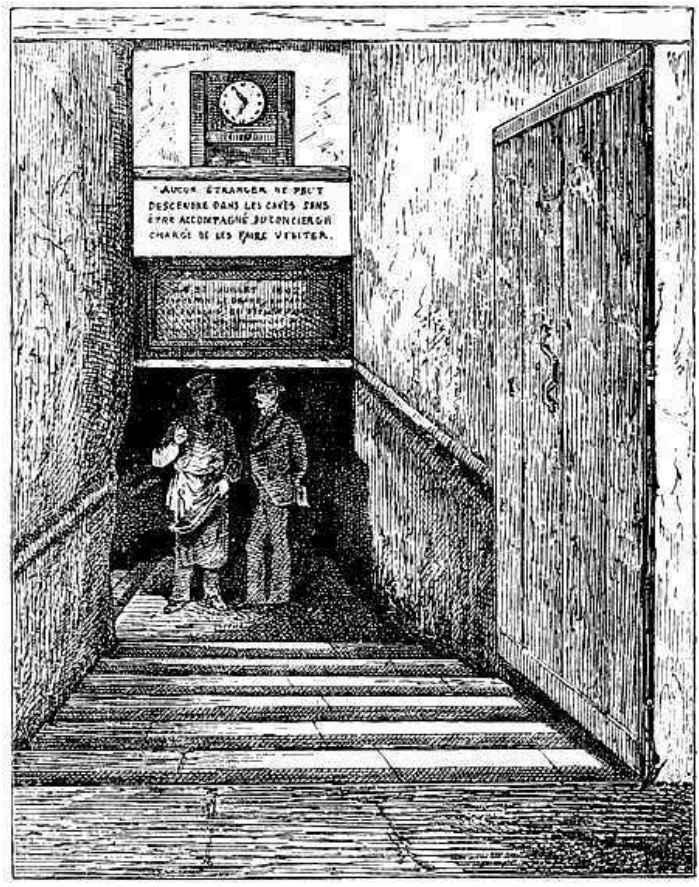
two to half a dozen bottles deep, with narrow oak laths between. The stacks are usually about 6 or 7 feet high, and 100 feet and upwards in length. Whilst the wine is thus reposing in a temperature of about 55° Fahrenheit, fermentation sets in, and the ensuing month is one of much anxiety. Thanks, however, to the care bestowed, Messrs. Moët & Chandon's annual loss from bottles bursting rarely exceeds three per cent, though fifteen was once regarded as a respectable and satisfactory average. The broken glass is a perquisite of the workmen, the money arising from its sale, which at the last distribution amounted to no less than 20,000 francs, being divided amongst them every couple of years.



BOTTLING CHAMPAGNE AT MESSRS. MOËT AND CHANDON'S, EPERNAY.

The usual entrance to Messrs. Moët & Chandon's Epernay cellars—which, burrowed out in all directions, are of the aggregate length of nearly seven miles, and have usually between 10,000,000 and 12,000,000 bottles and 20,000 casks of wine

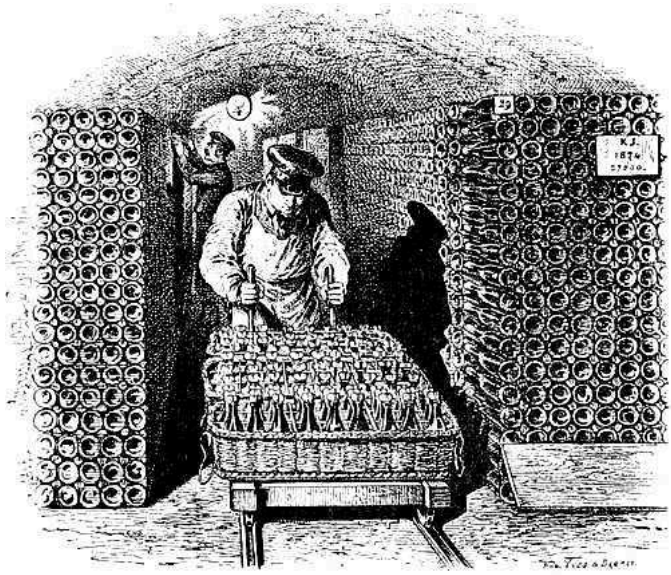
stored therein—is through a wide and imposing portal, and down a long and broad flight of steps. It is, however, by the ancient and less imposing entrance, through which more than one crowned head has condescended to pass, that we set forth on our lengthened tour through these intricate underground galleries—this subterranean city, with its miles of streets, cross-roads, open spaces, tramways, and stations devoted solely to Champagne. A gilt inscription on a black-marble tablet testifies that 'on the 26th July 1807, Napoleon the Great, Emperor of the French, King of Italy, and Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, honoured commerce by visiting the cellars of Jean Remi Moët, Mayor of Epernay, President of the Canton, and Member of the General Council of the Department,' within three weeks of the signature of the treaty of Tilsit. Passing down the flight of steep slippery steps traversed by the victor of Eylau and Jena, access is gained to the upper range of vaults, brilliantly illuminated by the glare of gas, or dimly lighted by the flickering flame of tallow-candles, upwards of 60,000 lb. of which are annually consumed. Here group after group of the small army of 350 workmen employed in these subterranean galleries are encountered, engaged in the process of transforming the *vin brut* into Champagne. At Messrs. Moët & Chandon's, the all-important operation of liqueuring the wine is effected by aid of machines of the latest construction, which regulate the quantity administered to the utmost nicety. The corks are branded by being pressed against steel dies heated by gas by women, who can turn out 3000 per day apiece, the quantity of string used to secure them amounting to nearly ten tons in the course of the year.



TABLET COMMEMORATIVE OF THE VISIT OF NAPOLEON I.

There is another and a lower depth of cellars to be explored, to which access is gained by trap-holes in the floor—through which the barrels and baskets of wine are raised and lowered—and by flights of steps. From the foot of the latter there extends an endless vista of lofty and spacious passages hewn out of the chalk, the walls of which, smooth as finished masonry, are lined with thousands of casks of raw wine, varied at intervals by gigantic vats. Miles of

long, dark-brown, dampish-looking galleries stretch away to the right and left, devoid of the picturesque festoons of fungi which decorate the London Dock vaults, yet exhibiting a sufficient degree of mouldiness to give them an air of respectable antiquity. These multitudinous galleries, lit up by petroleum-lamps, are mostly lined with wine in bottles stacked in compact masses to a height of six or seven feet, only room enough for a single person to pass being left. Millions of bottles are thus arranged, the majority on their side, in huge piles, with tablets hung up against each stack to note its age and quality; and the rest, which are undergoing daily evolutions at the hands of the twister, in racks at various angles of inclination. These cellars contain nearly 11,000 racks, and as many as 600,000 bottles are commonly twisted here daily.



The way runs on between regiments of bottles of the same size and shape, save where at intervals pints

take the place of quarts; and the visitor, gazing into the black depths of the transverse passages to the right and left, becomes conscious of a feeling that if his guide were suddenly to desert him, he would feel as hopelessly lost as in the catacombs of Rome. There are two galleries, each 650 feet in length, containing about 650,000 bottles, and connected by 32 transverse galleries, with an aggregate length of 4000 feet, in which nearly 1,500,000 bottles are stored. There are, further, eight galleries, each 500 feet in length, and proportionably stocked; also the extensive new vaults, excavated some five or six years back, in the rear of the then existing cellarage, and a considerable number of smaller vaults. The different depths and varying degrees of moisture afford a choice of temperature of which the experienced owners know how to take advantage. The original vaults, wherein more than a century ago the first bottles of Champagne made by the infant firm were stowed away, bear the name of Siberia, on account of their exceeding coldness. This section consists of several roughly-excavated low winding galleries, resembling natural caverns, and affording a striking contrast to the broad, lofty, and regular-shaped corridors of more recent date.

When the proper period arrives for the bottles to emerge once more into the upper air, they are conveyed to the packing-room, a spacious hall 180 feet long and 60 feet broad. In front of its three large double doors wagons are drawn up ready to receive their loads. The 70 men and women employed here easily foil, label, wrap, and pack up some 10,000 bottles a day. Cases and baskets are stacked in different parts of this vast hall, at one end of which numerous trusses of straw used in the packing are piled. Seated at tables ranged along one side of the

apartment women are busily occupied in pasting on labels or encasing the necks of bottles in gold or silver foil, whilst elsewhere men, seated on three-legged stools in front of smoking caldrons of molten sealing-wax of a deep green hue, are coating the necks of other bottles by plunging them into the boiling fluid. When labelled and decorated with either wax or foil, the bottles pass on to other women, who swathe them in pink tissue-paper and set them aside for the packers, by whom, after being deftly wrapped round with straw, they are consigned to baskets or cases, to secure which last no less than 10,000 lb. of nails are annually used. England and Russia are partial to gold foil, pink paper, and wooden cases holding a dozen or a couple of dozen bottles of the exhilarating fluid, whereas other nations prefer waxed necks, disdain pink paper, and insist on being supplied in wicker baskets containing fifty bottles each.

Some idea of the complex character of so vast an establishment as that of Messrs. Moët & Chandon may be gathered from a mere enumeration of their staff, which, in addition to twenty clerks and 350 cellarmen proper, includes numerous agrafe-makers and corkcutters, packers and carters, wheelwrights and saddlers, carpenters, masons, slaters and tilers, tinmen, firemen, needlewomen, &c., while the inventory of objects used by this formidable array of workpeople comprises no fewer than 1500 distinct heads. A medical man attached to the establishment gives gratuitous advice to all those employed, and a chemist dispenses drugs and medicines without charge. While suffering from illness the men receive half-pay, but should they be laid up by an accident met with in the course of their work full salary is invariably awarded to them. As may be supposed, so

vast an establishment as this is not without a provision for those past work, and all the old hands receive liberal pensions from the firm upon retiring.

It is needless to particularise Messrs. Moët & Chandon's wines, which are familiar to all drinkers of Champagne. Still it may be mentioned that the great Epernay firm, with the view of meeting the requirements of the time, have lately commenced shipping a high-class *vin brut*, or natural Champagne, possessing great vinosity, combined with remarkable delicacy of flavour. To this fine dry wine the name of 'Brut Impérial' has been given by the house. Moët & Chandon's famous 'Star' brand is known in all societies, figures equally at clubs and mess-tables, at garden-parties and picnics, dinners and *soirées*, and has its place in hotel *cartes* all over the world. One of the best proofs of the wine's universal popularity is found in the circumstance that as many as a thousand visitors from all parts of the world come annually to Epernay and make the tour of Messrs. Moët & Chandon's spacious cellars.

A little beyond Messrs. Moët & Chandon's, in the broad Rue du Commerce, we encounter a heavy, ornate, pretentious-looking château, the residence of the late M. Perrier-Jouët, presenting a striking contrast to the almost mean-looking premises opposite, where the business of the firm is carried on. On the left-hand side of a courtyard surrounded by low buildings, which serve as celliers, store-houses, packing-rooms, and the like, are the offices; and from an inner courtyard, where piles of bottles are stacked under open sheds, the cellars themselves are reached. Previous to descending into these we passed through the various buildings, in one of which a party of men were engaged in disgorging

and preparing wine for shipment. In another we noticed one of those heavy beam presses for pressing the grapes which the more intelligent manufacturers regard as obsolete, while in a third was the cuvée vat, holding no more than 2200 gallons. In making their cuvée the firm commonly mix one part of old wine to three parts of new. An indifferent vintage, however, necessitates the admixture of a larger proportion of the older growth. The cellars, like all the more ancient ones at Epernay, are somewhat straggling and irregular; still they are remarkably cool, and on the lower floor remarkably damp as well. This, however, would appear to be no disadvantage, as the breakage in them is calculated never to exceed 2½ per cent.

The firm have no less than five qualities of wine, and at one of the recent Champagne competitions at London, where the experts engaged had no means of identifying the brands submitted to their judgment, Messrs. Perrier-Jouët's First Quality got classed below a cheaper wine of their neighbours, Messrs. Pol Roger & Co., and very considerably below the Extra Sec of Messrs. Périnet et fils, and inferior even to a wine of De Venoge's, the great Epernay manufacturer of common-class Champagne.

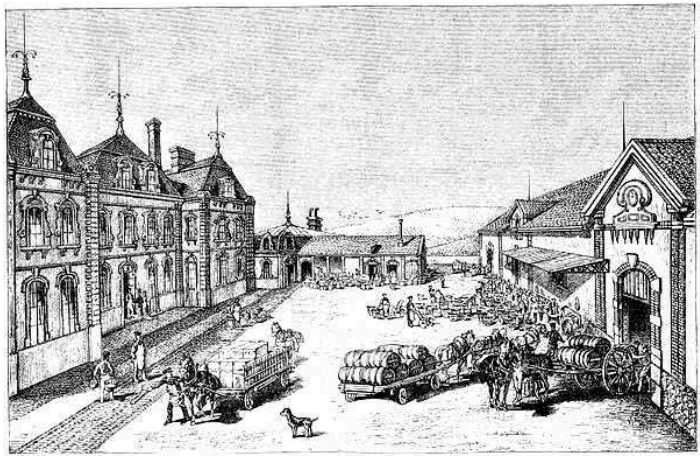
Champagne establishments, combined with the handsome residences of the manufacturers, line both sides of the long imposing Rue du Commerce at Epernay. On the left hand is a succession of fine châteaux, commencing with one belonging to M. Auban Moët, whose terraced gardens overlook the valley of the Marne, and command views of the vine-clad heights of Cumières, Hautvillers, Ay, and Mareuil, and the more distant slopes of Ambonnay and Bouzy; while on the other side of the famous

Epernay thoroughfare we encounter beyond the establishments of Messrs. Moët & Chandon and Perrier-Jouët the ornate monumental façade which the firm of Piper & Co.—of whom Messrs. Kunkelmann & Co. are to-day the successors—raised some years since above their extensive cellars. In a side street at the farther end of the Rue du Commerce stands a château of red brick, overlooking on the one side an extensive pleasure-garden, and on the other a spacious courtyard, bounded by celliers, stables, and bottle-sheds, all of modern construction and on a most extensive scale. These form the establishment of Messrs. Pol Roger & Co., settled for many years at Epernay, and known throughout the Champagne for their large purchases at the epoch of the vintage. From the knowledge they possess of the best crus, and their relations with the leading vineyard proprietors, they are enabled whenever the wine is good to acquire large stocks of it. Having bottled a considerable quantity of the fine wine of 1874, they resolved to profit by the exceptional quality of this vintage to commence shipping Champagne to England, where their agents, Messrs. Reuss, Lauteren, & Co., have successfully introduced the new brand.

Passing through a large open gateway, we enter the vast courtyard of the establishment, which, with arriving and departing carts—the first loaded with wine in cask or with new bottles, and the others with cases of Champagne—presents rather an animated scene. Under a roof projecting from the wall of the vast cellier on the right hand a tribe of ‘Sparnaciennes’—as the feminine inhabitants of Epernay are termed—are occupied in washing bottles in readiness for the coming tirage. The surrounding buildings, most substantially constructed, are not

destitute of architectural pretensions.

The extensive cellier, the area of which is 23,589 square feet, is understood to be the largest single construction of the kind in the Champagne district. Built entirely of iron, stone, and brick, its framework is a perfect marvel of lightness. The roof, consisting of rows of brick arches, is covered above with a layer of Portland cement, in order to keep it cool in summer and protect it against the winter cold, two most desirable objects in connection with the manipulation of Champagne. Here an endless chain of a new pattern enables wine in bottle to be lowered and raised with great rapidity to or from the cellars beneath—lofty and capacious excavations of two stories, the lower one of which is reached by a flight of no less than 170 steps.



COURTYARD OF MESSRS. POL ROGER AND CO.'S ESTABLISHMENT AT EPERNAY.

Less than a couple of miles southward of Epernay, on the high-road to Troyes, is the village of Pierry, which, unlike most of the Champagne villages, is one

of those happy spots with little or no history. Up to the close of the seventeenth century it was an insignificant hamlet; but at that epoch—when Dom Perignon's discovery gave such an impetus to the viticultural industry of the Marne—the waste land lying around it was broken up and planted with vines, and a number of rich strangers, chiefly from Epernay, built themselves houses and vendangeoirs here, and contributed to the erection of the church. The Benedictines of St.-Pierre-aux-Monts at Châlons, who continued to be the titular seigneurs of Pierry up to the period of the Revolution, were not behindhand in attention to their vines, and during the early part of the eighteenth century the wine vintaged in their Clos St. Pierre, under the fostering care of Brother Jean Oudart—whose renown almost equalled that of Perignon himself—was very highly esteemed.[449]

During the eighteenth century Pierry continued to be a favourite residence of well-to-do landowners,[450] and was further embellished by the construction of numerous handsome châteaux, the most interesting, from a historic point of view, being that formerly belonging to Cazotte.[451] It was here that the ex-Commissary General of the navy composed the greater part of his works, and elaborated that futile scheme for the escape of Louis XVI. after Varennes, which was to conduct its author to the scaffold.[452]

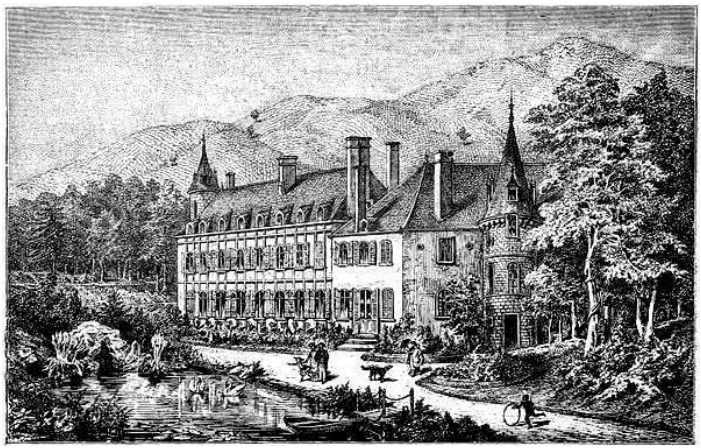
The visionary dreamer, to whom we owe the *Diable Amoureux*, appears at Pierry in the triple character of a practical viticulturist, a village Hampden withstanding with dauntless breast that little tyrant of the surrounding vineyards—the Abbot of Hautvillers,[453] and a local legislator put forward in the proprietarial interest at the outbreak of that

Revolution[454] which he appears to have foreseen, if not to have directly prophesied, as he has been credited with doing.[455]

Amongst the most imposing of the remaining Pierry châteaux is the one situate in that part of the village known as Corrigot, and now in the occupation of Messrs. Gé-Dufaut & Co. Its grandiose aspect, various courts, charming garden, fine trees, and clear lake justify this firm in adopting, in combination with an anchor, the title Château de Pierry as the brand of their wine. Prior to the Revolution the château belonged to M. de Papillon de Sannois, a fermier-général of that period. The municipal records of Pierry contain a petition addressed by him to the authorities in 1791, at a time when a panic prevailed respecting the forestallers of corn, begging them to institute a formal search throughout his residence, in order to give the lie to the rumours accusing him of having bought up and stored away a considerable quantity of wheat. The municipality accepted his invitation, and the result was a certificate to the effect that the total amount of wheat and oats stored there only represented three months' consumption for the household.

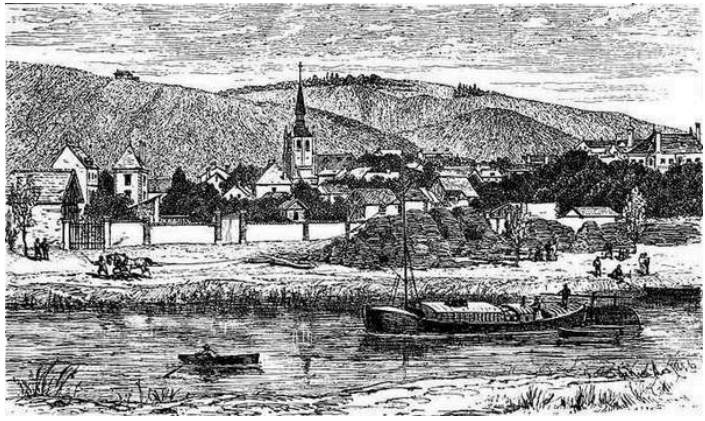
Messrs. Gé-Dufaut & Co. are the owners of vineyards both in Pierry and the neighbouring parts, and for upwards of thirty years the firm have been engaged in preparing and shipping Champagnes. Their cellars, excavated in the mingled stone, chalk, and earth which form the prevailing soil of the district, extend beneath the vineyards belonging to the firm, and are walled and vaulted throughout. The circumstance of their being on one level, slightly below the celliers of the establishment, is a great convenience as regards the various manipulations which the wine has to

undergo. Considerable reserves of old wines of the best years are stored in these vaults. The cultivation of the vineyards owned by the firm, and the pressing, maturing, and general cellar management of their wines are under the personal superintendence of the various partners, with a highly satisfactory result, as is proved by the first-class medal secured by the firm at the Vienna Exhibition of 1873, and the gold medal awarded to them at the Paris Exhibition of 1878. Messrs. Gé-Dufaut & Co. ship their wines to Europe, America, and India, and more especially to England, where their dry, natural, and unalcoholised Champagne has acquired a deserved reputation. The firm, moreover, are the officially appointed furnishers of Champagne to the Courts of Italy and Spain.



CHÂTEAU OF PIERRY, THE PROPERTY OF MESSRS. GÉ-DUFAUT AND CO.





VIEW OF AY FROM THE BANKS OF THE MARNE CANAL.

XI.
SOME CHAMPAGNE ESTABLISHMENTS AT AY AND

MAREUIL.

The *bourgade* of Ay and its eighteenth-century château—Gambling propensities of a former owner, Balthazar Constance Dangé-Dorçay—Appreciation of the Ay vintage by Sigismund of Bohemia, Leo X., Charles V., Francis I., and Henry VIII.—Bertin du Rocheret celebrates this partiality in triolets—Estimation of the Ay wine in the reigns of Charles IX. and Henri III.—Is a favoured drink with the leaders of the League, and with Henri IV., Catherine de Medicis, and the courtiers of that epoch—The 'Vendangeoir d'Henri Quatre' at Ay—The King's pride in his title of Seigneur d'Ay and Gonesse—Dominicus Baudius punningly suggests that the 'Vin d'Ay' should be called 'Vinum Dei'—The merits of the wine sung by poets and extolled by wits—The Ay wine in its palmy days evidently not sparkling—Arthur Young's visit to Ay in 1787—The establishment of Deutz & Geldermann—Drawing off the cuvée there—Mode of excavating cellars in the Champagne—The firm's new cellars, vineyards, and vendangeoir—M. Duminy's cellars and wines—The house founded in 1814—The new model Duminy establishment—Picturesque old house at Ay—Messrs. Pfungst Frères & Co.'s cellars—Their finely-matured dry Champagnes—The old church of Ay and its numerous decorations of grapes and vine-leaves—The sculptured figure above the Renaissance doorway—The Montebello establishment at Mareuil—The château formerly the property of the Dukes of Orleans—A titled Champagne firm—The brilliant career of Marshal Lannes—A promenade through the Montebello establishment—The press-house, the cuvée-vat, the packing-room, the offices, and the cellars—Portraits and relics at the château—The establishment of Bruch-Foucher & Co.—The

handsome carved gigantic cuvée-tun—The cellars and their lofty shafts—The wines of the firm.



FIGURE ABOVE THE DOORWAY OF AY CHURCH.

THE historic *bourgade* of Ay is within a short walk of the station on the line of railway connecting Epernay with Reims. The road lies across the light bridge spanning the Marne canal, the tall trees fringing which hide for a time the clustering houses; still we catch sight of the steeple of the antique church, relieved by a background of vine-covered slopes, and of an eighteenth-century château rising above a mass of foliage. Perched half-way up the slope, covered with 'golden plants,' which rises in the rear of the village, the château, with its long façade of windows,

commands the valley of the Marne for miles; and from the stately-terraced walk, planted with ancient lime-trees, geometrically clipped in the fashion of the last century, a splendid view of the distant vineyards of Avize, Cramant, Epernay, and Chouilly is obtained. The château formed one of a quartette of seignorial residences which, at the commencement of the present century, belonged to Balthazar Constance Dangé-Dorçay, whose ancestors had been lords of Chouilly under the *ancien régime*. Dorçay had inherited from an aunt the châteaux of Ay, Mareuil, Boursault, and Chouilly, together with a large patrimony in land and money; but a mania for gambling brought him to utter ruin, and he dispossessed himself of money, lands, and châteaux in succession, and was reduced, in his old age, to earn a meagre pittance as a violin-player at the Paris Opera-house. The old château of Boursault, which still exists contiguous to the stately edifice raised by Madame Clicquot on the summit of the hill, was risked and lost on a single game at cards by this pertinacious gamester, whose pressing pecuniary difficulties compelled him to sell the remaining châteaux one by one. That of Ay was purchased by M. Froc de la Boulaye, and by him bequeathed to his cousin the Count de Mareuil, whose son is to-day a partner in the Champagne house of Ayala & Co.

The wine of Ay, from an early date, has found equal favour in the eyes of poets and princes. Eustache Deschamps sang its praises in the fourteenth century, and was echoed a hundred years later by the anonymous author of the *Eglogue sur le Retour de Bacchus*.[456] Sigismund of Bohemia, the betrayer of John Huss, on visiting France in 1410, desired to pass through Ay in order to taste the wine at the place of its production.[457] Leo X., Charles V.,

Francis III., and our own Henry VIII., each had a house in or near Ay; 'for amongst all the great affairs of state which these princes had to unravel, supplying themselves with this vintage was not the least of their cares.'[458] Malicious tongues have asserted that they were somewhat suspicious of the honesty of the wine-growers of the district, and, in order to secure a genuine article, deemed it needful to have a commissioner or agent resident on the spot, to superintend the making of the wine set apart for their own consumption.[459] Tradition still points out, on the right of the road from Dizy to Ay, a vineyard called Le Léon, as the one whence the Pope derived his wine, though no traces remain of the vendangeoir built by the Emperor in a coppice above Ay during the siege of Epernay in 1544, and still standing in 1727.[460] The president Bertin du Rocheret has celebrated the partiality of a couple of these potentates for the wine of Ay in some triolets addressed to M. de Senécé, and published in the *Mercure* in 1728:

'Ay produces the best wine—
I call the world to witness this;
Though you may for Reims opine,
Ay produces the best wine.
It ranks the first, and the most fine
St. Evremond has said it is.
Ay produces the best wine—
I call the world to witness this.

Charles the Fifth was well aware
Of this—far better than his friend
Adrian in the papal chair;
Charles the Fifth was well aware
Of this, and so, to get his share,
Sought in France his days to end.

Charles the Fifth was well aware
Of this—far better than his friend.

Lest some fraud the juice should mix,
And his table thus disgrace,
He would his own vintage fix,
Lest some fraud the juice should mix.
Leo, fearing the like tricks,
Bought in Ay a pressing-place,
Lest some fraud the juice should mix,
And his table thus disgrace.'[461]

The wine of Ay ranked at the court of Charles IX. as 'a very pleasant and noble wine;'[462] and even that bigoted uprooter of vines and heresy had a vendangeoir in this stronghold of Protestantism,[463] which the Catholics of the Champagne marched against, singing—

'Parpaillot d'Ay,
T'es bien misérable,
T'as quitté ton Di
Pour servir le diable;
Tu n'auras ni chien, ni chat,
Pour te chanter Libera,
Et tu mourras mau-chrétien,
Toi qu'a maudit Saint Trézain.'[464]



HENRI III.
(From a painting of the period).

In the reign of Henri III. the wines of Ay—'claret and yellowish, subtile, fine, and in taste very pleasing to the palate, ... yet therewithal such wines as the Greeks call Oligophora, and as will not admit the mixture of much water'[465]—were 'eagerly sought after for the use of kings, princes, and great lords.'[466] At a time when the bulk of the vintage of

Burgundy was denounced as rough, sour, and harsh; and that of Bordeaux stigmatised as thick and black; and when good and bad years were allowed to have a considerable influence upon the growths of the Isle of France, the Orleannais, and Anjou, it was admitted that 'the wines of Ay do, for the most part, hold the first and principal place, ... and are, in all good and evil years, found better than any others.'[467] The kings and princes of the day made the wines of Ay their ordinary drink.[468] They flowed freely in the scandalous orgies with which the French Heliogabalus and his *mignons* alternated their pious flagellations and solemn processions, and mantled in the beakers over which the chiefs of the League sat in dark and solemn conclave; they were quaffed by the Béarnais to the bright eyes of the fair De Saulve, and cheered the nightly vigils of Catherine de Medicis and Ruggieri; they sharpened the biting wit of Chicot, and spurred the plotting spirit of Francis of Anjou. Guise and Crillon, Joyeuse and D'Epernon, Mayenne and D'Aubigné made common cause in recognising their merits; Quelus and Maugiron may have quaffed a goblet before setting forth on their fatal journey to the Barrière Saint Antoine; and a cup, filled by the fair hands of the Duchess de Montpensier, may have fired the brain and nerved the arm of the regicide Jacques Clément.



OLD HOUSE AT AY, KNOWN AS THE VENDANGEOIR OF HENRI QUATRE.

Henri Quatre boasted the merits of his vineyard at Prepaton, near Vendôme, when he was only King of Navarre,[469] and delighted in the wine of Arbois.[470] At Ay, within a few yards of the church, there is a quaint old timber house traditionally known as the 'vendangeoir d'Henri Quatre,' with obliterated carved escutcheons on the pillars of its doorway. In this dilapidated yet interesting structure we have a mute but certain testimony to the King's appreciation of the wine of Ay, if not a confirmation of the truth of the assertion that Henri was as proud of his title of Seigneur d'Ay as of that of King of France.[471] Giving an audience to the Spanish ambassador, and irritated at the long list of titles appended by the punctilious hidalgo to his royal master's name, he

exclaimed: 'You will say to his Highness Philip, King of Spain and the Indies, Castille, Leon, Arragon, Murcia, and the Balearic Isles, that Henri, Sieur of Ay and of Gonesse ...,' being the places producing the best wine and the whitest bread in France.[472] When encamped at Damery, during the siege of Epernay, this favourite beverage, and the smiles of the fair Anne Dudey, Présidente du Puy, helped to relieve the tedium of campaigning; for, as Bertin du Rocheret has sung,

'Our great Henry, king benign,
With it cheered his "belle hôtesse."
When at Damery he'd dine,
Our great Henry, king benign,
Chose it for his favourite wine;
And for bread, that of Gonesse
Our great Henry, king benign,
With it cheered his "belle hôtesse."'[473]

With the vintage of Ay in such universal esteem, it is scarcely to be wondered at that Dominicus Baudius, professor of eloquence at the University of Leyden and historiographer to the States of the Netherlands, should, in the fulness of his admiration, have declared to his friend the Président du Thou that instead of *vin d'Ay* it ought to be called *vinum Dei*.[474]

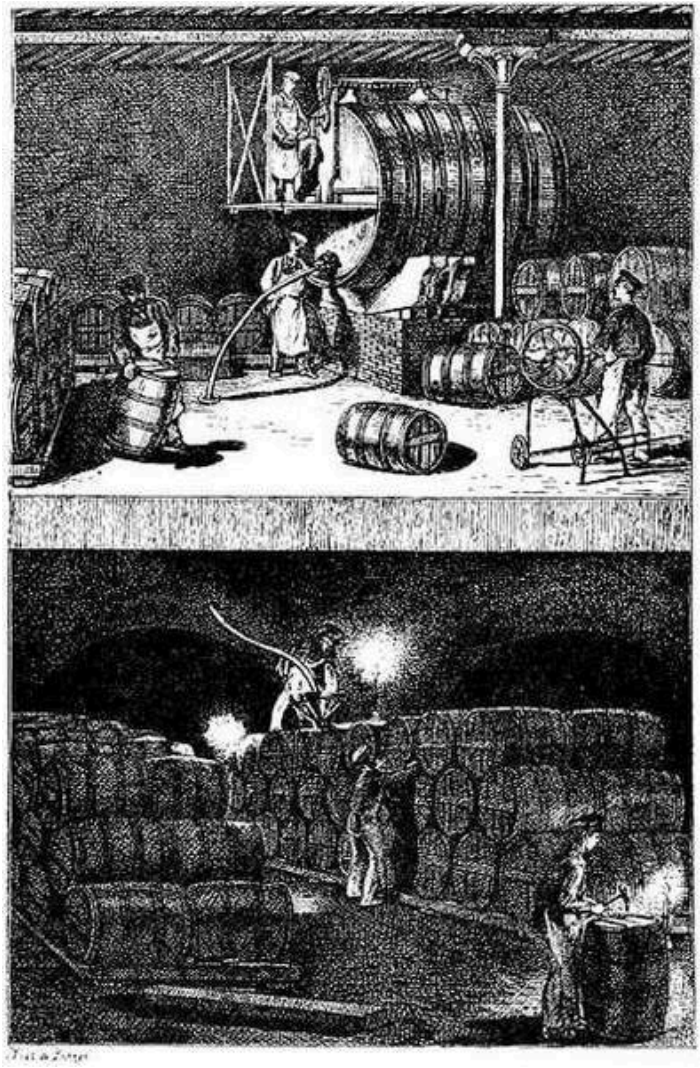
Olivier de Serres, the French Tusser, praises this divine liquor.[475] The anonymous author of the *Hercule Guepin*, a poem penned at the commencement of the seventeenth century in honour of the wine of Orleans, is forced to acknowledge the merits of that of Ay;[476] and that indefatigable commentator, the Abbé de Marolles, in a note to his edition of Martial, classes the growths of Ay, Avenay,

and Epernay amongst the best that France produced. 'Vive le bon vin d'Ay!' exclaims Guy Patin enthusiastically; and that strange compound of the wit and the philosopher, St. Evremond, has extolled its qualities in prose and verse.[477] 'If you ask me which wine of all others I prefer,' he writes from London to the Count d'Olonne, about 1671, 'without yielding to tastes introduced by people of sham daintiness, I will answer that good wine of Ay is the most natural of all wines, the most healthy, the best purified from all earth smack; of a most exquisite charm, through the peach flavour which is peculiar to it; and is, in my opinion, the finest of all flavours.'[478]

It is improbable that the wine of Ay of Francis I., or of Henri Quatre, was *mousseux*, for had it been so history would have mentioned it. In good years the still wine of Ay has a bouquet and perfume sufficient to account for its ancient reputation. Neither was the wine St. Evremond preferred sparkling, though his reference to the taste introduced by sham *gourmets* points probably to the custom of drinking the wine before its fermentation was completed, or else to the practice of icing it. When once, however, the introduction of *vin mousseux* added a new charm to the pleasures of the table, the poets who sang the praises of the foaming nectar seem one and all to have celebrated it as the 'pétillant Ay,' and to have chosen, perhaps for euphonistic reasons, that spot as its birthplace.[479] The material results were equally satisfactory; for Arthur Young mentions that when, on July 8, 1787, he visited 'Ay, a village not far out on the road to Reims very famous for its wines,' he was provided with a letter for M. Lasnier, who had 60,000 bottles in his cellar, whilst M. Dorsé had from 30,000 to 40,000.[480]

A century ago the foregoing were no doubt considered large stocks, but to-day the very smallest of the Ay firms would think itself poorly provided if its cellars contained under quadruple this quantity. The largest Champagne establishment at Ay is that of Messrs. Deutz & Geldermann, whose extra dry 'Gold Lack' and 'Cabinet' Champagnes have long been favourably known in England, through the energetic exertions of their agents, Messrs. J. R. Parkington & Co., of Crutched Friars. The Ay firm have their offices in a massive-looking corner-house at the further extremity of the town, in the direction of the steep hills sheltering it on the north. This forms their central establishment, and here are spacious celliers for disgorging and finishing off the wine, a large packing-hall, and rooms where bales of corks and other accessories of the trade are stored, the operations of making the cuvées and bottling being accomplished in an establishment some little distance off.

On proceeding thither, we find an elegant château with a charming terraced garden, lying at the very foot of the vine-clad slopes, and on the opposite side of the road some large celliers where wine in wood is stored, and where the cuvées of the firm, consisting usually of upwards of 50,000 gallons each, are made in a vat of gigantic proportions, furnished with a raised platform at one end for the accommodation of the workman who agitates the customary paddles. When the wine is completely blended it is drawn off into casks disposed for the purpose in the cellar below, as shown in the accompanying engraving, and after being fined it rests for about a month to clear itself. To each of these casks of newly-blended wine a portion of old wine is added separately, and at the moment of bottling the whole is newly amalgamated.



DRAWING OFF THE CUVÉE AT DEUTZ AND GELDERMANN'S, AY.

Adjoining M. Deutz's château is the principal entrance to the extensive cellars of the firm, to which, at our visit in 1877, considerable additions

were being made. In excavating these cellars in the chalk a uniform system is pursued. The workmen commence by rounding off the roof of the gallery, and then proceed to work gradually downwards, extracting the chalk, whenever practicable, in blocks suitable for building purposes, which, being worth from three to four shillings the square yard, help to reduce the cost of the excavation. When any serious flaws present themselves in the sides or roof of the galleries, they are invariably made good with masonry.

This splendid range of cellars now comprises eight long and lofty galleries no less than seventeen feet wide, and the same number of feet in height, and of the aggregate length of 2200 yards. These spacious vaults, which run parallel with each other, and communicate by means of cross passages, underlie the street, the château, the garden, and the vineyard slopes beyond, and possess the great advantage of being always dry. They are capable, we were informed, of containing several million bottles of Champagne, in addition to a large quantity of wine in cask.

Messrs. Deutz & Geldermann possess vineyards at Ay, and own a large vendangeoir at Verzenay, where in good years they usually press 500 pièces of wine. They, moreover, make large purchases of grapes at Bouzy, Cramant, Le Mesnil, Pierry, &c., and invariably have these pressed under their own superintendence. Beyond large shipments to England, where their wine is deservedly held in high estimation, Messrs. Deutz & Geldermann transact a considerable business with other countries, and more especially with Germany, in which country their brand has been for years one of the most popular,

while to-day it is the favourite at numerous regimental messes and the principal hotels.

Within a hundred yards of the open space, surrounded by houses of different epochs and considerable diversity of design, where the Ay market-hall stands, and in one of those narrow winding streets common to the town, an escutcheon, with a bunch of grapes for device, surmounting a lofty gateway, attracts attention. Beyond, a trim courtyard, girt round with orange-trees in bright green boxes, and clipped in orthodox fashion, affords access to the handsome residence and offices of M. Duminy, well known in England and America as a shipper of high-class Champagnes, and whose Parisian connection is extensive. On the right-hand side of the courtyard is the packing-room; and through the cellars, which have an entrance here, one can reach the celliers in an adjoining street, where the cuvée is made and the bottling of the wine accomplished.



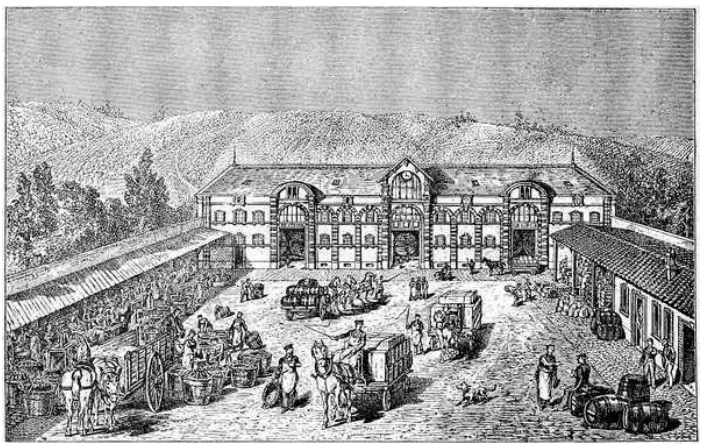
THE EXCAVATION OF DEUTZ AND GELDERMANN'S NEW CELLARS AT AY.



M. Duminy's cellars are remarkably old, and consequently of somewhat irregular construction, being at times rather low and narrow, as well as on different levels. In addition, however, to these venerable vaults, packed with wines of 1874 and '78, M. Duminy has a new and extensive establishment on the outskirts of Ay, as well as various subterranean adjuncts in the town itself. This new establishment, which stands under the vineclad slope, and merely a stone's throw from the railway line to Reims, consists of a large ornamental building looking on to a spacious courtyard ordinarily alive with busy workpeople. In addition to the pavilion already erected, it is intended to construct one of similar design, and to connect the two with a monumental tower. The requisite land has already been purchased, the architectural plans are prepared, and the work is now in active progress.

Entering the courtyard of which we have spoken, we notice the new offices of the firm on the left hand,

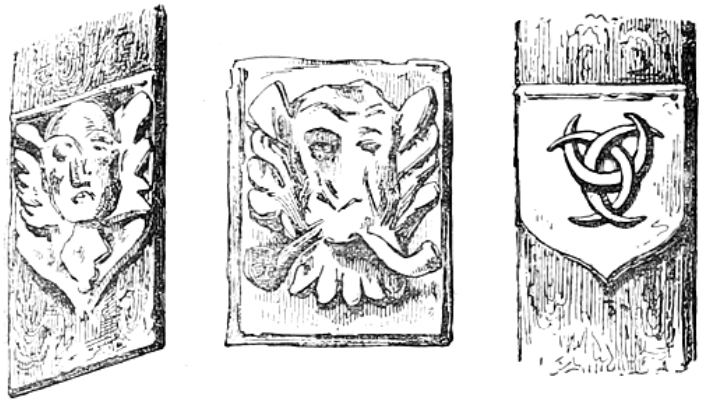
and extending along the wall beyond is a long zinc-roofed shed, crowded with baskets filled with newly-purchased Champagne bottles. On the opposite side of the courtyard is a building in which the operation of bottle-washing is carried on. The pavilion in the rear of the courtyard is of somewhat monumental proportions, and is ornamented with dressings of white stone and red brick. Entering through the principal doorway, we find ourselves in a vast cellier, where the packing operations are carried on, and where are a couple of huge tuns in which the cuvées of the house are made. A stone staircase conducts to an upper cellier, where several hundred casks of *vin brut* are stored, and for the raising or lowering of which lifts are provided at stated distances. In an apartment above this second cellier straw envelopes for bottles and other accessories employed in the trade are kept.



M. DUMINY'S NEW ESTABLISHMENT AT AY.

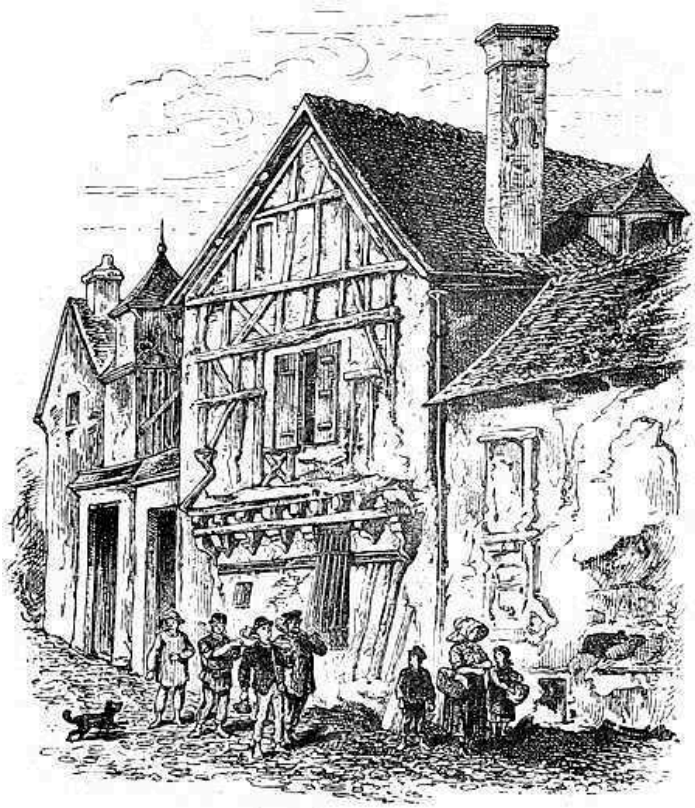
The cellars extend, not merely beneath this large building and the courtyard in front, but run under the adjacent mountain-slope. They comprise four

galleries on the same level, vaulted and faced with brick or stone, each gallery being about 500 feet in length and upwards of twelve feet in width and height. Eight transverse passages connect these galleries with each other, and numerous lifts communicate with the cellier and the courtyard above. The galleries that run under the vineyard slope are ventilated by shafts no less than 120 feet in height. M. Duminy has already provided room here for a million bottles of sparkling wine; and it is estimated that, when the establishment is completed, two and a half millions of bottles can be stored here in addition to the stock contained in the old cellars possessed by M. Duminy in the town. During its two-thirds of a century of existence the house has invariably confined itself to first-class wines, taking particular pride in shipping fully-matured growths. Besides its own large reserve of these, it holds considerable stocks long since disposed of, and now merely awaiting the purchasers' orders to be shipped.



A few paces beyond M. Duminy's we come upon an antiquated, decrepit-looking timber house, with its ancient gable bulging over as though the tough oak brackets on which it rests were at last grown weary

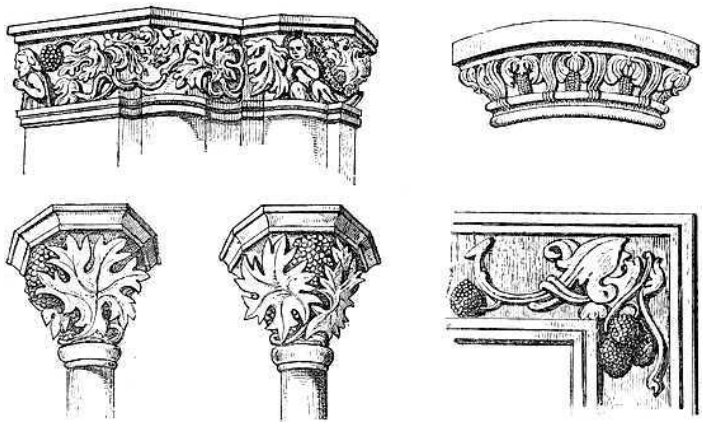
of supporting their unwieldy burden. Judging from the quaint carved devices on the timbers at the lower portions of this building, one may imagine it to have been the residence of an individual of some importance in the days when the principal European potentates had their commissioners installed at Ay to secure them the finest vintages. The house evidently dates back to this or to an earlier epoch.



ANCIENT TIMBER HOUSE AT AY.

The cellars of Messrs. Pfungst Frères et Cie. are situated some little distance from the vineyard

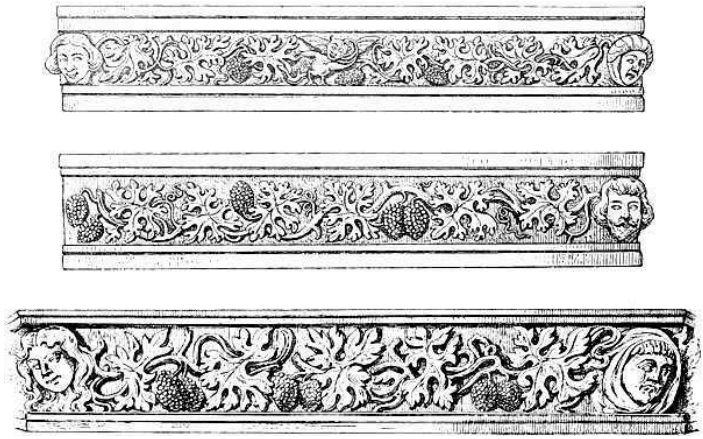
owned by them at Ay. The firm lay themselves out exclusively for the shipment of high-class Champagne, and the excellent growths of this district necessarily form an important element in their carefully-composed cuvées. A considerable portion of their stock consists of reserves of old wine of grand years; and a variety of samples of finely-matured Champagnes were submitted to our judgment. All of these wines were of superior quality, combining delicacy and fragrance with dryness, the latter being their especial feature. In addition to their business with England, where the brand of the firm is rapidly increasing in popularity among connoisseurs of matured wines, Messrs. Pfungst Frères ship largely to India and the United States.



CAPITALS AND MOULDINGS IN AY CHURCH.

On the northern side of the town stands the handsome Gothic church of Ay, dating from about the middle of the fifteenth century. The existing building replaced the edifice erected some two hundred years previously, and traces of which are still to be seen in the present transept. The stone

tower, which is in striking contrast with the other portions of the structure, bears the date 1541 on its western face. This tower and the interior of the church were greatly damaged by the fire—traditionally ascribed to lightning—which occurred at the close of the sixteenth century, and the former had to be strengthened by filling up the arched windows and by the addition of buttresses. The bell, whose terrible tocsin used to warn good citizens that the *patrie* was in danger in the days of the Revolution, when the church was converted into a Temple of Reason, had previously swung in the abbey of Hautvillers, and may have summoned the vintagers to labour as well as the faithful to prayer. From 1867 to 1877 extensive interior repairs and restorations, costing upwards of 6000 *l.*, greatly transformed the interior of the church. Care was, however, taken to preserve the numerous bits of mediæval and Renaissance sculpture with which both the interior and exterior of the edifice were studded. In many of the ornamental mouldings, as well as the capitals of the columns, grape-laden vine-branches had been freely introduced, as if to indicate the honour in which the vine, the material source of all the prosperity enjoyed by the little town, was held both by mediæval and later architects; and these appear all to have been scrupulously restored. One of the most characteristic decorations of this character is the sculptured figure of a boy bearing a basket of grapes upon his head, which surmounts the handsome Renaissance doorway.



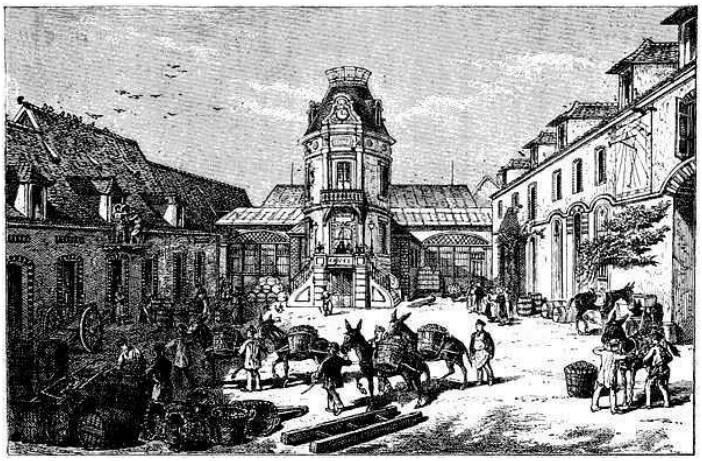
MOULDINGS FROM AY CHURCH.

Within half an hour's walk of Ay, in an easterly direction, is the village of Mareuil, a long straight street of straggling houses, bounded by trees and garden-plots, with vine-clad hills rising abruptly behind on the one side, and the Marne canal flowing placidly by on the other. The archaic church, a mixture of the Romanesque and Early Gothic, stands at the farther end of the village, and some little distance on this side of it is a massive-looking eighteenth-century building, spacious enough to accommodate a regiment of horse, but conventual rather than barrack-like in aspect, from the paucity of windows looking on to the road. A broad gateway leads into a spacious courtyard, to the left of which stands a grand château; while on the right there rises an ornate round tower of three stories, from the gallery on the summit of which a fine view over the valley of the Marne is obtained. The buildings, enclosing the court on three sides, comprise press-houses, celliers, and packing-rooms, an antiquated

sun-dial marking the hour on the blank space above the vines that climb beside the entrance gateway. The more ancient of these tenements formed the vendangeoir of the Dukes of Orleans at the time they owned the château of Mareuil, purchased in 1830 by the Duke de Montebello, son of the famous Marshal Lannes, and minister and ambassador of Louis Philippe and Napoleon III.

The acquisition of this property, to which were attached some important vineyards, led, several years later, to the duke's founding, in conjunction with his brothers, the Marquis and General Count de Montebello, a Champagne firm, whose brand speedily acquired a notable popularity. To-day the business is carried on by their sons and heirs, for all the original partners in the house have followed their valiant father to the grave. Struck down by an Austrian cannon-ball in the zenith of his fame, the career of Marshal Lannes, brief as it was, furnishes one of the most brilliant pages in French military annals. Joining the army of Italy as a volunteer in 1796, he was made a colonel on the battle-field in the gorges of Millesimo, when Augereau's bold advance opened Piedmont to the French. He fought at Bassano and Lodi, took part in the assault of Pavia and the siege of Mantua, and at Arcola, when Napoleon dashed flag in hand upon the bridge, Lannes was seriously wounded whilst shielding his general from danger. He afterwards distinguished himself in Egypt, and led the van of the French army across the Alps, displaying his accustomed bravery both at Montebello and Marengo. At Austerlitz, where he commanded the right wing of the army, he greatly contributed to the victory; and at Jena, Friedland, and Eylau his valour was again conspicuous. Sent to Spain, he defeated the

Spaniards at Tudela, and took part in the operations against Saragossa. Wounded at the battle of Essling, when the Archduke Charles inflicted upon Napoleon I. the first serious repulse he had met with on the field of battle, the valiant Lannes expired a few days afterwards in the Emperor's arms.

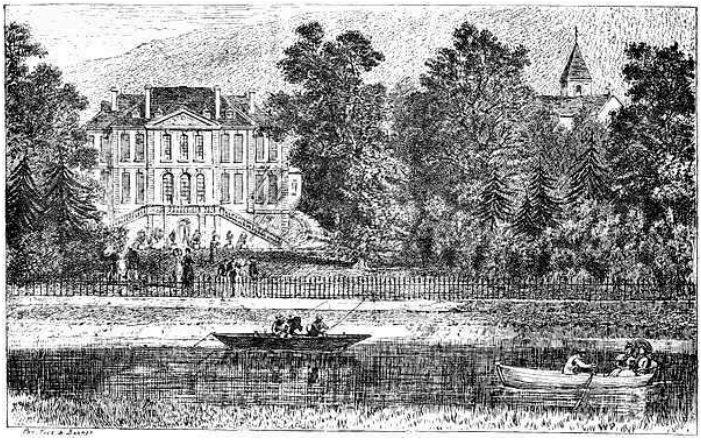


THE MONTEBELLO ESTABLISHMENT AT MAREUIL.

We were met at Mareuil, on the occasion of our visit, by Count Alfred Ferdinand de Montebello, the present manager of the house, and conducted by him over the establishment. In the press-house, to the left of the courtyard, were two of the ponderous presses used in the Champagne, for, like all other large firms, the house makes its own wine. Grapes grown in the Mareuil vineyards arrive here in baskets slung over the backs of mules, muzzled, so that while awaiting their loads they may not devour the fruit within reach. In a cellier adjoining the press-house stands a large vat, capable of holding fifty pièces of wine, with a crane beside it for hauling up the casks when the cuvée is made. Here the tirage likewise

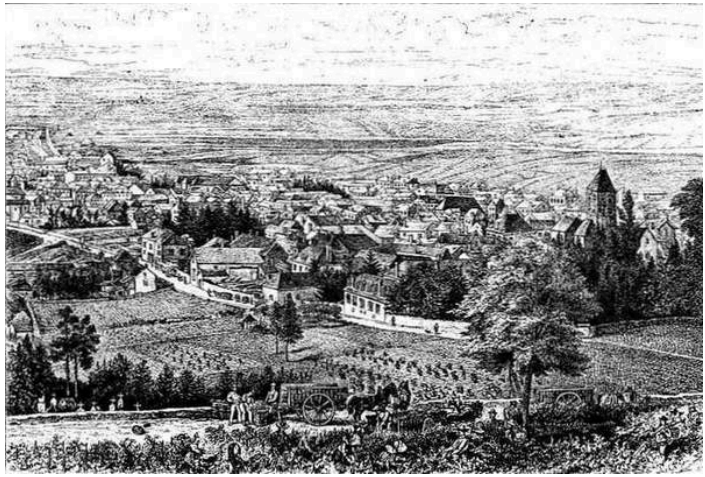
takes place; and in the range of buildings roofed with glass, in the rear of the tower, the bottled wine is labelled, capped with foil, and packed in cases for transmission to Paris, England, and other places abroad.

A double flight of steps, decorated with lamps and vases, leads to the handsome offices of the firm, situated on the first-floor of the tower; while above is an apartment with a panelled ceiling, gracefully decorated with groups of Cupids engaged in the vintage and the various operations which the famous wines of the Mountain and the River undergo during their conversion into Champagne. On the ground-floor of the tower a low doorway conducts to the spacious cellars, which, owing to the proximity of the Marne, are all on the same level as well as constructed in masonry. The older vaults, where the Marquis de Pange, a former owner of the château, stored the wine which he used to sell to the Champagne manufacturers, are somewhat low and tortuous compared with the broad and lofty galleries of more recent date, which have been constructed as the growing connection of the firm obliged them to increase their stocks. Spite, however, of numerous additions, portions of their reserves have to be stored in other cellars in Mareuil. Considerable stocks of each of the four qualities of wine supplied by the firm are being got ready for disgorgement, including Cartes Noires and Bleues, with the refined Carte Blanche and the delicate Crêmant, which challenge comparison with brands of the highest repute.



CHÂTEAU OF MAREUIL, BELONGING TO THE DUKE OF MONTEBELLO.

In the adjacent château, the gardens of which slope down to the Marne canal, there are various interesting portraits, with one or two relics of the distinguished founder of the Montebello family, notably Marshal Lannes's gold-embroidered velvet saddle trappings, his portrait and that of Marshal Gerard, as well as one of Napoleon I., by David, with a handsome clock and candelabra of Egyptian design, a bust of Augustus Cæsar, and a portrait of the Regent d'Orleans.



GENERAL VIEW OF AVIZE.

XII.
CHAMPAGNE ESTABLISHMENTS AT AVIZE AND RILLY.

Avize the centre of the white grape district—Its situation and aspect—The establishment of Giesler & Co.—The tirage and the cuvée—Vin Brut in racks and on tables—The packing-hall, the extensive cellars, and the disgorging cellier—Bottle stores and bottle-washing machines—Messrs. Giesler's wine-presses at Avize and vendangeoir at Bouzy—Their vineyards and their purchases of grapes—Reputation of the Giesler brand—The establishment of M. Charles de Cazanove—A tame young boar—Boar-hunting in the Champagne—M. de Cazanove's commodious cellars and carefully-selected wines—Vineyards owned by him and his family—Reputation of his wines in Paris and their growing popularity in

England—Interesting view of the Avize and Cramant vineyards from M. de Cazanove's terraced garden—The vintaging of the white grapes in the Champagne—Roper Frères' establishment at Rilly-la-Montagne—Their cellars penetrated by roots of trees—Some samples of fine old Champagnes—The principal Châlons establishments—Poem on Champagne by M. Amaury de Cazanove.



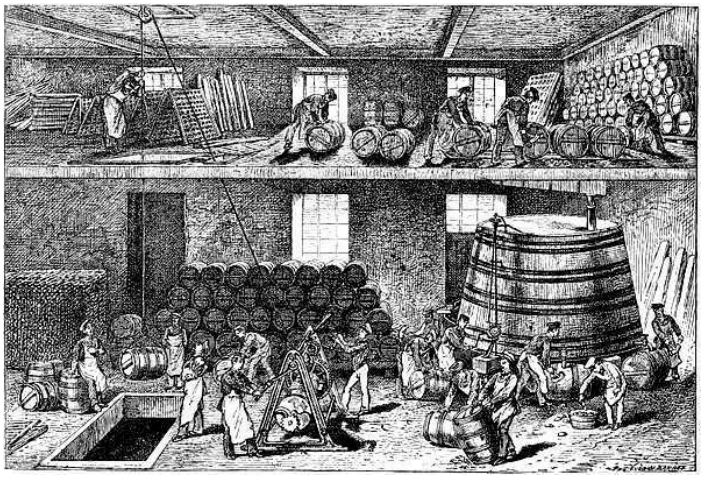
DOORWAY OF AVIZE CHURCH.

AVIZE, situated in the heart of the Champagne white grape district, may be reached from Epernay by road through Pierry and Cramant, or by the Châlons Railway to Oiry Junction, between which station and

Romilly there runs a local line, jocularly termed the *chemin de fer de famille*, from the general disregard displayed by the officials for anything approaching to punctuality. Avize can scarcely be styled a town, and yet its growing proportions are beyond those of an ordinary village. It lies pleasantly nestled among the vines, sheltered by bold ridges on the north-west, with the monotonous plains of La Champagne pouilleuse, unsuited to the cultivation of the vine, stretching away eastward in the direction of Châlons. Avize cannot pretend to the same antiquity as its neighbour Vertus, and lacks the many picturesque vestiges of which the latter can boast. Its church dates back only to the fifteenth century, although the principal doorway in the Romanesque style evidently belongs to a much earlier epoch. There is a general air of trim prosperity about the place, and the villagers have that well-to-do appearance common to the inhabitants of the French wine districts. Only at vintage-time, however, are there any particular outdoor signs of activity, although half a score of Champagne firms have their establishments here, giving employment to the bulk of the population, and sending forth their two or three million bottles of the sparkling wine of the Marne annually.

Proceeding along the straight level road leading from the station to the village, we encounter on our right hand the premises of Messrs. Giesler & Co., the reputation of whose brand is universal. When M. Giesler quitted the firm of P. A. Mumm, Giesler, & Co., at Reims, in 1838, he removed to Avize, and founded the present extensive establishment. Entering through a large open gateway, we find ourselves within a spacious courtyard, with a handsome dwelling-house in the rear, and all the signs of a Champagne business of magnitude

apparent. A spiral staircase conducts to the counting-house on the first story of a range of buildings on the left hand, the ground floor of which is divided into celliers. Passing through a door by the side of this staircase, we enter a large hall where the operation of bottling the wine is going on. Four tuns, each holding five ordinary pièces of wine, and raised upon large blocks of wood, are standing here, and communicating with them are bottling syphons of the type commonly employed in the Champagne. Messrs. Giesler do not usually consign the newly-bottled wine at once to the cellars, but retain it above-ground for about a fortnight, in order that it may develop its effervescent qualities more perfectly. We find many thousands of these bottles stacked horizontally in the adjoining celliers, in one of which stands the great cuvée tun, wherein some fifty hogsheads of the finest Champagne growths are blended together at one time, two hundred hogsheads being thus mingled daily while the cuvées are in progress. The casks of wine having been hoisted from the cellars to the first floor by a crane, and run on to a trough, their bungs are removed, and the wine flows through an aperture in the floor into the huge tun beneath, its amalgamation being accomplished by the customary fan-shaped appliances, set in motion by the turning of a wheel. In an adjacent room is the machine used for mixing the liqueur which Messrs. Giesler add so sparingly to their light and fragrant wines.



MAKING THE CUVÉE AT MESSRS. GIESLER'S, AT AVIZE.

There are a couple of floors above these celliers, the uppermost of which is used as a general store, while in the one beneath many thousands of bottles of *vin brut* repose *sur pointe*, either in racks or on tables, as at the Clicquot-Werlé establishment. This latter system requires ample space, for as the workman who shakes the bottles is only able to use one hand, the operation of dislodging the sediment necessarily occupies a much longer time than is requisite when the bottles rest in racks.

The buildings on the opposite side of the courtyard comprise a large packing-hall, celliers where the wine is finished off, and rooms where corks and suchlike things are stored. Here, too, is the entrance to the cellars, of which there are three tiers, all lofty and well-ventilated galleries, very regular in their construction, and faced with either stone or brick. In these extensive vaults are casks of fine reserved wines for blending with youthful vintages, and bottles of *vin brut*, built up in solid stacks, that may

be reckoned by their hundreds of thousands. At Messrs. Giesler's the disgorging of the wine is accomplished in a small cellier partially underground, and the temperature of which is very cool and equable. The *dégorgeurs*, isolated from the rest of the workpeople, are carrying on their operations here by candlelight. So soon as the sediment is removed, the bottles are raised in baskets to the cellier above, where the liqueuring, recorking, stringing, and wiring are successively accomplished. By pursuing this plan the loss sustained by the disgorgement is believed to be reduced to a minimum.

Extensive as these premises are, they are still insufficient for the requirements of the firm; and across the road is a spacious building where new bottles are stored, and the washing of the bottles in preparation for the tirage takes place. By the aid of the machinery provided sixteen women, assisted by a couple of men, commonly wash some fifteen or sixteen thousand bottles in the course of a day. Here, too, stands one of the two large presses with which, at the epoch of the vintage, a hundred pièces of wine are pressed every four-and-twenty hours. The remaining press is installed in a cellier at the farther end of the garden on the other side of the road. Messrs. Giesler possess additional presses at their vendangeoir at Bouzy, and during the vintage have the command of presses at Ay, Verzenay, Vertus, Le Mesnil, &c.; it being a rule of theirs always to press the grapes within a few hours after they are gathered, to obviate their becoming bruised by their own weight and imparting a dark colour to the wine, a contingency difficult to guard against in seasons when the fruit is over-ripe. The firm own vineyards at Avize, and have agreements with vine-proprietors

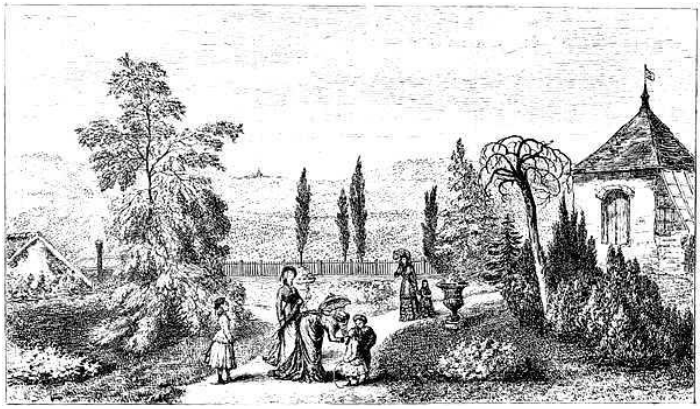
at Ay, Bouzy, Verzenay, and elsewhere, to purchase their crops regularly every year. Messrs. Giesler's brand has secured its existing high repute solely through the fine quality of the wines shipped by the house—wines which are known and appreciated by all real connoisseurs of Champagne.

From Messrs. Giesler's it is merely a short walk to the establishment of M. Charles de Cazanove, situated in the principal street of Avize. On entering the court we encountered a tame young boar engaged in the lively pursuit of chasing some terrified hens; while a trio of boar-hounds, basking on the sunny flagstones, contemplated his proceedings with lazy indifference. Boars abound in the woods hereabouts, and hunting them is a favourite pastime with the residents; and the young boar we had noticed proved to be one of the recent captures of the sons of M. de Cazanove, who are among the warmest partisans of the exciting sport.

The house of M. Charles de Cazanove was established in 1843, by its present proprietor, on the foundation of a business which had been in existence since 1811. Compared with the monumental grandeur of some of the great Reims and Epernay establishments, the premises present a simple and modest aspect; nevertheless, they are capacious and commodious, besides which, the growing business of the house has led to the acquisition of additional cellarage in other parts of Avize. More important than all, however, is the quality of the wine with which these cellars are stocked; and, following the rule observed by Champagne firms of the highest repute, it has been a leading principle with M. de Cazanove always to rely upon the choicer growths—those light, delicate, and fragrant wines of the Marne

which throw out the true aroma of the flower of the vine. M. de Cazanove, who is distinguished for his knowledge of viticulture, occupies an influential position at Avize, being Vice-President of the Horticultural Society of the Marne, and a member of the committee charged with guarding the Champagne vineyards against the invasion of the phylloxera. His own vines include only those fine varieties to which the crus of the Marne owe their great renown. He possesses an excellent vineyard at Grauves, near Avize; and his mother-in-law, Madame Poultier of Pierry, is one of the principal vine-growers of the district.

M. de Cazanove's wines are much appreciated in Paris, where his business is very extensive. His shipments to England are also considerable; but from the circumstance of some of his principal customers importing the wine under special brands of their own, the brand of the house is not so widely known as we should have anticipated.



VINEYARDS OF AVIZE AND CRAMANT, FROM THE GARDEN OF M. C. DE CAZANOVE.

From M. de Cazanove's terraced garden in the rear of

his establishment a fine view is obtained of one of the most famous viticultural districts of the Champagne, yielding wines of remarkable delicacy and exquisite bouquet. On the left hand rises up the mountain of Avize, its summit fringed with dense woods, where in winter the wild-boar has his lair. In front stretch the long vine-clad slopes of Cramant, with orchards at their base, and the housetops of the village and the spire of the quaint old church just peeping over the brow of the hill. To the right towers the bold forest-crowned height of Saran, with M. Moët's château perched half-way up its north-eastern slope; and fading away in the hazy distance are the monotonous plains of the Champagne.

We have already explained that the wines of Avize and Cramant rank as *premiers crus* of the white grape district, and that every Champagne manufacturer of repute mingles one or the other in his cuvée. The white grapes are usually gathered a fortnight or three weeks later than the black varieties, but in other respects the vintaging of them is the same. The grapes undergo the customary minute examination by the *éplucheuses*, and all unripe, damaged, and rotten berries being thrown aside, the fruit is conveyed with due care to the press-houses in the large baskets known as *paniers mannequins*. The pressing takes place under exactly the same conditions as the pressing of the black grapes; the must, too, is drawn off into hogsheads to ferment, and by the end of the year, when the active fermentation has terminated, the wine is usually clear and limpid.

At Rilly-la-Montagne, on the line of railway between Reims and Epernay, Roper Frères & Cie., late of Epernay, have their establishment. Starting from the

latter place, we pass Ay and Avenay, and then the little village of Germaine in the midst of the forest, and nigh the summit of the mountain of Reims, with its 'Rendezvous des Chasseurs' in immediate proximity to the station. Finally we arrive at Rilly, which, spite of its isolated situation, has about it that aspect of prosperity common to the more favourable wine districts of France. This is scarcely surprising, when the quality of its wines is taken into consideration. The still red wine of Rilly has long enjoyed a high local reputation, and to-day the Rilly growths are much sought after for conversion into Champagne. White wine of 1874, from black grapes, fetched, we are informed, as much as 600 to 700 francs the pièce; while the finer qualities from white grapes realised from 300 to 400 francs. Messrs. Roper Frères & Cie. are the owners of some productive vineyards situated on the high-road to Chigny and Ludes.

The establishment of Roper Frères is adjacent to a handsome modern house standing back from the road in a large and pleasant garden, bounded by vineyards on two of its sides. In the celliers all the conveniences pertaining to a modern Champagne establishment are to be found, while extending beneath the garden are the extensive cellars of the firm, comprising two stories of long and spacious galleries excavated in the chalk, their walls and roofs being supported whenever necessary by masonry. A curious feature about these cellars is that the roots of the larger trees in the garden above have penetrated the roof of the upper story, and hang pendent overhead like innumerable stalactites. Here, after the comparatively new wine of 1874 had been shown to us—including samples of the vin brut or natural Champagne of which the firm make a specialty at a

moderate price—some choice old Champagnes were brought forth, including the fine vintages of 1865, 1857, and 1846. The latter wine had of course preserved very little of its effervescence, still its flavour was exceedingly fine, being soft and delicate to a degree. At the Vienna Exhibition of 1873, and the London Exhibition of 1874, the collection of Champagnes exhibited by Roper Frères met with favourable recognition from the international juries.

Our tour through the Champagne vineyards and wine-cellars here comes to an end. It is true there are important establishments at Châlons, notably those of the Perriers, Freminet et Fils, Dagonet et Fils, and Jacquard Frères. As, however, any description of these would be little else than a recapitulation of something we have already said, we content ourselves with merely notifying their existence, and close the present chapter with a poem on Champagne, from the pen of M. Amaury de Cazanove of Avize:

ODE AU CHAMPAGNE.

Pour ta beauté, pour ta gloire, ô Patrie,
Nous t'adorons … surtout pour tes malheurs!
Oublions-les…. Avec idolâtrie,
Chantons ton ciel, tes femmes et tes fleurs.
France, nous chanterons tes femmes et tes roses;
France, nous chanterons tes vins, autre trésor;
Qu'on voie, ouvrant tes lèvres longtemps closes,
Un fier sourire étinceler encor!

Nectar qu'aux dieux jadis versait Hébé la blonde!
O noir Falerne! ô Massique vermeil!
Pauvres vins du vieux temps oubliés à la ronde …

Car le Champagne a fait le tour du monde
En conquérant, à nos drapeaux pareil;
Il rit, léger, sous la mousse qui tremble,
Et semble
Dans le cristal un rayon de soleil.

'Je suis le sang des coteaux de Bourgogne!'
Dit celui-là baron à parchemin,
Grand assommeur qui vous met sans vergogne
Son casque au front, si lourd le lendemain….
'C'est moi l'exquis Bordeaux, je sens la violette;
Mes rubis, le gourmet goutte à goutte les boit,
Et mon parfum délicat se complète
Par ta saveur, aile d'un perdreau froid.'

Messeigneurs les Grand Vins, s'il faut qu'on vous réponde;
Bordeaux, Bourgogne, écoutez un conseil:
Vantez un peu moins fort vos vertus à la ronde….
Car le Champagne a fait le tour du monde
En conquérant, à nos drapeaux pareil;
Il rit, léger, sous la mousse qui tremble,
Et semble
Dans le cristal un rayon de soleil.

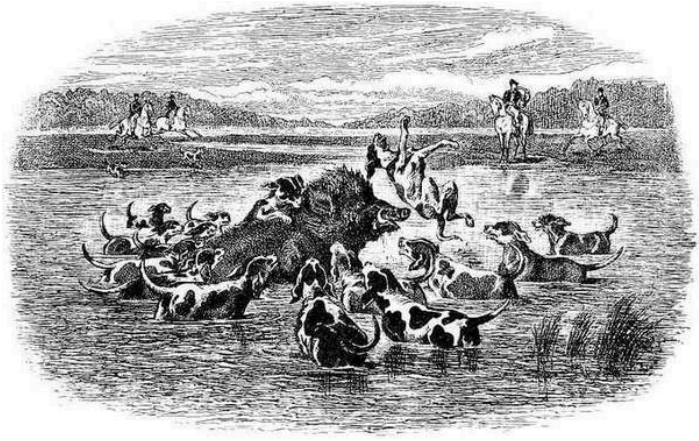
Car le Champagne est le vrai vin de France;
C'est notre cœur pétillant dans nos yeux,
Se relevant plus haut sous la souffrance;
C'est dans sa fleur l'esprit de nos aïeux;
Le souffle de bravoure aimable, qui tressaille
Sous le vent de l'épée aux plumes des cimiers;
C'est le galant défi de la bataille:
'A vous, Messieurs les Anglais, les premiers!'

Certain buveur de bière en vain ricane et gronde;
Aux cauchemars de ses nuits sans sommeil

Dieu livre ses remords! … Nous chantons à la ronde
Que le Champagne a fait le tour du monde
En conquérant, à nos drapeaux pareil;
Il rit, léger, sous la mousse qui tremble,
Et semble
Dans le cristal un rayon de soleil.[481]

Avize, 8 Juillet 1877.





THE BOAR TAKES SOIL.

XIII.
SPORT IN THE CHAMPAGNE.

The Champagne forests the resort of the wild-boar—Departure of a hunting-party in the early morning to a boar-hunt—Rousing the boar from his lair—Commencement of the attack—Chasing the boar—His course is checked by a bullet—The dogs rush on in full pursuit—The boar turns and stands at bay—A skilful marksman advances and gives him the *coup de grâce*—Hunting the wild-boar on horseback in the Champagne—An exciting day's sport with M. d'Honnincton's boar-hounds—The 'sonnerie du sanglier' and the 'vue'—The horns sound in chorus 'The boar has taken soil'—The boar leaves the stream, and a spirited chase ensues—Brought to bay, he seeks the water again—Deathly struggle between the boar and a full pack of hounds—The fatal shot is at length fired, and the 'hallali' is sounded—As many as fifteen wild-boars sometimes killed at a

single meet—The vagaries of some tame young boars—Hounds of all kinds used for hunting the wild-boar in the Champagne—Damage done by boars to the vineyards and the crops—Varieties of game common to the Champagne.



THE Champagne does not merely comprise vineyards producing some of the finest wine in the world. In parts it is covered by vast and luxuriant forests, where the pleasures of the chase are not lacking to the Champenois, who as a rule are eager in the pursuit of sport. In winter these forests are the resort of wild-boar, who haunt by preference the woods around Reims, journeying thither, it is said, by night from the famous forest of the Ardennes—the scene of Rosalind's wanderings and Touchstone's eccentricities, as set forth in *As You Like It*; and whose gloomy depths and tangled glens shelter not merely boars, but wolves as well.

In the villages of the Champagne on a cold winter's morning, with it snowing or blowing, you are frequently awake before daylight by the noise of barking dogs, of horns sounding the departure, and of some vehicle rolling heavily over the stones. A

party of sportsmen is proceeding to the meet. Jokes and laughter enliven the journey, but every one becomes silent and serious upon reaching the place of rendezvous, for the object of the gathering is the excitable and perilous boar-hunt.

In the Champagne it is no longer the fashion, as in Burgundy,

'With javelin's point a churlish swine to gore.'

The more certain rifle is the weapon usually employed, and these arms are now examined and carefully loaded. Meanwhile the reports of the keepers are attentively listened to. They have beaten the wood, each on his own side, accompanied by a bloodhound, and they inform the hunters what they have seen or found. Great experience is necessary to accomplish the *rembuchement*, as this tour of inspection is termed, in a satisfactory manner; and with some it is a veritable science. Eventually, after a discussion among the more experienced ones, it is decided to follow the scent which appears to be freshest; whereupon the dogs are brought up coupled, and let loose upon the trail. The attack now begins. There are always two or three *piqueurs* who follow the dogs, exciting them with their voices, and making all the noise possible, as long as the game has not been roused from its lair. Meanwhile the marksmen place themselves at the posts indicated by the president of the hunt, the most experienced being assigned the best spots, whilst those whose habit it is never to harm the boar go of their own accord 'up wind'—that is, to bad places—thus causing the animal to 'refuse,' and to pass within range of guns that rarely let him escape unhurt.

At first the dogs raise a somewhat distant cry—

perhaps one has followed a wrong scent—and some of the huntsmen remark in a low tone to themselves that after all they would have done better to have stopped at home, and turned out of their beds at a less unseasonable hour; then, at least, they would not be standing with frozen feet in the snow, and with colds in the head in perspective. But suddenly there comes a cry of 'Vlô!'—the Champenois expression for designating the boar—'Attention!' 'Look out!' Then the report of a couple of shots, and finally the howling of the pack of dogs. Snow and cold are at once forgotten. Each man grasps his rifle and waits for the boar to pass by. The branches of the underwood creak and break; there is a noise as of a squadron of cavalry dashing into a wood; then, all of a sudden, a black mass is caught sight of approaching. But the boar is a cunning fellow; he has seen the sportsman who is in wait for him, or has scented his presence, and will pass out of range. Now that luck has betrayed the latter, he has to content himself with the *rôle* of a spectator.

So far as one can judge by the barking of the dogs, the boar is directing his course to where an experienced marksman is posted—one who is not about to fire his first difficult shot. Observe him: he is perfectly motionless, for the least movement might betray his presence; his eyes alone dart right and left in quest of the foe. Here comes the boar, passing like a cannon-ball along the line, and there is scarcely time to catch a glimpse of him between the reports of two shots, which succeed each other with the rapidity of lightning. The boar is by no means an animal easy to knock over. The forest roads are never more than ten to fifteen paces broad; and as there are marksmen both on the right and left, it is necessary to reserve your fire until the animal has

crossed the road and is plunging again into cover. In addition to this, there are only two spots where a mortal wound can be inflicted upon the boar—either behind the shoulder or in the neck. Hit elsewhere, he will lose but little blood, and the only effect of the wound will be to render him more savage. He will rip up a dog or two, perhaps, and then rush off far away, without showing any further sign of injury. Boars carrying several bullets in their bodies, but rejoicing in capital health, as well as others covered with cicatrices, are frequently killed. Firing too high is a common fault with many marksmen, arising from the fact that in winter the boar's bristles are very long and thick, and that each one stands on end at the sight of an enemy, thus making the animal look much higher on his legs than he really is.

But to return to our description of the hunt. The boar has just been hit by one of those rare marksmen, every bullet of whose rifle goes straight to its intended billet. Although struck, the animal continues his onward course, a couple of drops of blood which have tinged the snow with red showing unmistakably that he has not been missed. The dogs who follow him closely hesitate for a minute as they reach the roadway, but the leader has espied the spot where the boar was wounded; he sniffs the blood, and darts off again, followed by the pack, who have full confidence in his discernment. The dogs are torn and wounded by the thorns and briers which continually obstruct their path, for the boar rushes through the thickest and most inaccessible cover, in hopes of retarding the progress of his pursuers; but the hounds divine that their prey is near, and the most tired among them recover all their energy. Suddenly a great silence succeeds the furious yelping

and baying of a short time ago. The boar is about to turn at bay. His strength is becoming exhausted, and feeling that he is doomed to die, he has faced round, with his back towards some inaccessible thicket, so as not to be taken in the rear, and confronts his pursuers, determined to die bravely and to sell his life dearly. It is no longer the baying of a pack in full cry that now rends the air, but isolated yelpings and plaintive howlings, such as watch-dogs give vent to when strangers are wandering round the house they protect.

Then comes the crowning feat of the hunt, and the most difficult to accomplish. The most intrepid marksman advances towards the dogs, his hunting-knife and rifle alike ready, the former to be made use of should the latter not suffice. He has need of great prudence and great coolness to accomplish his task, for directly the boar hears his approach he will unhesitatingly dash upon him. He must await the animal's onslaught with a firm heart and steady hand, and only fire when sure of his aim. Often, however, the hunter is bothered by the dogs, which surround the boar on all sides, hang on to him from behind, and excite his fury. The position may become critical, and many a sportsman who has counted too much upon his nerve has found himself compelled to climb a tree, whence he has been able to 'bowl over' the enemy, without incurring any danger. It is needless to add that when discovered in this position he has felt very much ashamed at having resorted to such an expedient.

In the Champagne the wild boar is almost invariably pursued on foot, the minute subdivision of the land into different holdings and consequent limitation of the right of sport rendering it very difficult to follow

the animal on horseback. M. Roederer, it is true, started a pack of hounds in the Forest of Reims; but at his death there were not sufficient lovers of the chase to keep up this style of sport, and every one fell into the habit of knocking over a wild-boar in the same prosaic fashion as a simple rabbit. However, some few years back, a rich landowner from Brittany, the Vicomte d'Honnincton, having had an opportunity of sport in the Champagne, and having seen that large game abounded, installed himself near the fine Forêt de la Traconne, in the neighbourhood of Sézanne, and resumed the chase of the wild-boar on horseback. The great success he met with induced him to take up his quarters in this district, and his pack, composed of a cross between the English staghound and the Artois hound, has become justly famous.

In the month of December 1878, an exciting day's sport was had with M. d'Honnincton's boar-hounds. The presence of herds of wild-boar having been noted in the neighbouring woods between Epernay and Montmort, M. d'Honnincton was soon to the fore with his pack, and all the sportsmen for miles around were summoned. The meet was at the Château de la Charmoye, a regular hunters' rendezvous, belonging to the Vicomte de Bouthylliers, and situate in the heart of the woodland. During breakfast one of the huntsmen came to announce that a huge *solitaire* had passed the night at a short distance from the château. Everything, therefore, promised well for sport. The guests mounted in haste, each one equipped in true French style, with an immense hunting-horn round his body and a light gun or a pistol attached to the saddle. The lively strains of the horn had begun to sound on every side, and the hounds were being uncoupled, when the boar, disturbed by all this

noise, majestically traversed the main avenue of the château, and pushed on towards a group of ladies assembled to witness the departure of the sportsmen. A finer start would have been impossible. The hounds dashed towards their prey as soon as they caught sight of him at full cry, and the *sonnerie du sanglier* and the *vue* were blazed forth by the horns on every side. The hunt commenced. The greatest difficulty and the object of all was to hinder the boar from plunging into the thick of the forest, where, in the dense cover, he would have gained a considerable advance upon the dogs. Thanks to the activity of the huntsmen, who cut off his retreat on this side, it was possible to drive him towards the plain of Montmort; and from this moment the sport was as fine as can be imagined, it being easy to note the minor details of the hunt even from a distance. The boar made his way with difficulty over the ground saturated by rain, and the eagerness of the hounds increased in proportion as they gained upon him.

A broadish rivulet with very steep banks was reached. The boar tried to clear it at a bound, but fell into mid-stream. The sportsmen all came up at this moment, and with their horns began to sound in chorus 'The boar has taken soil;' the hounds plunged in and began to swim after the boar, and the scene became a truly exciting one. At length the boar succeeded in quitting the stream; but frightened by the horsemen whom he saw on the opposite shore, he recrossed it a second and then a third time, amidst the hounds, who were assailing him on every side, and each time met with the same difficulty in ascending the bank. It may be readily understood that he was getting exhausted by his efforts, and began to appear done up. He recovered his vigour,

however, and soon gained ground on the hounds. He had still two or three miles to cover in order to regain the forest, and it was necessary at all costs to prevent him from accomplishing this. Then ensued a wild hunt, a mad steeplechase over fields, hedges, brooks, ditches; the horses in several places sank over their hocks, and were covered with foam, but whip and spur restored energy to the least ardent. The boar was gasping, but still kept on, and the steam from his body, which quite surrounded him and caused him to resemble a four-legged demon, could be plainly perceived from a distance. In this style the hunt swept through the little village of Lucy, with all the dogs of the place howling, the women and children shrieking, and the men arming themselves with spades and pitchforks. But the boar not losing courage on this account, and despising these primitive weapons, did not stop, and drew nearer and nearer to the wood. The hounds were getting tired, and the most experienced sportsmen began to despair somewhat of a successful day, when suddenly the beast plunged into a pond situate close to the forest, halted, rolled several times in the mud, and rose completely covered in steam and mire. It is all over: the animal is at bay, and cannot go any further.

This is the interesting moment. The boar pulls himself together, feeling that he is to die, and, up to his belly in water, he bravely awaits the pack. With his eye glowing with rage, his bristles erect, he utters grunts of defiance. The fifty dogs throw themselves on to him without a moment's hesitation; but four or five are sent rolling into the middle of the water, never more to rise. The struggle which follows is terrible; the boar's tusks tell at every blow, and the water becomes literally red with blood. At length the

foremost sportsmen come up, and it is high time they do. Seven dogs are already lying on their backs, with their legs in the air, and almost all bear marks of the boar's terrible tusks. The first who is ready alights from his steed, and boldly advances into the water; for it would be imprudent to fire at the boar from the edge of the pond, and thereby run the risk of wounding him, and rendering him still more furious, or even of killing one of the dogs, by whom he is surrounded. An interval of solemn silence ensues; the horns only wait for the shot to be fired to sound the *hallali*. The dogs make way in order to let the sportsman advance; the boar draws back a little, and then making a bound recovers all his strength for a rush upon his enemy. Woe to the man who misses him! the boar will give him no quarter. But the sportsman waits for him very quietly, and when he is only two paces from him plants a bullet between his eyes, which lays him dead. The notes of the *hallali* awake the echoes: never had a hunt been crowned by finer results. The setting sun lighted up the scene, which transpired just below the Château de Montmort, scarcely half a mile off, and the ladies assembled on the terrace of the old château of Sully waved their handkerchiefs in congratulation to the fortunate sportsmen.

The foregoing narrative furnishes a good idea of the ordinary method of hunting the wild-boar on horseback in the Champagne, a method which, though offering at times varying details, arising from the size of the animal pursued and the number and strength of the hounds engaged in the chase, presents, on the whole, a general resemblance to the description just given.

Some years back boars were far from numerous in

the Champagne, hiding themselves, moreover, in inaccessible positions far away in the woods, so that it was necessary to cover a larger extent of ground in order to sight a recent trail. Latterly, however, these animals have multiplied considerably, each sow having seven or eight young ones at a litter, and littering three times a year. In the forests around Reims and Epernay twelve, and even fifteen, boars have been killed during a single hunt. It not unfrequently happens that a herd of fifty, and even a hundred, boars are encountered together, when a veritable massacre often ensues, if the hunting-party only comprises a sufficient number of guns.

The victims include at times some sows with young grice, which the hunters frequently try to bring up. One of these little animals, who had been named ‘Snow’ from having been captured one day when the snow was on the ground, followed his owner about everywhere like the most faithful poodle. His master would often take him into the wood and simulate a hunt with his dogs. Snow, however, possessed vices as well as virtues, and one of his habits was an extremely disagreeable one. Like the rest of his species, he was very fond of rolling himself in the mire, and, on returning home, would proceed to clean himself by rubbing unconcernedly against the dresses of the ladies of the house. One Sunday his master had taken him out for a walk, and as they returned home they passed the church, which the ladies of the locality, arrayed in their richest attire, were just leaving. During his walk Snow had taken two or three mud-baths, and, on meeting the fair devotees of Avize, he thought the occasion a propitious one for cleansing himself. He at once put the idea into practice, employing the silk dresses of the ladies for the purpose. The children who

accompanied them were greatly terrified, and rushed shrieking into the adjoining houses, pursued by the gambolling boar, who seemed to greatly enjoy the panic he had caused. As La Fontaine has remarked,

'Rien que la mort n'était capable
D'expier son forfait.'

So, after such an offence, poor Snow was sentenced to undergo capital punishment, and expiated by death his want of regard for the silk attire of the fair sex.

Another boar named 'Scotsman,' and belonging to the same sportsman, was also an amusing fellow. He would stretch himself out in the sun of an afternoon as majestically as the Sultan on his divan, whilst a hen with whom he had contracted a tender friendship kindly relieved him of his parasites.

A gentleman of the same district owns two enormous sows, which follow him like greyhounds whenever he rides out. When a friend asks him to step indoors and to refresh or rest himself, he replies: 'I must beg you to excuse me; I have with me *Catherine* and *Rigolette*, who might inconvenience you.' The friend looks round to see who these interesting young people may be, and his surprise may be imagined when two big swine familiarly place their forepaws upon his shoulders.

Several sportsmen of the Champagne possess packs of hounds, and the true boar-hound, the 'dog of black St. Hubert breed,' is really a magnificent animal, with his long pendant ears, his open chest, and broad-backed body. Hounds of the La Vendée and Poitou breeds are also used at boar-hunts. Dogs, though they may be of excellent race, require,

however, skilful training before they will hunt the boar. It is necessary they should see several boars killed ere they will venture to tackle this formidable enemy, of which the dog is instinctively afraid. House-dogs, curs, and terriers will at times pursue the boar admirably, and prolong his standing for hours without approaching within range of the beast's tusks, whilst animals of a higher spirit will allow themselves to be ripped up alive, or, if they escape, will not dare to again approach their foe after a first repulse.

Since boars became so numerous in the Champagne they have done considerable damage to the crops, a corn or potato field being soon devastated by them. At harvest-time a watch has often to be set for them by night. A few years ago, at the moment of the vintage, people were even compelled to light large fires near the vineyards to scare away these dangerous neighbours.

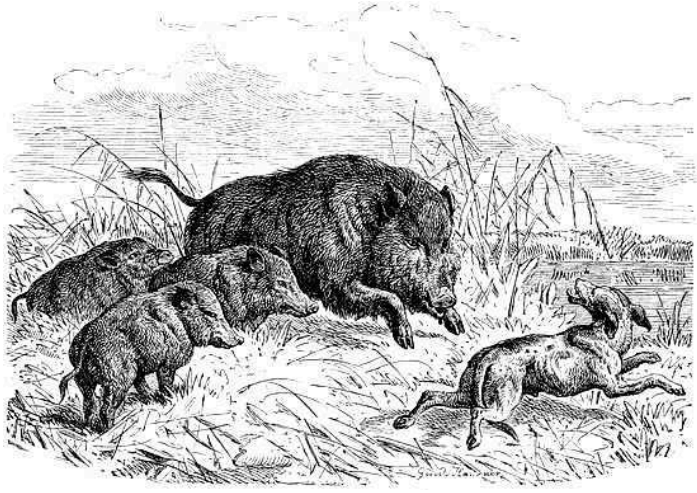
The shooting season in the Champagne extends from the commencement of September till the end of February; but boar-hunting is often prolonged until the first of May, and occasionally *battues* are organised during the summer.

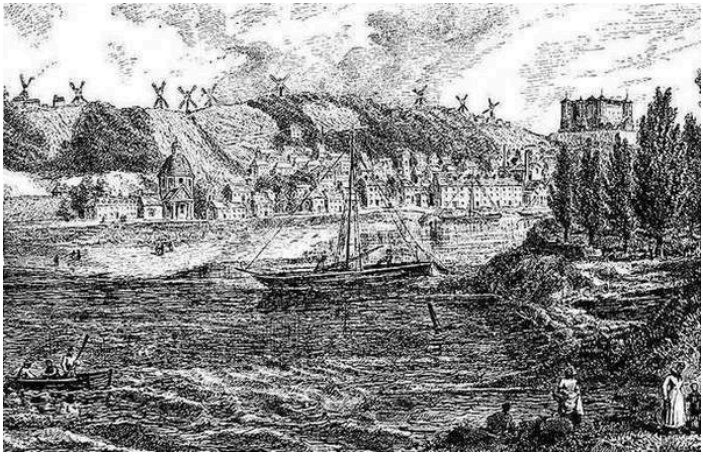
Other four-footed game tenanting the forests of the Champagne are the roe-deer, in tolerable quantity; a few fallow-deer and stags and wolves, which latter are still numerous, spite of the warfare carried on against them. The roe-deer is hunted, like the boar, with hounds; but this easy sport, which does not possess the attraction of danger, is quite neglected when boars are numerous. The forests also give shelter to hares in abundance, martins, wild-cats, and foxes, the latter being rigorously destroyed on account of their depredations. They are stifled by

smoke in their holes, or else poisoned or taken in traps.

Sportsmen are so numerous in every little village of the Marne, the shooting license only costing five-and-twenty francs, that feathered game has become very rare. The most remarkable specimen is the caimpetière, or small bustard, which exists only in the Champagne and Algeria, and the flesh of which is highly esteemed.

Partridges and hares would have entirely disappeared from the plains were it not for the shelter which the vineyards afford them, for woe to him who ventures to shoot among the vines! The vine is as sacred to the Champenois as the mistletoe was to their Gallic forefathers. Great severity is shown in respect to trespassers at the epoch when the vines are sprouting, for each broken bud represents a bunch of grapes, which its owner hoped might realise its weight in gold.





THE VINEYARDS OF THE COTEAU DE SAUMUR.

PART III.

I.
SPARKLING SAUMUR AND SPARKLING SAUTERNES.



The sparkling wines of the Loire often palmed off as Champagne—The finer qualities improve with age—Anjou the cradle of the Plantagenet kings—Saumur and its dominating feudal Château and antique Hôtel de Ville—Its sinister Rue des Payens and steep tortuous Grande Rue—The vineyards of the Coteau of Saumur—Abandoned stone-quarries converted into dwellings—The vintage in progress—Old-fashioned pressoirs—The making of the wine—Touraine the favourite residence of the earlier French monarchs—After a night's carouse at the epoch of the Renaissance—The Vouvray vineyards—Balzac's picture of La Vallée Coquette—The village of Vouvray and the Château of Moncontour—Vernou, with its reminiscences of Sully and Pépin-le-Bref—The vineyards around Saumur—Remarkable ancient

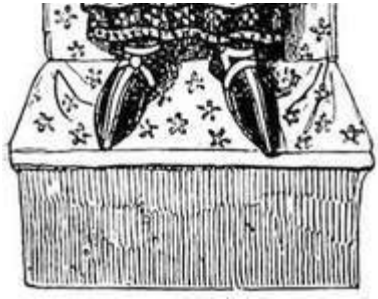
Dolmens—Ackerman-Laurance's establishment at Saint-Florent—Their extensive cellars, ancient and modern—Treatment of the newly-vintaged wine—The cuvée—Proportions of wine from black and white grapes—The bottling and disgorging of the wine and finishing operations—The Château of Varrains and the establishment of M. Louis Duvau aîné—His cellars a succession of gloomy galleries—The disgorging of the wine accomplished in a melodramatic-looking cave—M. Duvau's vineyard—His sparkling Saumur of various ages—Marked superiority of the more matured samples—M. E. Normandin's sparkling Sauternes manufactory at Châteauneuf—Angoulême and its ancient fortifications—Vin de Colombar—M. Normandin's sparkling Sauternes cuvée—His cellars near Châteauneuf—Recognition accorded to the wine at the Concours Régional d'Angoulême.

AFTER the Champagne, Anjou is the French province which ranks next in importance for its production of sparkling wines. Vintaged on the banks of the Loire, these are largely consigned to the English and other markets, labelled Crême de Bouzy, Sillery and Ay Mousseux, Cartes Noires and Blanches, and the like; while their corks are branded with the names of phantom firms, supposed to be located at Reims and Epernay. As a rule, these wines come from around Saumur; but they are not necessarily the worse on that account, for the district produces capital sparkling wines, the finer qualities of which improve greatly by being kept for a few years. One curious thing shown to us at Saumur was the album of a manufacturer of sparkling wines containing examples of the many hundred labels ticketed with which his produce had for years past been sold. Not one of

these labels assigned to the wines the name of their real maker or their true birthplace, but introduced them under the auspices of mythical dukes and counts, as being manufactured at châteaux which are so many ‘castles in Spain,’ and as coming from Ay, Bouzy, Châlons, Epernay, Reims, and Verzenay, but never by any chance from Saumur.

Being produced from robuster growths than the sparkling wines of the Department of the Marne, sparkling Saumur will always lack that excessive lightness which is the crowning grace of fine Champagne; still, it has only to be kept for a few years, instead of being drunk shortly after its arrival from the wine-merchant, for its quality to become greatly improved and its intrinsic value to be considerably enhanced. We have drunk sparkling Saumur that had been in bottle for nearly twenty years, and found the wine not only remarkably delicate, but, singular to say, with plenty of effervescence.





STATUE OF RICHARD CŒUR DE LION AT FONTEVRAULT.

To an Englishman Anjou is one of the most interesting of the ancient provinces of France. It was the cradle of the Plantagenet kings, and only ten miles from Saumur still repose the bones of Henry, the first Plantagenet, and Richard of the Lion Heart, beneath their elaborate coloured and gilt effigies, in the so-called Cimetière des Rois of the historic Abbey of Fontevrault. The famous vineyards of the Coteau de Saumur, eastward of the town and bordering the Loire, extend as far as here, and include the communes of Dampierre, Souzay, Varrains, Chacé, Parnay, Turquant, and Montsoreau, the last-named within three miles of Fontevrault, and chiefly remarkable through its seigneur of ill-fame, Jean de Chambes, who instigated his wife to lure Bussy d'Amboise to an assignation in order that he might the more surely poignard him. Saumur is picturesquely placed at the foot of this bold range of heights, near where the little river Thouet runs into the broad and rapid Loire. A massive-looking old château, perched on the summit of an isolated crag, stands out grandly against the clear sky and dominates the town, the older houses of which crouch at the foot of the lofty hill and climb its steepest sides. The restored antique Hôtel de Ville, in the Pointed style, with its elegant windows, graceful belfry, and florid wrought-iron balconies, stands

back from the quay bordering the Loire. In the rear is the Rue des Payens, whither the last of the Huguenots of this ‘metropolis of Protestantism,’ as it was formerly styled, retired, converting their houses into so many fortresses to guard against being surprised by their Catholic adversaries. Adjacent is the steep tortuous Grande Rue, of which Balzac—himself a Tourangeau—has given such a graphic picture in his *Eugénie Grandet*, the scene of which is laid at Saumur. To-day, however, only a few of its ancient carved-timber houses, quaint overhanging corner turrets, and fantastically studded massive oak doors, have escaped demolition.

The vineyards of the Coteau de Saumur, yielding the finest wines, are reached by the road skirting the river, the opposite low banks of which are fringed with willows and endless rows of poplars, which at the time of our visit were already golden with the fading tints of autumn. Numerous fantastic windmills crown the heights, the summit of which is covered with vines, varied by dense patches of woodland. Here, as elsewhere along the banks of the Loire, the many abandoned quarries along the face of the hill have been turned by the peasants into cosy dwellings by simply walling-up the entrances, while leaving, of course, the necessary apertures for doors and windows. Dampierre, the first village reached, has many of these cave-dwellings, and numbers of its houses are picturesquely perched up the sides of the slope. The holiday costumes of the peasant women encountered in the neighbourhood of Saumur are exceedingly quaint, their elaborate and varied headdresses being counterparts of *coiffures* in vogue so far back as three and four centuries ago.



PEASANT WOMEN OF THE ENVIRONS OF SAUMUR.

Quitting the banks of the river, we ascend a steep tortuous road, shut in on either side by high stone walls—for hereabouts all the best vineyards are scrupulously enclosed—and finally reach the summit of the heights, whence a view is gained over what the Saumurois proudly style the grand valley of the Loire. Everywhere around the vintage is going on. The vines are planted rather more than a yard apart, and those yielding black grapes are trained, as a rule, up tall stakes, although some few are trained espalier fashion. Women dexterously detach the bunches with pruning-knives and throw them into the *seilles*—small squat buckets with wooden handles—the contents of which are emptied from time to time into baskets—the counterpart of the chiffonnier's *hotte*, and coated with pitch inside so as to close all the crevices of the wickerwork—which the *portes-bastes* carry slung to their backs. When white wine is being made from black grapes for sparkling Saumur, the grapes are conveyed in these baskets to the

underground pressoirs in the neighbouring villages before their skins get at all broken, in order that the wine may be as pale as possible in colour.

The black grape yielding the best wine in the Saumur district is the breton, said to be the same as the carbinet-sauvignon, the leading variety in the grand vineyards of the Médoc. Other species of black grapes cultivated around Saumur are the varennes, yielding a soft and insipid wine of no kind of value, and the liverdun, or large gamay, the prevalent grape in the Mâconnais, and the same which in the days of Philippe-le-Hardi the *parlements* of Metz and Dijon interdicted the planting and cultivation of. The prevalent white grapes are the large and small pineau blanc, the bunches of the former being of an intermediate size, broad and pyramidal in shape, and with the berries close together. These have fine skins, are oblong in shape, and of a transparent yellowish-green hue tinged with red, are very sweet and juicy, and as a rule ripen late. As for the small pineau, the bunches are less compact, the berries are round and of a golden tint, are finer as well as sweeter in flavour, and ripen somewhat earlier than the fruit of the larger variety.

We noticed as we drove through the villages of Champigny and Varrains—the former celebrated for its fine red wines, and more especially its cru of the Clos des Cordeliers—that hardly any of the houses had windows looking on to the narrow street, but that all were provided with low openings for shooting the grapes into the cellar, where, when making red wine, they are trodden, but when making white wine, whether from black or white grapes, they are invariably pressed. Each of the houses had its ponderous porte-cochère and low narrow portal

leading into the large enclosed yard at its side, and over the high blank walls vines were frequently trained, pleasantly varying their dull gray monotony.

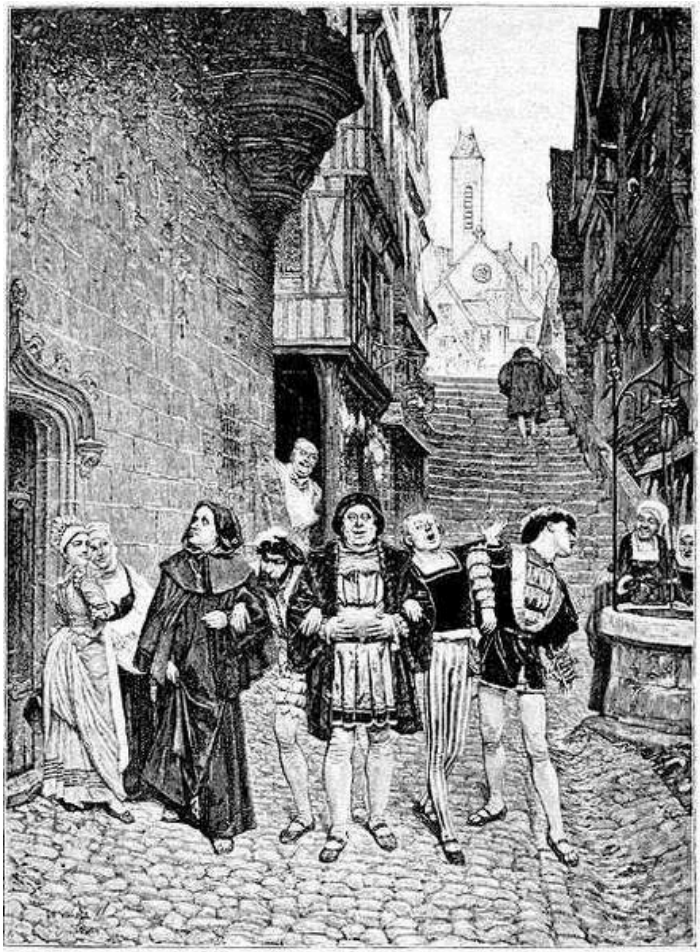
The grapes on being shot into the openings just mentioned fall through a kind of tunnel into a reservoir adjacent to the heavy press, which is invariably of wood and of the old-fashioned cumbersome type. They are forthwith placed beneath the press and usually subjected to five separate squeezes, the must from the first three being reserved for sparkling wine, while that from the two latter, owing to its being more or less deeply tinted, only serves for table-wine. The must is at once run off into casks, in order that it may not ferment on the grape-skins and imbibe any portion of their colouring matter. Active fermentation speedily sets in, and lasts for a fortnight or three weeks, according to whether the temperature chances to be high or low.

The vintaging of the white grapes takes place about a fortnight later than the black grapes, and is commonly a compound operation, the best and ripest bunches being first of all gathered just as the berries begin to get shrivelled and show symptoms of approaching rottenness. It is these selected grapes that yield the best wine. The second gathering, which follows shortly after the first, includes all the grapes remaining on the vines, and yields a wine perceptibly inferior in quality. The grapes on their arrival at the press-house are generally pressed immediately, and the must is run off into tuns to ferment. At the commencement these tuns are filled up every three or four days to replace the fermenting must which has flowed over; afterwards any waste is made good at the interval of a week, and then once a fortnight, the bungholes of the casks being securely

closed towards the end of the year, by which time the first fermentation is over.

It should be noted that the Saumur sparkling wine manufacturers draw considerable supplies of the white wine, required to impart lightness and effervescence to their *vin préparé*, from the Vouvray vineyards. Vouvray borders the Loire a few miles from the pleasant city of Tours, which awakens sinister recollections of truculent Louis XI., shut up in his fortified castle of Plessis-lez-Tours, around which Scott has thrown the halo of his genius in his novel of *Quentin Durward*. A succession of vineyard slopes stretch from one to another of the many historic châteaux along this portion of the Loire, the romantic associations of which render the Touraine one of the most interesting provinces of France. Near Tours, besides the vineyards of Saint-Cyr are those of Joué and Saint-Avertin; the two last situate on the opposite bank of the Cher, where the little town of Joué, perched on the summit of a hill in the midst of vineyards, looks over a vast plain known by the country-people as the Landes de Charlemagne, the scene, according to local tradition, of Charles Martel's great victory over the Saracens. The Saint-Avertin vineyards extend towards the east, stretching almost to the forest of Larçay, on the borders of the Cher, where Paul Louis Courier, the famous vigneron pamphleteer of the Restoration, noted alike for his raillery, wit, and satire, fell beneath the balls of an assassin. A noticeable cru in the neighbourhood of Tours is that of Cinq Mars, the ruined château of which survives as a memorial of the vengeance of Cardinal Richelieu, who, after having sent its owner to the scaffold, commanded its massive walls and towers to be razed '*à hauteur d'infamie*,' as we see them now.

Touraine, from its central position, its pleasant air, and its fertile soil, was ever a favourite residence of the earlier French monarchs, and down to the days of the Bourbons the seat of government continually vacillated between the banks of the Seine and those of the Loire. The vintages that ripen along the river have had their day of court favour too; for if Henri of Andelys sneeringly describes the wine of Tours as turning sour, in his famous poem of the *Bataille des Vins*, the sweet white wines of Anjou were greatly esteemed throughout the Middle Ages, and, with those of Orleans, were highly appreciated in Paris down to the seventeenth century. The cult of the 'dive Bouteille' and the fashion of Pantagruelic repasts have always found favour in the fat and fertile 'garden of France;' and the spectacle of citizens, courtiers, and monks staggering fraternally along, 'waggling their heads,' as Rabelais describes them, after a night of it at the tavern, was no uncommon one in the streets of its old historic towns during the period of the Renaissance.



TAVERN ROYSTERERS AT EARLY MORNING IN THE TOURAINE.

On proceeding to Vouvray from Tours, we skirt a succession of poplar-fringed meadows, stretching eastward in the direction of Amboise along the right bank of the Loire; and after a time a curve in the river discloses to view a range of vine-clad heights, extending some distance beyond the village of

Vouvray. Our route lies past the picturesque ruins of the abbey of Marmoûtier, immortalised in the piquant pages of the *Contes Drôlatiques*, and the Château des Roches—one of the most celebrated castles of the Loire—the numerous excavations in the soft limestone ridge on which they are perched being converted as usual into houses, magazines, and wine-cellars. We proceed through the village of Rochecorbon, and along a road winding among the spurs of the Vouvray range, past hamlets, half of whose inhabitants live in these primitive dwellings hollowed out of the cliff, and finally enter the charming Vallé Coquette, hemmed in on all sides with vine-clad slopes. Here a picturesque old house, half château, half homestead, was pointed out to us as a favourite place of sojourn of Balzac, who held the wine of Vouvray in high esteem, and who speaks of this rocky ridge as 'inhabited by a population of vine-dressers, their houses of several stories being hollowed out in the face of the cliff, and connected by dangerous staircases hewn in the soft stone. Smoke curls from most of the chimneys which peep above the green crest of vines, while the blows of the cooper's hammer resound in several of the cellars. A young girl trips to her garden over the roofs of these primitive dwellings, and an old woman, tranquilly seated on a ledge of projecting rock, supported solely by straggling roots of ivy spreading itself over the disjointed stones, leisurely turns her spinning-wheel, regardless of her dangerous position.' The foregoing picture, sketched by the author of *La Comédie Humaine* forty years ago, has scarcely changed at the present day.

At the point where the village of Vouvray climbs half-way up the vine-crested ridge the rapid-winding Cise throws itself into the Loire, and on crossing the

bridge that spans the tributary stream we discern on the western horizon, far beyond the verdant islets studding the swollen Loire, the tall campaniles of Tours Cathedral, which seem to rise out of the water like a couple of Venetian towers. Vouvray is a trim little place, clustered round about with numerous pleasant villas in the midst of charming gardens. The modern château of Moncontour here dominates the slope, and its terraced gardens, with their fantastically-clipped trees and geometric parterres, rise tier above tier up the face of the picturesque height that overlooks the broad fertile valley, with its gardens, cultivated fields, patches of woodland, and wide stretches of green pasture which, fringed with willows and poplars, border the swollen waters of the Loire. Where the river Brenne empties itself into the Cise the Coteau de Vouvray slopes off towards the north, and there rise up the vine-clad heights of Vernou, yielding a similar but inferior wine to that of Vouvray. The village of Vernou is nestled under the hill, and near the porch of its quaint little church a venerable elm-tree is pointed out as having been planted by Sully, Henry IV.'s able Minister. Here, too, an ancient wall, pierced with curious arched windows, and forming part of a modern building, is regarded by popular tradition as belonging to the palace in which Pépin-le-Bref, father of Charlemagne, lived at Vernou.



DOLMEN AT BAGNEUX, NEAR SAUMUR.

The communes of Dampierre, Souzay, and Parnay, in the neighbourhood of Saumur, produce still red wines rivalling those of Champigny, besides which all the finest white wines are vintaged hereabouts—in the Perrière, the Poilleux, and the Clos Morain vineyards, and in the Rotissans vineyard at Turquant. Wines of very fair quality are also grown on the more favourable slopes extending southwards along the valley of the Thouet, and comprised in the communes of Varrains, Chacé, St. Cyr-en-Bourg, and Brézé. The whole of this district, by the way, abounds with interesting archæological remains. While visiting the vineyards of Varrains and Chacé we came upon a couple of dolmens—vestiges of the ancient Celtic population of the valley of the Loire singularly abundant hereabouts. Brézé, the marquisate of which formerly belonged to Louis XVI.'s famous grand master of the ceremonies—immortalised by the rebuff he received from Mirabeau—boasts a noble château on the site of an ancient fortress, in connection with which there are

contemporary excavations in the neighbouring limestone, designed for a garrison of 500 or 600 men. Beyond the vineyards of Saint-Florent, westward of Saumur and on the banks of the Thouet, is an extensive plateau, partially overgrown with vines, where may be traced the remains of a Roman camp. Moreover, in the southern environs of Saumur, in the midst of vineyards producing exclusively white wines, is one of the most remarkable dolmens known. This imposing structure, perfect in all respects save that one of the four enormous stones which roof it in has been split in two, and requires to be supported, is no less than 65 feet in length, 23 feet in width, and 10 feet high.

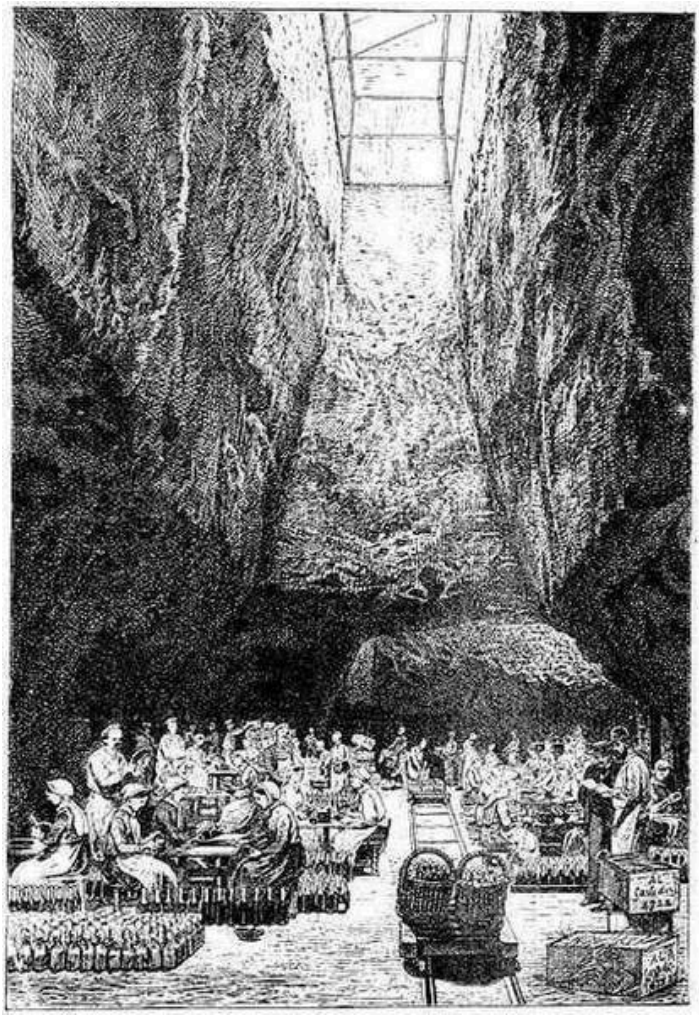
At Saint-Florent, the pleasant little suburb of Saumur, skirting the river Thouet, and sheltered by steep hills formed of soft limestone, which offers great facilities for the excavation of extensive cellars, the largest manufacturer of Saumur sparkling wines has his establishment. Externally this offers but little to strike the eye. A couple of pleasant country houses, half hidden by spreading foliage, stand at the two extremities of a spacious and well-kept garden, beyond which one catches a glimpse of some outbuildings sheltered by the vine-crowned cliff, in which a labyrinth of gloomy galleries has been hollowed out. Here M. Ackerman-Laurance, the extent of whose business ranks him as second among the sparkling wine manufacturers of the world, stores something like 10,000 casks and several million bottles of wine.

At the commencement of the present century, in the days when, as Balzac relates in his *Eugénie Grandet*, the Belgians bought up entire vintages of Saumur wine, then largely in demand with them for

sacramental purposes, the founder of the Saint-Florent house commenced to deal in the ordinary still wines of the district. Nearly half a century ago he was led to attempt the manufacture of sparkling wines, but his efforts to bring them into notice failed; and he was on the point of abandoning his enterprise, when an order for one hundred cases revived his hopes, and led to the foundation of the present vast establishment. As already mentioned, for many miles all the heights along the Loire have been more or less excavated for stone for building purposes, so that every one hereabouts who grows wine or deals in it has any amount of cellar accommodation ready to hand. It was the vast extent of the galleries which M. Ackerman *père* discovered already excavated at Saint-Florent that induced him to settle there in preference to Saumur. Extensive, however, as the original vaults were, considerable additional excavations have from time to time been found necessary; and to-day the firm is still further increasing the area of its cellars, which already comprise three principal avenues, each the third of a mile long, and no fewer than sixty transverse galleries, the total length of which is several miles. One great advantage is that the whole are on the ordinary level.

Ranged against the black uneven walls of the more tortuous ancient vaults which give access to these labyrinthine corridors are thousands of casks of wine —some in single rows, others in triple tiers—forming the reserve stock of the establishment. As may be supposed, a powerful vinous odour permeates these vaults, in which the fumes of wine have been accumulating for the best part of a century. After passing beneath a massive stone arch which

separates the old cellars from the new, a series of broad and regularly proportioned galleries are reached, having bottles stacked in their tens of thousands on either side. Overhead the roof is perforated at regular intervals with circular shafts, affording both light and ventilation, and enabling the temperature to be regulated to a nicety. In these lateral and transverse galleries millions of bottles of wine in various stages of preparation are stacked.



THE CELLARS OF M. ACKERMAN-LAURANCE AT SAINT-FLORENT.
LABELLING AND PACKING SPARKLING SAUMUR.

We have explained that in the Champagne it is the custom for the manufacturers of sparkling wine to purchase considerable quantities of grapes from the

surrounding growers, and to press these themselves, or have them pressed under their own superintendence. At Saumur only those firms possessing vineyards make their own *vin brut*, the bulk of the wine used for conversion into sparkling wine being purchased from the neighbouring growers. On the newly-expressed must arriving at M. Ackerman-Laurance's cellars it is allowed to rest until the commencement of the ensuing year, when half of it is mixed with wine in stock belonging to last year's vintage, and the remaining half is reserved for mingling with the must of the ensuing vintage. The blending is accomplished in a couple of colossal vats hewn out of the rock, and coated on the inside with cement. Each of these vats is provided with 200 paddles for thoroughly mixing the wine, and with five pipes for drawing it off when the amalgamation is complete. Usually the cuvée will embrace 1600 hogsheads, or 80,000 gallons of wine, almost sufficient for half a million bottles. A fourth of this quantity can be mixed in each vat at a single operation, and this mixing is repeated again and again until the last gallon run off is of precisely the same type as the first. For the finer qualities of sparkling Saumur the proportion of wine from the black grapes to that from white is generally at the rate of three or four to one. For the inferior qualities more wine from white than from black grapes is invariably used. Only in the wine from white grapes is the effervescent principle retained to any particular extent; but, on the other hand, the wine from black grapes imparts both quality and vinous character to the blend.

The blending having been satisfactorily accomplished, the wine is stored in casks, never

perfectly filled, yet with their bungholes tightly closed, and slowly continues its fermentation, eating up its sugar, purging itself, and letting fall its lees. Three months later it is fined. It is rarely kept in the wood for more than a year, though sometimes the superior qualities remain for a couple of years in cask. Occasionally it is even bottled in the spring following the vintage; still, as a rule, the bottling of sparkling Saumur takes place during the ensuing summer months, when the temperature is at the highest, as this insures to it a greater degree of effervescence. At the time of bottling its saccharine strength is raised to a given degree by the addition of the finest sugar-candy, and henceforward the wine is subjected to precisely the same treatment as is pursued with regard to Champagne.

It is in a broad but sombre gallery of the more ancient vaults—the roughly-hewn walls of which are black from the combined action of alcohol and carbonic acid gas—that the processes of disgorging the wine of its sediment, adding the syrup, filling up the bottles with wine to replace that which gushes out when the disgorging operation is performed, together with the re-corking, stringing, and wiring of the bottles, are carried on. The one or two adjacent shafts impart very little light, but a couple of resplendent metal reflectors, which at a distance one might fancy to be some dragon’s flaming eyes, combined with the lamps placed near the people at work, effectually illuminate the spot.



THE CELLARS OF M. LOUIS DUVAU AÎNÉ AT THE CHÂTEAU OF VARRAINS.

Another considerable manufacturer of sparkling Saumur is M. Louis Duvau aîné, owner of the château of Varrains, in the village of the same name, at no great distance from the Coteau de Saumur. His cellars adjoin the château, a picturesque but somewhat neglected structure of the last century, with sculptured medallions in high relief above the lower windows, and florid vases surmounting the mansards in the roof. In front is a large rambling court shaded with acacia and lime trees, and surrounded by outbuildings, prominent among which is a picturesque dovecot, massive at the base as a martello tower, and having an elegant open stone lantern springing from its bell-shaped roof. The cellars are entered down a steep incline under a low stone arch, the masonry above which is overgrown with ivy in large clusters and straggling creeping plants. We soon come upon a deep recess to the

right, wherein stands a unique cumbersome screw-press, needing ten or a dozen men to work the unwieldy capstan which sets the juice flowing from the crushed grapes into the adjacent shallow trough. On our left hand are a couple of ancient reservoirs, formed out of huge blocks of stone, with the entrance to a long vaulted cellar filled with wine in cask. We advance slowly in the uncertain light along a succession of gloomy galleries, with moisture oozing from their blackened walls and roofs, picking our way between bottles of wine stacked in huge square piles and rows of casks raised in tiers. Suddenly a broad flood of light shooting down a lofty shaft throws a Rembrandtish effect across a spacious and most melodramatic-looking cave, roughly hewn out of the rock, and towards which seven dimly-lighted galleries converge. On all sides a scene of bustling animation presents itself. From one gallery men keep arriving with baskets of wine ready for the disgorger; while along another bottles of wine duly dosed with syrup are being borne off to be decorated with metal foil and their distinctive labels. Groups of workmen are busily engaged disgorging, dosing, and re-corking the newly-arrived bottles of wine; corks fly out with a succession of loud reports, suggestive of the irregular fire of a party of skirmishers; a fizzing, spurting, and spluttering of the wine next ensues, and is followed by the incessant clicking of the various apparatus employed in the corking and wiring of the bottles.



Gradual inclines conduct to the two lower tiers of galleries, for the cellars of M. Duvau consist of as many as three stories. Down below there is naturally less light, and the temperature, too, is sensibly colder. Advantage is taken of this latter circumstance to remove the newly-bottled wine to these lower vaults whenever an excessive development of carbonic acid threatens the bursting of an undue proportion of bottles, a casualty which among the Saumur sparkling wine manufacturers ranges far higher than with the manufacturers of Champagne. For the economy of time and labour, a lift, raised and lowered by means of a capstan worked by horses, is employed to transfer the bottles of wine from one tier of cellars to another.

The demand for sparkling Saumur is evidently on the increase, for M. Duvau, at the time of our visit, was excavating extensive additional cellarage. The subsoil at Varrains being largely composed of marl, which is much softer than the tufa of the Saint-Florent coteau, necessitated the roofs of the new galleries being worked in a particular form in order to avoid having recourse to either brickwork or masonry. Tons of this excavated marl were being spread over the soil of M. Duvau's vineyard in the rear of the château, greatly, it was said, to the benefit of the vines, whose grapes were all of the black variety; indeed, scarcely any wine is vintaged from white grapes in the commune of Varrains.

At M. Duvau's we went through a complete scale of sparkling Saumurs, commencing with the younger and less matured samples, and ascending step by step to wines a dozen and more years old. Every year seemed to produce an improvement in the wine, the older varieties gaining greatly in delicacy and softening very perceptibly in flavour.



Finding that sparkling wines were being made in most of the wine-producing districts of France, where the growths were sufficiently light and of the requisite quality, Messrs. E. Normandin & Co. conceived the idea of laying the famous Bordeaux district under contribution for a similar purpose, and, aided by a staff of experienced workmen from Epernay, they have succeeded in producing a sparkling Sauternes. Sauternes, as is well known, is one of the finest of white wines, soft, delicate, and of

beautiful flavour, and its transformation into a sparkling wine has been very successfully accomplished. Messrs. Normandin's head-quarters are in the thriving little town of Châteauneuf, in the pleasant valley of the Charente, and within fifteen miles of Angoulême, a famous old French town, encompassed by ancient ramparts and crumbling corner-towers; and which, dominated by the lofty belfry of its restored semi-Byzantine cathedral, rising in a series of open arcades, spreads itself picturesquely out along a precipitous height, watered at its base by the rivers Anguienne and Charente. Between Angoulême and Châteauneuf vineyard plots dotted over with walnut-trees, or simple rows of vines divided by strips of ripening maize, and broken up at intervals by bright green pastures, line both banks of the river Charente. The surrounding country is undulating and picturesque. Poplars and elms fringe the roadsides, divide the larger fields and vineyards, and screen the cosy-looking red-roofed farmhouses, which present to the eyes of the passing tourist a succession of pictures of quiet rural prosperity.

Châteauneuf communicates with the Sauternes district by rail, so that supplies of wine from there are readily obtainable. Vin de Colombar—a famous white growth which English and Dutch cruisers used to ascend the Charente to obtain cargoes of when the Jerez wines were shut out from England by the Spanish War of Succession—vintaged principally at Montignac-le-Coq, also enters largely into Messrs. Normandin & Co.'s sparkling Sauternes cuvée. This colombar grape is simply the semillon—one of the leading varieties of the Sauternes district—transported to the Charente. The remarkably cool cellars where the firm store their wine, whether in

wood or bottle, have been formed from some vast subterranean galleries whence centuries ago stone was quarried, and which are situated about a quarter of an hour's drive from Châteauneuf, in the midst of vineyards and cornfields. The wine is invariably bottled in a cellier at the head establishment, but it is in these cellars where it goes through the course of careful treatment similar to that pursued with regard to Champagne.

In order that the delicate flavour of the wine may be preserved, the liqueur is prepared with the finest old Sauternes, without any addition of spirit, and the dose is administered with the most improved modern appliance, constructed of silver, and provided with crystal taps. At the Concours Régional d'Angoulême of 1877, the jury, after recording that they had satisfied themselves by the aid of a chemical analysis that the samples of sparkling Sauternes submitted to their judgment were free from any foreign ingredient, awarded to Messrs. Normandin & Co. the only gold medal given in the Group of Alimentary Products.

Encouraged, no doubt, by the success obtained by Messrs. Normandin & Co. with their sparkling Sauternes, the house of Lermat-Robert & Co., of Bordeaux, introduced a few years ago a sparkling Barsac, samples of which were submitted to the jury at the Paris Exhibition of 1878.





VINTAGER OF THE CÔTE D'OR.



VINTAGER OF THE

II.

THE SPARKLING WINES OF BURGUNDY, THE JURA, AND THE

SOUTH OF FRANCE.

Sparkling wines of the Côte d'Or at the Paris Exhibition of 1878—Chambertin, Romanée, and Vougeot—Burgundy wines and vines formerly presents from princes—Vintaging sparkling Burgundies—Their after-treatment in the cellars —Excess of breakage—Similarity of proceeding to that followed in the Champagne—Principal manufacturers of sparkling Burgundies—Sparkling wines of Tonnerre, the birthplace of the Chevalier d'Eon—The Vin d'Arbanne of Bar-sur-Aube—Death there of the Bastard de Bourbon—Madame de la Motte's ostentatious display and arrest there—Sparkling wines of the Beaujolais—The Mont-Brouilly vineyards—Ancient reputation of the wines of the Jura—The Vin Jaune of Arbois beloved of Henri Quatre—Rhymes by him in its honour—Lons-le-Saulnier—Vineyards yielding the sparkling Jura wines—Their vintaging and subsequent treatment—Their high alcoholic strength and general drawbacks—Sparkling wines of Auvergne, Guienne, Dauphiné, and Languedoc—Sparkling Saint-Péray the Champagne of the South—Valence, with its reminiscences of Pius VI. and Napoleon I.—The 'Horns of Crussol' on the banks of the Rhône—Vintage scene at Saint-Péray—The vines and vineyards producing sparkling wine—Manipulation of sparkling Saint-Péray—Its abundance of natural sugar—The cellars of M. de Saint-Prix, and samples of his wines—Sparkling Côte-Rotie, Château-Grillé, and Hermitage—Annual production and principal markets of sparkling Saint-Péray—Clairette de Die—The Porte Rouge of Die Cathedral—How the Die wine is made—The sparkling white and rose-coloured muscatels of Die—Sparkling wines of Vercheny and Lagrasse—Barnave and the royal flight to

Varennes—Narbonne formerly a miniature Rome, now noted merely for its wine and honey—Fête of the Black Virgin at Limoux—Preference given to the new wine over the miraculous water—Blanquette of Limoux, and how it is made—Characteristics of this overrated wine.



SPARKLING wines are made to a considerable extent in Burgundy, notably at Beaune, Nuits, and Dijon; and though as a rule heavier and more potent than the subtile and delicate-flavoured wines of the Marne, still some of the higher qualities, both of the red and white varieties, exhibit a degree of refinement which those familiar only with the commoner kinds can scarcely form an idea of. At the Paris Exhibition of 1878 we tasted, among a large collection of the sparkling wines of the Côte d'Or, samples of Chambertin, Romanée, and Vougeot, of

the highest order. Although red wines, they had the merit of being deficient in that body which forms such an objectionable feature in sparkling wines of a deep shade of colour. M. Regnier, the exhibitor of sparkling red Vougeot, sent, moreover, a white sparkling wine, from the species of grape known locally as the clos blanc de Vougeot. These wines, as well as the Chambertin, came from the Côte de Nuits, the growths of which are generally considered of too vigorous a type for successful conversion into sparkling wine, preference being usually given to the produce of the Côte de Beaune. Among the sparkling Burgundies from the last-named district were samples from Savigny, Chassagne, and Meursault, all famous for their fine white wines.

Burgundy ranks as one of the oldest viticultural regions of Central Europe, and for centuries its wines have been held in the highest renown. In the Middle Ages both the wines and vines of this favoured province passed as presents from one royal personage to another, just as grand *cordons* are exchanged between them nowadays. The fabrication of sparkling wine, however, dates no further back than some sixty years or so. The system of procedure is much the same as in the Champagne, and, as there, the wine is mainly the produce of the pineau noir and pineau blanc varieties of grape. At the vintage, in order to avoid bruising the ripened fruit and to guard against premature fermentation, the grapes are conveyed to the pressoirs in baskets, instead of the large oval vats termed *balonges*, common to the district. They are placed beneath the press as soon as possible, and for superior sparkling wines only the juice resulting from the first pressure, and known as the *mère goutte*, or mother drop, is employed. For the ordinary wines, that expressed at

the second squeezing of the fruit is mingled with the other. The must is at once run off into casks, which have been previously sulphured, to check, in a measure, the ardour of the first fermentation, and lighten the colour of the newly-made wine. Towards the end of October, when this first fermentation is over, the wine is removed to the cellars, or to some other cool place, and in December it is racked into other casks. In the April following it is again racked, to insure its being perfectly clear at the epoch of bottling in the month of May. The sulphuring of the original casks having had the effect of slightly checking the fermentation and retaining a certain amount of saccharine in the wine, it is only on exceptional occasions that the latter is artificially sweetened previous to being bottled.

A fortnight after the tirage the wine commonly attains the stage known as *grand mousseux*, and by the end of September the breakage will have amounted to between 5 and 8 per cent, which necessitates the taking down the stacks of bottles and piling them up anew. The wine as a rule remains in the cellars for fully a couple of years from the time of bottling until it is shipped. Posing the bottles *sur pointe*, agitating them daily, together with the disgorging and liqueuring of the wine, are accomplished precisely as in the Champagne.

Among the principal manufacturers of sparkling Burgundies are Messrs. André & Voillot, of Beaune, whose sparkling white Romanée, Nuits, and Volnay are well and favourably known in England; M. Louis Latour, also of Beaune, and equally noted for his sparkling red Volnay, Nuits, and Chambertin, as for his sparkling white varieties; Messrs. Maire et Fils, likewise of Beaune; M. Labouré-Goutard and Messrs.

Geisweiller et Fils, of Nuits; Messrs. Marey & Liger-Belair, of Nuits and Vosne; and M. Regnier, of Dijon.

In the department of the Yonne—that is, in Lower Burgundy—sparkling wines somewhat alcoholic in character have been made for the last half century at Tonnerre, where the Chevalier d'Eon, that enigma of his epoch, was born. The Tonnerre vineyards are of high antiquity, and for sparkling wines the produce of the black and white pineau and the white morillon varieties of grape is had recourse to. The vintaging is accomplished with great care, and only the juice which flows from the first pressure is employed. This is run off immediately into casks, which are hermetically closed when the fermentation has subsided. The after-treatment of the wine is the same as in the Champagne. Sparkling wines are likewise made at Epineuil, a village in the neighbourhood of Tonnerre, and at Chablis, so famous for its white wines, about ten miles distant.

An effervescing wine known as the Vin d'Arbanne is made at Bar-sur-Aube, some fifty miles north-east of Tonnerre, on the borders of Burgundy, but actually in the province of Champagne, although far beyond the limits to which the famed viticultural district extends. It was at Bar-sur-Aube where the Bastard de Bourbon, chief of the sanguinary gang of *écorcheurs* (flayers), was sewn up in a sack and flung over the parapet of the old stone bridge into the river beneath, by order of Charles VII.; and here, too, Madame de la Motte, of Diamond Necklace notoriety, was married, and in after years made a parade of the ill-gotten wealth she had acquired by successfully fooling that infatuated libertine the Cardinal Prince de Rohan, until her ostentatious display was cut short by her arrest. This Vin

d'Arbanne is produced from pineaux and white gamay grapes, which, after being gathered with care at the moment the dew falls, are forthwith pressed. The wine is left on its lees until the following February, when it is racked and fined, the bottling taking place when the moon is at the full in March.

Red and white sparkling wines are made to a small extent at Saint-Lager, in the Beaujolais, from wine vintaged in the Mont-Brouilly vineyards, one of the best known of the Beaujolais crus. Mont-Brouilly is a lofty hill near the village of Cercie, and is covered from base to summit on all its sides with vines of the gamay species, rarely trained at all, but left to trail along the ground at their own sweet will. At the vintage, as we witnessed it, men and women—young, middle-aged, and old—accompanied by troops of children, were roaming all over the slopes dexterously nipping off the bunches of grapes with their thumb and finger nails, and flinging them into the little wooden tubs with which they were provided. The pressing of the grapes and the after-treatment of the wine destined to become sparkling are the same in the Beaujolais as in Upper and Lower Burgundy.

The red, straw, and yellow wines of the Jura have long had a high reputation in the East of France, and the *Vin Jaune* of Arbois, an ancient fortified town on the banks of the Cuisance, besieged and sacked in turn by Charles of Amboise, Henri IV., and Louis XIV., was one of the favourite beverages of the tippling Béarnais who styled himself Seigneur of Ay and Gonesse, and who acquired his liking for it while sojourning during the siege of Arbois at the old Château des Arsures. In one of Henri Quatre's letters to his minister Sully we find him observing, 'I send

you two bottles of Vin d'Arbois, for I know you do not detest it.' A couple of other bottles of the same wine are said to have cemented the king's reconciliation with Mayenne, the leader of the League; and the lover of La Belle Gabrielle is moreover credited with having composed at his mistress's table some doggrel rhymes in honour of the famous Jura cru:

'Come, little page, serve us aright,
The crown is often heavy to bear;
So fill up my goblet large and light
Whenever you find a vacancy there.
This wine is surely no Christian wight,
And yet you never complaint will hear
That it's not baptised with water clear.
Down my throat I pour
The old Arbois;
And now, my lords, let us our voices raise,
And sing of Silenus and Bacchus the praise!'

In more modern times the Jura, not content with the fame of the historic yellow wines of Arbois and the deservedly-esteemed straw wines of Château-Châlon, has produced large quantities of sparkling wine, the original manufacture of which commenced as far back as a century ago. To-day the principal seats of the manufacture are at Arbois and Lons-le-Saulnier, the latter town the capital of the department, and one of the most ancient towns of France. Originally founded by the Gauls on the banks of the Vallière, in a little valley bordered by lofty hills, which are to-day covered with vines, it was girded round with fortifications by the Romans. Subsequently the Huns and the Vandals pillaged it; then the French and the Burgundians repeatedly contested its possession, and it was only definitively acquired by France during

the reign of Louis XIV. Rouget de l'Isle, the famous author of the 'Marseillaise,' was born at Lons-le-Saulnier, and here also Marshal Ney assembled and harangued his troops before marching to join Napoleon, whom he had promised Louis XVIII. to bring back to Paris in an iron cage.

The vineyards whence the principal supplies for these sparkling wines are derived are grouped at varying distances around Lons-le-Saulnier at L'Etoile, Quintigny, Salins, Arbois, St. Laurent-la-Roche, and Pupillin, with the Jura chain of mountains rising up grandly on the east. The best vineyards at L'Etoile—which lies some couple of miles from Lons-le-Saulnier, surrounded by hills, planted from base to summit with vines—are La Vigne Blanche, Montmorin, and Montgenest. At Quintigny, the wines of which are less potent than those of Arbois, and only retain their effervescent properties for a couple of years, the Paridis, Prémelan, and Montmorin vineyards are held in most repute, while at Pupillin, where a soft agreeable wine is vintaged, the principal vineyards are the Faille and the Clos. The vines cultivated for the production of sparkling wines are chiefly the savagnin, or white pineau, the melon of Poligny, and the poulsard, a black variety of grape held locally in much esteem.

At the vintage, which commences towards the end of October and lasts until the middle of the following month, all the rotten or unripe grapes are carefully set aside, and the sound ones only submitted to the action of a screw-press. After the must has flowed for about half an hour, the grapes are newly collected under the press and the screw again applied. The produce of this double operation is poured into a vat termed a *sapine*, where it remains until bubbles are

seen escaping through the *chapeau* that forms on the surface of the liquid. The must is then drawn off—sometimes after being fined—into casks, which the majority of wine-growers previously impregnate with the fumes of sulphur. When in cask the wine is treated in one of two ways; either the casks are kept constantly filled to the bunghole, causing the foam which rises to the surface during the fermentation to flow over, and thereby leave the wine comparatively clear, or else the casks are not completely filled, in which case the wine requires to be racked several times before it is in a condition for fining. This latter operation is effected about the commencement of February, and a second fining follows if the first one fails to render the wine perfectly clear. At the bottling, which invariably takes place in April, the Jura wines rarely require any addition of sugar to insure an ample effervescence. Subsequently they are treated in exactly the same manner as the vintages of the Marne are treated by the great Champagne manufacturers. In addition to white sparkling wine, a pink variety, with natural effervescent properties, is made by mixing with the savagnin and melon grapes a certain proportion of the poulsard species, from which the best red wines of the Jura are produced.

One of the principal sparkling wine establishments at Lons-le-Saulnier is that of M. Auguste Devaux, founded in the year 1860. He manufactures both sweet and dry wines, which are sold largely in France and elsewhere on the Continent, and have lately been introduced into England. Their alcoholic strength is equivalent to from 25° to 26° of proof spirit, being largely above the dry sparkling wines of the Champagne, which the Jura manufacturers regard as a positive advantage rather than a decided drawback, which it most undoubtedly is.

Besides being too spirituous, the sparkling wines of the Jura are deficient in refinement and delicacy. The commoner kinds, indeed, frequently have a pronounced unpleasant flavour, due to the nature of the soil, to careless vinification, or to the inferior quality of liqueur with which the wines have been dosed. Out of some fifty samples of all ages and varieties which in my capacity of juror I tasted at the Paris Exhibition of 1878, I cannot call to mind one that a real connoisseur of sparkling wines would care to admit to his table.

Sparkling wines are made after a fashion in several of the southern provinces of France—in Auvergne, at Clermont-Ferrand, under the shadow of the lofty Puy de Dôme; in Guienne, at Astaffort, the scene of a bloody engagement during the Wars of Religion, in which the Protestant army was cut to pieces when about to cross the Garonne; at Nérac, where frail Marguerite de Valois kept her dissolute Court, and Catherine de Médicis brought her flying squadron of fascinating maids-of-honour to gain over the Huguenot leaders to the Catholic cause; and at Cahors, the Divina, or divine fountain of the Celts, and the birthplace of Pope John XXII., of Clement Marot, the early French poet, and of Léon Gambetta; in Dauphiné, at Die, Saint-Chef, Saint-Péray, and Largentière—so named after some abandoned silver mines—and where the vines are cultivated against low walls rising in a series of terraces from the base to the summit of the lofty hills; and in Languedoc, at Brioude, where St. Vincent, the patron saint of the vine-dressers, suffered martyrdom, and where it is the practice to expose the must of the future sparkling wine for several nights to the dew in order to rid it of its reddish colour; also at Linardie, and, more southward still, at Limoux, whence comes the

well-known effervescing Blanquette.

Principal among the foregoing is the excellent wine of Saint-Péray, commonly characterised as the Champagne of the South of France. The Saint-Péray vineyards border the Rhone some ten miles below the Hermitage coteau—the vines of which are to-day well-nigh destroyed by the phylloxera—but are on the opposite bank of the river. Our visit to Saint-Péray was made from Valence, in which dull southern city we had loitered in order to glance at the vast Hôtel du Gouvernement—where octogenarian Pius VI., after being spirited away a prisoner from Rome and hurried over the Alps in a litter by order of the French Directory, drew his last breath while silently gazing across the rushing river at the view he so much admired—and to discover the house in the Grande Rue, numbered 4, in an attic of which history records that Napoleon I., when a sub-lieutenant of artillery in garrison at Valence, resided, and which he quitted owing three and a half francs to his pastrycook.

We crossed the Rhone over one of its hundred flimsy suspension-bridges, on the majority of which a notice warns you neither to smoke nor run, and were soon skirting the base of a lofty, bare, precipitous rock, with the 'horns of Crussol,' as the peasants term two tall pointed gables of a ruined feudal château, perched at the dizzy edge, and having a perpendicular fall of some five or six hundred feet below. The château, which formerly belonged to the Dukes of Uzès, recognised by virtue of the extent of their domains as *premiers pairs de France*, was not originally erected in close proximity to any such formidable precipice. The crag on which it stands had, it seems, been blasted from time to time for the

sake of the stone, until on one unlucky occasion, when too heavy a charge of powder was employed, the entire side of the rock, together with a considerable portion of the château itself, were sent flying into the air. The authorities, professing to regard what remained of the edifice as an historical monument of the Middle Ages, hereupon stepped in and prohibited the quarry being worked for the future.



CONVEYING GRAPES TO THE PRESS AT SAINT-PÉRAY.

Passing beneath the cliff, one wound round to the left and dived into a picturesque wooded dell at the entrance to a mountain pass, then crossed the rocky bed of a dried-up stream, and drove along an avenue

of mulberry-trees, which in a few minutes conducted us to Saint-Péray, where one found the vintage in full operation. Carts laden with tubs filled with white and purple grapes, around which wasps without number swarmed, were arriving from all points of the environs and crowding the narrow streets. Any quantity of grapes were seemingly to be had for the asking, for all the pretty girls in the place were gorging themselves with the luscious-looking fruit. In the coopers' yards brand-new casks were ranged in rows in readiness for the newly-made wine, and through open doorways, and in all manner of dim recesses, one caught sight of sturdy men energetically trampling the gushing grapes under their bare feet, and of huge creaking winepresses reeking with the purple juice. It was chiefly common red wine, of an excellent flavour, however, that was being made in these nooks and corners, the sparkling white wine known as Saint-Péray being manufactured in larger establishments, and on more scientific principles. It is from a white species of grape known as the petite and grosse rousette—the same which yields the white Hermitage—that the Champagne of the south is produced; and the vineyards where they are cultivated occupy all the more favourable slopes immediately outside the village, the most noted being the Coteau-Gaillard, Solignacs, Thioulet, and Hungary.

Although there is a close similarity between the manufacture of Champagne and the effervescing wine of Saint-Péray, there are still one or two noteworthy variations. For a wine to be sparkling it is requisite that it should ferment in the bottle, a result obtained by bottling it while it contains a certain undeveloped proportion of alcohol and carbonic acid, represented by so much sugar, of

which they are the component parts. This ingredient has frequently to be added to the Champagne wines to render them sparkling, but the wine of Saint-Péray in its natural state contains so much sugar that any addition would be deleterious. This excess of saccharine enables the manufacturer to dispense with some of the operations necessary to the fabrication of Champagne, which, after fermenting in the cask, requires a second fermentation to be provoked in the bottle, whereas the Saint-Péray wine ferments only once, being bottled immediately it comes from the wine-press.

The deposit in the wine after being impelled towards the neck of the bottle is got rid of by following the same system as is pursued in the Champagne, but no liqueur whatever is subsequently added to the wine. On the other hand, it is a common practice to reduce the over-sweetness of sparkling Saint-Péray in years when the grapes are more than usually ripe by mixing with it some old dry white wine.

At Saint-Péray we visited the cellars of M. de Saint-Prix, one of the principal wine-growers of the district. The samples of effervescing wine which he produced for us to taste were of a pale golden colour, of a slightly nutty flavour, and with a decided suggestion of the spirituous essence known to be concentrated in the wine, one glass of which will go quite as far towards elevating a person as three glasses of Champagne. Keeping the wine for a few years is said materially to improve its quality, to the sacrifice, however, of its effervescing properties. M. de Saint-Prix informed us that he manufactured every year a certain quantity of sparkling Côte-Rotie, Château-Grillé, and Hermitage. The principal markets for the Saint-Péray sparkling wines—the

production of which falls considerably short of a million bottles per annum—are England, Germany, Russia, Holland, and Belgium.



The other side of the Rhone is fruitful in minor sparkling wines, chief among which is the so-called Clairette de Die, made at the town of that name, a place of some splendour, as existing antiquities show, in the days of the Roman dominion in Gaul. Later on, Die was the scene of constant struggles for supremacy between its counts and bishops, one of the latter being massacred by the populace in front of the cathedral doorway—ever since known by the sinister appellation of the Porte Rouge—and Catholics and Huguenots alike devastated the town in the troublesome times of the Reformation. Clairette de Die is made principally from the blanquette or malvoisie variety of grape, which, after the stalks have been removed, is both trodden with the feet and pressed. The must is run off immediately into casks, and four-and-twenty hours later it is racked into other casks, a similar operation being

performed every two or three days for the period of a couple of months, when, the fermentation having subsided, the wine is fined and usually bottled in the following March. Newly-made Clairette de Die is a sweet sparkling wine, but it loses its natural effervescence after a couple of years, unless it has been treated in the same manner as Champagne, which is rarely the case. The wine enjoys a reputation altogether beyond its merits.

In addition to the well-known Clairette, some of the wine-growers of Die make sparkling white and rose-coloured muscatels of superior quality, which retain their effervescing properties for several years. A sparkling wine is also made some ten miles from Die, on the road to Saillans, in a district bounded on the one side by the waters of the Drôme, and on the other by strange mountains with helmet-shaped crests. The centre of production is a locality called Vercheny, composed of several hamlets, one of which, named Le Temple, was the original home of the family of Barnave. The impressionable young deputy to the National Assembly formed one of the trio sent to bring back the French royal family from Varennes after their flight from Paris. It will be remembered how, under the influence of Marie Antoinette and Madame Elizabeth, Barnave became transformed during the journey into a faithful partisan of their unhappy cause, and that he eventually paid the penalty of his devotion with his life.

In the extreme south of France, and almost under the shadow of the Pyrenees, a sparkling wine of some repute is made at a place called Lagrasse, about five-and-twenty miles westward of Narbonne, the once-famous Mediterranean city, the maritime rival of

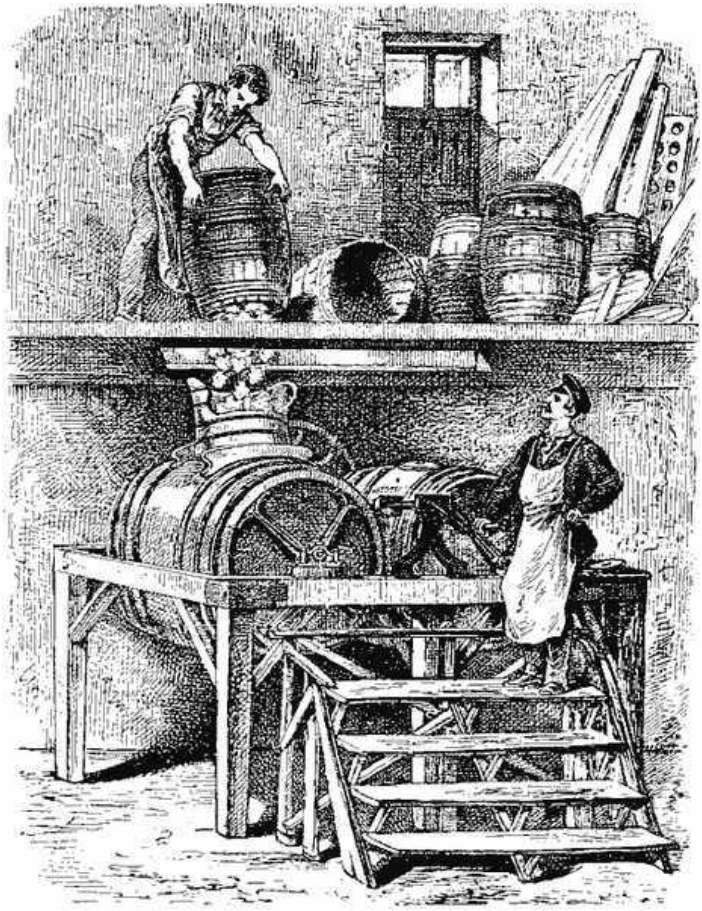
Marseilles, and in its palmy days, prior to the Christian era, a miniature Rome, with its capitol, its curia, its decemvirs, its consuls, its prætors, its questors, its censors, and its ediles, and which boasted of being the birthplace of three Roman Emperors. To-day Narbonne has to content itself with the humble renown derived from its delicious honey and its characterless full-bodied wines. Limoux, so celebrated for its Blanquette, lies a long way farther to the west, behind the Corbières range of mountains that join on to the Pyrenees, and the jagged peaks, deep barren gorges, and scarred sides of which have been witness of many a desperate struggle during the century and a half when they formed the boundary between France and Spain.

We arrived at Limoux just too late for the famous *fête* of the Black Virgin, which lasts three weeks, and attracts crowds of southern pilgrims to the chapel of Our Lady of Marseilles, perched on a little hill some short distance from the town, with a fountain half-way up, whose water issues drop by drop, and has the credit of possessing unheard-of virtues. The majority of pilgrims, however, exhibit a decided preference for the new-made wine over the miraculous water, and for one-and-twenty days something like a carnival of inebriety prevails at Limoux.

Blanquette de Limoux derives its name from the species of grape it is produced from, and which we believe to be identical with the malvoisie, or malmsey. Its long-shaped berries grow in huge bunches, and dry readily on the stalks. The fruit is gathered as tenderly as possible, care being taken that it shall not be in the slightest degree bruised, and is then spread out upon a floor to admit of

whatever sugar it contains becoming perfect. The bad grapes having been carefully picked out, and the seeds extracted from the remaining fruit, the latter is now trodden, and the must, after being filtered through a strainer, is placed in casks, where it remains fermenting for about a week, during which time any overflow is daily replenished by other must reserved for the purpose. The wine is again clarified, and placed in fresh casks with the bungholes only lightly closed until all sensible fermentation has ceased, when they are securely fastened up. The bottling takes place in the month of March, and the wine is subsequently treated much after the same fashion as sparkling Saint-Péray, excepting that it is generally found necessary to repeat the operation of *dégorgement* three, if not as many as four, times.

Blanquette de Limoux is a pale white wine, the saccharine properties of which have become completely transformed into carbonic acid gas and alcohol. It is consequently both dry and spirituous, deficient in delicacy, and altogether proves a great disappointment. At its best it may, perhaps, rank with sparkling Saint-Péray, but unquestionably not with an average Champagne.



PREPARING THE CHAMPAGNE LIQUEUR.

III.
FACTS AND NOTES RESPECTING SPARKLING WINES.

Dry and sweet Champagnes—Their sparkling

properties—Form of Champagne glasses—Style of sparkling wines consumed in different countries—The colour and alcoholic strength of Champagne—Champagne approved of by the faculty—Its use in nervous derangements—The icing of Champagne—Scarcity of grand vintages in the Champagne—The quality of the wine has little influence on the price—Prices realised by the Ay and Verzenay crus in grand years—Suggestions for laying down Champagnes of grand vintages—The improvement they develop after a few years—The wine of 1874—The proper kind of cellar in which to lay down Champagne—Advantages of Burrow's patent slider wine-bins—Increase in the consumption of Champagne—Tabular statement of stocks, exports, and home consumption from 1844–5 to 1877–8—When to serve Champagne at a dinner-party—Charles Dickens's dictum that its proper place is at a ball—Advantageous effect of Champagne at an ordinary British dinner-party.



IN selecting a sparkling wine, one fact should be

borne in mind—that just as, according to Sam Weller, it is the seasoning which makes the pie mutton, beef, or veal, so it is the liqueur which renders the wine dry or sweet, light or strong. A really palatable dry Champagne, emitting the fragrant bouquet which distinguishes all wines of fine quality, free from added spirit, is obliged to be made of the very best *vin brut*, to which necessarily an exceedingly small percentage of liqueur will be added. On the other hand, a sweet Champagne can be produced from the most ordinary raw wine—the Yankees even claim to have evolved it from petroleum—as the amount of liqueur it receives completely masks its original character and flavour. This excess of syrup, it should be remarked, contributes materially to the wine's explosive force and temporary effervescence; but shortly after the bottle has been uncorked the wine becomes disagreeably flat. A fine dry wine, indebted as it is for its sparkling properties to the natural sweetness of the grape, does not exhibit the same sudden turbulent effervescence. It continues to sparkle, however, for a long time after being poured into the glass, owing to the carbonic acid having been absorbed by the wine itself instead of being accumulated in the vacant space between the liquid and the cork, as is the case with wines that have been highly liqueured. Even when its carbonic acid gas is exhausted, a good Champagne will preserve its fine flavour, which the effervescence will have assisted to conceal. Champagne, it should be noted, sparkles best in tall tapering glasses; still these have their disadvantages, promoting, as they do, an excess of froth when the wine is poured into them, and almost preventing any bouquet which the wine possesses from being recognised.

Manufacturers of Champagne and other sparkling wines prepare them dry or sweet, light or strong, according to the markets for which they are designed. The sweet wines go to Russia and Germany —the sweet-toothed Muscovite regarding M. Louis Roederer's syrupy product as the *beau-idéal* of Champagne, and the Germans demanding wines with twenty or more per cent of liqueur, or nearly quadruple the quantity that is contained in the average Champagnes shipped to England. France consumes light and moderately sweet wines; the United States gives a preference to the intermediate qualities; China, India, and other hot countries stipulate for light dry wines; while the very strong ones go to Australia, the Cape, and other places where gold and diamonds and suchlike trifles are from time to time 'prospected.' Not merely the driest, but the very best, wines of the best manufacturers, and commanding of course the highest prices, are invariably reserved for the English market. Foreigners cannot understand the marked preference shown in England for exceedingly dry sparkling wines. They do not consider that as a rule they are drunk during dinner with the *plats*, and not at dessert, with all kinds of sweets, fruits, and ices, as is almost invariably the case abroad.

Good Champagne is usually of a pale straw colour, but with nothing of a yellow tinge about it. When its tint is pinkish, this is owing to a portion of the colouring matter having been extracted from the skins of the grapes—a contingency which every pains are taken to avoid, although, since the success achieved by the wine of 1874, slightly pink wines are likely to be the fashion. The positive pink or rose-coloured Champagnes, such as were in fashion some thirty years ago, are simply tinted with a small

quantity of deep-red wine. The alcoholic strength of the drier wines ranges from eighteen degrees of proof spirit upwards, or slightly above the ordinary Bordeaux, and under all the better-class Rhine wines. Champagnes, when loaded with a highly alcoholised liqueur, will, however, at times mark as many as thirty degrees of proof spirit. The lighter and drier the sparkling wine, the more wholesome it is, the saccharine element in conjunction with alcohol being not only difficult of digestion, but generally detrimental to health.

The faculty are agreed that fine dry Champagnes, consumed in moderation, are among the safest wines that can be partaken of. Any intoxicating effects are rapid but exceedingly transient, and arise from the alcohol suspended in the carbonic acid being applied rapidly and extensively to the surface of the stomach. 'Champagne,' said Curran, 'simply gives a runaway rap at a man's head.' Dr. Druitt, equally distinguished by his studies upon wine and his standing as a physician, pronounces good Champagne to be 'a true stimulant to body and mind alike—rapid, volatile, transitory, and harmless. Amongst the maladies that are benefited by it,' remarks he, 'is the true neuralgia—intermitting fits of excruciating pain running along certain nerves, without inflammation of the affected part, often a consequence of malaria, or of some other low and exhausting causes. To enumerate the cases in which Champagne is of service would be to give a whole nosology. Who does not know the misery, the helplessness of that abominable ailment influenza, whether a severe cold or the genuine epidemic? Let the faculty dispute about the best remedy if they please; but a sensible man with a bottle of Champagne will beat them all. Moreover, whenever

there is pain, with exhaustion and lowness, then Dr. Champagne should be had up. There is something excitant in the wine—doubly so in the sparkling wine, which, the moment it touches the lips, sends an electric telegram of comfort to every remote nerve. Nothing comforts and rests the stomach better, or is a greater antidote to nausea.'

Champagne of fine quality should never be mixed with ice or iced water; neither should it be iced to the extent Champagnes ordinarily are; for, in the first place, the natural lightness of the wine is such as not to admit of its being diluted without utterly spoiling it, and in the next, excessive cold destroys alike the fragrant bouquet of the wine and its delicate vinous flavour. Really good Champagne should not be iced below a temperature of fifty degrees Fahr.; whereas exceedingly sweet wines will bear icing down almost to freezing point, and be rendered more palatable by the process. The above remarks apply to all sorts of sparkling wine.

In the Champagne, what may be termed a really grand vintage commonly occurs only once, and never more than twice, in ten years. During the same period, however, there will generally be one or two other tolerably good vintages. In grand years the crop, besides being of superior quality, is usually abundant, and as a consequence the price of the raw wine is scarcely higher than usual. Apparently from this circumstance the sparkling wine of grand vintages does not command an enhanced value, as is the case with other fine wines. It is only when speculators recklessly outbid each other for the grapes or the *vin brut*, or when stocks are low and the *vin brut* is really scarce, that the price of Champagne appears to rise.

That superior quality does not involve enhanced price is proved by the amounts paid for the Ay and Verzenay crus in years of grand vintages. During the present century these appear to have been 1802, ’06, ’11, ’18, ’22, ’25, ’34, ’42, ’46, ’57, ’65, ’68, and ’74—that is, thirteen grand vintages in eighty years. Other good vintages, although not equal to the foregoing, occurred in the years 1815, ’32, ’39, ’52, ’54, ’58, ’62, ’64, and ’70. Confining ourselves to the grand years, we find that the Ay wine of 1834, owing to the crop being plentiful as well as good, only realised from 110 to 140 francs the pièce of 44 gallons, although for two years previously this had fetched them 150 to 200 francs. In 1842 the price ranged from 120 to 150 francs, whereas the vastly inferior wine of the year before had commanded from 210 to 275 francs. In 1846, the crop being a small one, the price of the wine rose, and in 1857 the pièce fetched as much as from 480 to 500 francs; still this was merely a trifle higher than it had realised the two preceding years. In 1865 the price was 380 to 400 francs, and in 1868 about the same, whereas the indifferent vintages of 1871, ’72, and ’73—the latter eventually proved to be of execrable quality—realised from 500 to 1000 francs the pièce. It was very similar with the wine of Verzenay. In 1834 the price of the pièce ranged from 280 to 325 francs, or about the average of the three preceding years. In 1846, the crop being scarce, the price rose considerably; while in 1857, when the crop was plentiful, it fell to 500 francs, or from 5 to 20 per cent below that of the two previous years, when the yield was both inferior and less abundant. In 1865 the price rose 33 per cent above that of the year before; still, although Verzenay wine of 1865 and 1868 fetched from 420 to 450 francs the pièce, and

that of 1874 as much as 900 francs, the greatly inferior vintages of 1872–73 commanded 900 and 1030 francs the pièce. Subsequently the price of the wine fell to 350 and 450 francs the pièce, to rise again, however, in 1878 to 900 francs, which was followed by a fall the following year to 250 francs. In 1880, when the yield was no more than the quarter of an average one, and the quality was as yet undetermined, the Ay and Verzenay wines commanded the high price of 1500 francs and upwards the pièce. Exceptionally high prices were also realised for the wines of the neighbouring localities.

Consumers of Champagne, if wise, would profit by the circumstance that quality has not the effect of causing a rise in prices, and if they were bent upon drinking their favourite wine in perfection, as one meets with it at the dinner-tables of the principal manufacturers, who only put old wine of grand vintages before their guests, they would lay down Champagnes of good years in the same way as the choicer vintages of port, burgundy, and bordeaux are laid down. The Champagne of 1874 was a wine of this description, with all its finer vinous qualities well developed, and consequently needing age to attain not merely the roundness, but the refinement, of flavour pertaining to a high-class sparkling wine. Instead of being drunk a few months after it was shipped in the spring and summer of 1877, as was the fate of much of the wine in question, it needed being kept for three years at the very least to become even moderately round and perfect. In the Champagne one had many opportunities of tasting the grander vintages that had arrived at ten, twelve, or fifteen years of age, and had thereby attained supreme excellence. It is true their effervescence had

moderated materially, but their bouquet and flavour were perfect, and their softness and delicacy something marvellous.

A great wine like that of 1874 will go on improving for ten years, providing it is only laid down under proper conditions. These are, first, an exceedingly cool but perfectly dry cellar, the temperature of which should be as low as from 50° to 55° Fahr., or even lower if this is practicable. The cellar, too, should be neither over dark nor light, scrupulously clean, and sufficiently well ventilated for the air to be continuously pure. It is requisite that the bottles should rest on their sides, to prevent the corks shrinking, and thus allowing both the carbonic acid and the wine itself to escape. For laying down Champagne or any kind of sparkling wine, an iron wine-bin is by far the best; and the patent 'slider' bins made by Messrs. W. & J. Burrow, of Malvern, are better adapted to the purpose than any other. In these the bottles rest on horizontal parallel bars of wrought-iron, securely riveted into strong wrought-iron uprights, both at the back and in front. They are especially adapted for laying down Champagne, as they admit of the air circulating freely around the bottles, thus conducing to the preservation of the metal foil round their necks, and keeping the temperature of the wine both cool and equable.

From the subjoined table it will be seen that the consumption of Champagne has more than quadrupled since the year 1844–5, a period of six-and-thirty years. A curious fact to note is the immense increase in the exports of the wine during the three years following the Franco-German war, during which contest both the exports and home consumption of Champagne naturally fell off very

considerably. No reliable information is available as to the actual quantity of Champagne consumed yearly in England, but this may be taken in round numbers at about four millions of bottles. The consumption of the wine in the United States varies from rather more than a million and a half to nearly two million bottles annually.

OFFICIAL RETURN BY THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AT REIMS OF THE TRADE IN CHAMPAGNE WINES FROM APRIL 1844 TO APRIL 1881.

Years — from April to April.	Manufacturers' Stocks.	Number of Bottles exported.	Number of Bottles sold in France.	Total Number of Bottles sold.
1844–45	23,285,218	4,380,214	2,255,438	6,635,652
1845–46	22,847,971	4,505,308	2,510,605	7,015,913
1846–47	18,815,367	4,711,915	2,355,366	7,067,281
1847–48	23,122,994	4,859,625	2,092,571	6,952,196
1848–49	21,290,185	5,686,484	1,473,966	7,160,450
1849–50	20,499,192	5,001,044	1,705,735	6,706,779

1850–51	20,444,915	5,866,971	2,122,569	7,989,540
1851–52	21,905,479	5,957,552	2,162,880	8,120,432
1852–53	19,376,967	6,355,574	2,385,217	8,740,790
1853–54	17,757,769	7,878,320	2,528,719	10,407,039
1854–55	20,922,959	5,895,773	2,452,743	9,348,516
1855–56	15,957,141	7,137,001	2,562,039	9,699,040
1856–57	15,228,294	8,490,198	2,468,818	10,959,016
1857–58	21,628,778	7,368,310	2,421,454	9,789,764
1858–59	28,328,251	7,666,633	2,805,416	10,472,049
1859–60	35,648,124	8,265,395	3,039,621	11,305,016
1860–61	30,235,260	8,488,223	2,697,508	11,185,731
1861–62	30,254,291	6,904,915	2,592,875	9,497,790
1862–63	28,013,189	7,937,836	2,767,371	10,705,207
1863–64	28,466,975	9,851,138	2,934,996	12,786,134
1864–65	33,298,672	9,101,441	2,801,626	11,903,067
1865–66	34,175,429	10,413,455	2,782,777	13,196,132
1866–67	37,608,716	10,283,886	3,218,343	13,502,229

1867–68	37,969,219	10,876,585	2,924,268	13,800,853
1868–69	32,490,881	12,810,194	3,104,496	15,914,690
1869–70	39,272,562	13,858,839	3,628,461	17,487,300
1870–71	39,984,003	7,544,323	1,633,941	9,178,264
1871–72	40,099,243	17,001,124	3,367,537	20,368,661
1872–73	45,329,490	18,917,779	3,464,059	22,381,838
1873–74	46,573,974	18,106,310	2,491,759	20,598,069
1874–75	52,733,674	15,318,345	3,517,182	18,835,527
1875–76	64,658,767	16,705,719	2,439,762	19,145,481
1876–77	71,398,726	15,882,964	3,127,991	19,010,955
1877–78	70,183,863	15,711,651	2,450,983	18,162,634
1878–79	65,813,194	14,844,181	2,596,356	17,440,537
1879–80	68,540,668	16,524,593	2,665,561	19,190,154
1880–81	54,505,964	18,220,980	2,330,924	20,551,904

Distinguished gourmets are scarcely agreed as to the proper moment when Champagne should be introduced at the dinner-table. Dyspeptic Mr.

Walker, of 'The Original,' laid it down that Champagne ought to be introduced very early at the banquet, without any regard whatever to the viands it may chance to accompany. 'Give Champagne,' he says, 'at the beginning of dinner, as its exhilarating qualities serve to start the guests, after which they will seldom flag. No other wine produces an equal effect in increasing the success of a party—it invariably turns the balance to the favourable side. When Champagne goes rightly, nothing can well go wrong.' These precepts are sound enough; still all dinner-parties are not necessarily glacial, and the guests are not invariably mutes. Before Champagne can be properly introduced at a formal dinner, the conventional glass of sherry or madeira should supplement the soup, a white French or a Rhine wine accompany the fish, and a single glass of bordeaux prepare the way with the first *entrée* for the sparkling wine, which, for the first round or two, should be served briskly and liberally. A wine introduced thus early at the repast should of course be dry, or, at any rate, moderately so.

We certainly do not approve of Mr. Charles Dickens's dictum that Champagne's proper place is not at the dinner-table, but solely at a ball. 'A cavalier,' he said, 'may appropriately offer at propitious intervals a glass now and then to his danceress. There it takes its fitting rank and position amongst feathers, gauzes, lace, embroidery, ribbons, white-satin shoes, and eau-de-Cologne, for Champagne is simply one of the elegant extras of life.' This is all very well; still the advantageous effect of sparkling wine at an ordinary British dinner-party, composed as it frequently is of people brought indiscriminately together in accordance with the exigencies of the hostess's visiting-list, cannot be gainsaid. After the preliminary

glowering at each other, *more Britannico*, in the drawing-room, everybody regards it as a relief to be summoned to the repast, which, however, commences as chillily as the soup and as stolidly as the salmon. The soul of the hostess is heavy with the anxiety of prospective dishes, the brow of the host is clouded with the reflection that our rulers are bent upon adding an extra penny to the income-tax. Placed between a young lady just out and a dowager of grimly Gorgonesque aspect, you hesitate how to open a conversation. Your first attempts are singularly ineffectual, only eliciting a dropping fire of monosyllables. You envy the placidly languid young gentleman opposite, limp as his fast-fading camellia, and seated next to Belle Breloques, who is certain, in racing parlance, to make the running for him. But even that damsel seems preoccupied with her fan, and, despite her *aplomb*, hesitates to break the icy silence. The two City friends of the host are lost in mute speculation as to the future price of indigo or Ionian Bank shares, while their wives seem to be mentally summarising the exact cost of each other's toilettes. Their daughters, or somebody else's daughters, are desperately jerking out monosyllabic responses to feeble remarks concerning the weather, the theatres, operatic *débutantes*, the people in the Row, æstheticism, and kindred topics from a couple of F.O. men. Little Snapshot, the wit, on the other side of the Gorgon, has tried to lead up to a story, but has found himself, as it were, frozen in the bud. When lo! the butler softly sibillates in your ear the magic word 'Champagne,' and as it flows, creaming and frothing, into your glass, a change comes over the spirit of your vision.

The hostess brightens, the host coruscates. The young lady on your right suddenly develops into a

charming girl, with becoming appreciation of your pet topics and an astounding aptness for repartee. The Gorgon thaws, and implores Mr. Snapshot, whose jests are popping as briskly as the corks, not to be so dreadfully funny, or he will positively kill her. Belle Breloques can always talk, and now her tongue rattles faster then ever, till the languid one arouses himself like a giant refreshed, and gives her as good as he gets. The City men expatiate in cabalistic language on the merits of some mysterious speculation, the prospective returns from which increase with each fresh bottle. One of their wives is discussing church decoration with a hitherto silent curate, and the other is jabbering botany to a red-faced warrior. The juniors are in full swing, and ripples of silvery laughter rise in accompaniment to the beaded bubbles all round the table.

Gradually, as people drift off from generalities to their own particular line—gastronomy, politics, art, sport, fashion, literature, church matters, theatricals, speculation, scandal, dress, and the like—the scraps of sentences that the ear catches flying about the table present a mosaic somewhat resembling the following: ‘Forster should have sent him to Kilmainham—to see that dear delightful Mr. Irving in —ten-inch armour-plating, but could not steer in a sea-way, so—sat down in the saddle and rammed his spurs into—Petsy Prettitoes and half a dozen girls from the Cruralia, who were—ordained last week by the Bishop of London, when his lordship—said there was no doubt who best deserved the vacant Garter, and declared—a dividend of seven per cent for the—comet year with a bouquet—of sunflowers and lilies on satin, which you should—cover with a light crust —of stiff clay, with a rasper on the further side as—the third story of the hotel overlooking—the

Euphrates Valley Railway, which would lead to—the loveliest bit of landscape in the Academy—with the finest hair in the world, and eyes like—a boiled cod's head and shoulders—cut low at the neck, with a gold shoulder-strap, and—nothing else to speak of before the House except the Bill for—her photographs, which are in all the shop-windows, beside Mrs. Langtry's—who never ought to have allowed Bismarck to—assist at the consecration of—the Henley course—so the Duke started at once for Aldershot, and reviewed—the two best novels of the season—cut up with tomatoes and a dash of garlic—and was positive he saw them dining together at Richmond on—fourteen brace of birds and five hares in—the loveliest set of embroidered vestments and an altar-cloth worked for—a Conservative majority, which will drive the Government to—take a couple of stalls at Her Majesty's to hear *Carmen*—who gave him the last galop, but he—blundered at his first fence and fell—to seventy-two and a half, whilst the preference shares were—all ordered on foreign service and—heard nothing from the Irish members but—Oscar Wilde's poems bound in red morocco—with a white-satin train and—plenty of body and a good colour—all through riding every morning in—a private box on the upper tier—and that is why Gladstone at once gave orders—for them to be actually shut up together—in the strong room of the Bank of England, with a reserve fund of bullion—from the music in the first act of *Patience*—equal to that of Job when he said—well, only half a glass, then, since you are so pressing.' And all this is due to Champagne, that great unloosener not merely of tongues, but, better still, of purse-strings, as is well known to the secretaries of those charitable institutions which set the exhilarating wine flowing

earliest at their anniversary dinners.




CUVÉE
RÉSERVÉE

APPENDIX.

THE PRINCIPAL CHAMPAGNE AND OTHER FRENCH SPARKLING WINE BRANDS.

⁂ In this list, whenever a manufacturer has various qualities, the higher qualities are always placed first. The lowest qualities are omitted altogether.

CHAMPAGNES.

Firms and Wholesale Agents.	*Brands.*	*Qualities.*	*On side of Corks.*
AYALA & Co., AY Ayala & Co., 59 & 60 Great Tower-street, London	 	Extra (Dry) First (Dry)	Extra. Première.

Runk & Unger, 50 Park-place, New York		Second.	
BINET FILS & Co., REIMS		Dry Elite	Dry Elite.
Rutherford & Browne, 5 Water-lane, London		First	First quality.
BOLLINGER, J., AY			
L. Mentzendorf, 6 Idol-lane, London		Very Dry Extra	Very Dry Extra quality.
E. & J. Burke, 40 Beaver-street, New York		Dry Extra	Dry Extra quality.
BRUCH-FOUCHER & Co., MAREUIL		Carte d'Or.	
L. Ehrmann, 34 Great Tower-street, London		First.	
		Second.	
CLICQUOT-PONSARDIN, VVE., REIMS			
(WERLE & Co.)		Dry	England.

Fenwick, Parrot, & Co., 124 Fenchurch-street, London Schmidt Bros., New York		Rich	„
DE CAZANOVE, C., AVIZE J. R. Hunter & Co., 46 Fenchurch-street, London		Vin Monarque First. Second.	Extra.
DEUTZ & GELDERMANN, AY J. R. Parkington & Co., Crutched Friars, London		Gold Lack (Extra Dry and Dry) Cabinet (Extra Dry and Dry	Gold Lack. Cabinet.
DUCHATEL-OHAUS, REIMS Woellworth & Co., 70 Mark-lane, London		Carte Blanche (Dry and Rich). Verzenay (do.). Sillery (do.).	

DUMINY & Co., AY			
Fickus, Courtenay, & Co., St. Dunstan's-buildings, St. Dunstan's-hill, London		Extra	Maison fondée en 1814.
Anthony Oechs, 51 Warren-street, New York		First	„
ERNEST IRROY, REIMS			
Cuddeford & Smith, 66 Mark-lane, London		Carte d'Or, Dry	Carte d'Or, Sec.
F. O. de Luze & Co., 18 South William-street, New York		Carte d'Or	Carte d'Or.

FARRE, CHARLES, REIMS	 		
Hornblower & Co., 50 Mark-lane, London		Cabinet	(Grand Cabinet Vin)
Gilmor & Gibson, Baltimore			(Grand Vin).
Mel & Sons, San Francisco		Carte Blanche	Carte Blanche.
Hogg, Robinson, & Co., Melbourne		Carte Noire	Carte Noire.
FISSE, THIRION, & Co., REIMS		Cachet d'Or (Extra Dry and Medium Dry)	Cachet d'Or.
Stallard & Smith, 25 Philpot-lane, London		Carte Blanche (Dry, Medium Dry, and Rich)	Carte Blanche.
		Carte Noire (Dry	Carte Noire.

		and Medium Dry)	
GÉ-DUFAUT & Co., PIERRY		Vin de Réserve. Vin de Cabinet.	
L. Rosenheim & Sons, 7 Union-court, Old Broad-street, London		Bouzy, 1er Cru. Fleur de Sillery.	
GIBERT, GUSTAVE, REIMS Cock, Russell, & Co., 23 Rood-lane, London Hays & Co., 40 Day-street, New York	 	Vin du Roi (Extra Dry, Dry, or Rich). Extra (Extra Dry, Dry, or Rich).	
GIESLER & Co., AVIZE F. Giesler & Co., 32 Fenchurch-street, London Purdy & Nicholas, 43 Beaver-street New York	 	Extra Superior India First. Second.	Extra. India.

HEIDSIECK & Co., REIMS		Dry Monopole.	
Theodor Satow & Co., 141 Fenchurch-street, London		Monopole (Rich).	
		Dry Vin Royal.	
Schmidt & Peters, 20 Beaver-street, New York		Grand Vin Royal (Rich).	
KRUG & Co., REIMS		Carte Blanche	Carte Blanche, England.
Inglis & Cunningham, 60 Mark-lane, London		Private Cuvée	Private Cuvée, England.
A. Rocherau & Co., New York			
MAX. SUTAINE & Co., REIMS (VEUVE MORELLE & Co.)		Creaming Sillery (Extra Dry).	
H. Schultz, 71 Great Tower-st., London		Creaming Sillery.	
Knoepfel & Co., 60 Liberty-street, New York		Bouzy (Dry).	
		Sparkling Sillery.	
		Brut Impérial	Imperial, England.

MOËT & CHANDON, EPERNAY	Creaming	Creaming, „
Simon & Dale, Old Trinity House, 5	Extra Superior	Extra Superior, „
Water-lane, London, Agents for Gt.	Extra Dry Sillery	White Dry, „
Britain and the Colonies	White Dry Sillery	„ „ , „
Renauld, François, & Co., 23 Beaver-street, New York	First	England.
J. Hope & Co., Montreal	Second.	
MONTEBELLO, DUC DE, MAREUIL		
John Hopkins & Co., 26 Crutched Friars, London	Cuvée Extra	Cuvée Extra.
Coyle & Turner, 31 Lower Ormond Quay, Dublin	Carte Blanche	Reserve.

MUMM (G. H.) & Co., REIMS			
W. J. & T. Welch, 10 Corn Exchange		Vin Brut Extra.	
Chambers, Seething-lane, London		Carte Blanche	Carte Blanche.
F. de Bary & Co., 41 Warren-street,		Extra Dry	Extra Dry.
New York		Extra	Extra Quality.
MUMM, JULES, & Co., REIMS		Extra Dry.	
J. Mumm & Co., 3 Mark-lane, London		Dry.	
PÉRINET & FILS, REIMS			
J. Barnett & Son, 36 Mark-lane, London		Cuvée Réservée	Cuvée Réservée.
Wood, Pollard, & Co., Boston, U.S.		(Extra Dry)	

Hooper & Donaldson, San Francisco		White Dry Sillery	White Dry Sillery.
PERRIER-JOUËT & Co., EPERNAY A. Boursot & Co., 9 Hart-st., Crutched Friars, London		Cuvée de Réserve Pale Dry Creaming. First.	Extra.
PFUNGST FRÈRES & Cie., AY, EPERNAY J. L. Pfungst & Co., 23 Crutched Friars, London		Carte d'Or (Dry, Extra Dry, & Brut) Sillery Crêmant (Extra Dry and Brut) Carte Noire (Dry, Extra Dry, and Brut) Cordon Blanc (Full, Dry, & Extra Dry)	Carte d'Or. Sillery Crêmant. Carte Noire. Cordon Blanc.
PIPER (H.) & Co., REIMS (KUNKELMANN & Co.)		Très-Sec (Extra Dry)	Kunkelmann & Co.

Newton & Rivière, 33 Great Tower-street, London		Sec (Very Dry)	„ „
		Carte Blanche	„ „
John Osborn, Son, & Co., New York		(Rich)	
POL ROGER & Co., EPERNAY			
Reuss, Lauteren & Co., 39 Crutched Friars, London		Vin Réservé.	
POMMERY, VEUVE, REIMS (POMMERY & GRENO)		Extra Sec (Vin Brut)	Veuve Pommery.
A. Hubinet, 24 Mark-lane, London			
Charles Graef, 65 Broad-street, New York		Sec.	
ROEDERER, LOUIS, REIMS			Reims, Carte
Grainger & Son, 108 Fenchurch-street,		Carte Blanche	Blanche, Gt.

London			Britain.
ROEDERER, THÉOPHILE, & Co. (Maison fondée en 1864), REIMS		Crystal Champagne, Special Cuvée.	Special Cuvée.
		Extra Reserve Cuvée	Reserve Cuvée.
J. Ashburner, Biart, & Co., 150 Fenchurch-street, London		Carte Blanche, Ex. First	Carte Blanche.
		Carte Noire, Verzenay	Carte Noire. Verzenay.
ROPER FRÈRES & Co., RILLY-LA MONTAGNE 24 Crutched Friars, London		Vin Brut, or Natural Champagne	Vin Brut.
		First (Extra Dry)	Extra Dry.
		Do. (Medium Dry)	Medium Dry.
		Second.	
		Crême de Bouzy.	
RUINART, PÈRE ET FILS, REIMS Ruinart, Père et Fils, 22 St. Swithin's-		Carte Anglaise.	
		Dry Pale Crêmant.	
		Ex. Dry Sparkling.	

lane, London		Carte Blanche, First.	
		Vin Brut	Vin Brut.
		Carte d'Or (Extra Dry)	Very Dry.
DE SAINT-MARCEAUX & Co., REIMS (C. ARNOULD & HEIDELBERGER)		Bouzy Nonpareil (Dry)	Vin Sec.
		Carte Blanche (Medium)	
Groves & Co., 5 Mark-lane, London			
Hermann Bätjer & Bro., New York		*For America only.*	
		Dry Royal	Dry.
		Extra Dry	Extra Dry.
		Second (Medium)	

SAUMUR AND SAUTERNES.

Firms and Wholesale Agents.	*Brands.*	*Qualities.*	*On side of Corks.*
ACKERMAN-LAURANCE, ST. FLORENT,			

SAUMUR		Carte d'Or	Carte d'Or.
J. N. Bishop, 41 Crutched Friars, London		Carte Rose	Carte Rose.
D. McDougall jun. & Co., St. George's-place, Glasgow		Carte Bleue	Carte Bleue.
		Carte Noire	Carte Noire.
DUVAU, LOUIS, AÎNÉ, CHÂTEAU DE VARRAINS, SAUMUR		Carte d'Or, Ex. Sup.	
		Carte d'Argent, Ex.	
		Carte Blanche, Sup.	
Jolivet & Canney, 3 Idol-lane, London		Carte Rose, Ord.	
LORRAIN, JULES, CHÂTEAU DE LA CÔTE, VARRAINS, near SAUMUR		Carte d'Or.	
		Carte Blanche.	
		Carte Rose.	
J. Lorrain, 73 Tower-st., London		Carte Bleue.	

ROUSTEAUX, A., ST. FLORENT, SAUMUR		
Cock, Russell, & Co., 63 Great Tower-street, London		Extra.
I. H. Smith's Sons, Peck Slip, New York		First.
NORMANDIN (E.) & Co., CHÂTEAU-NEUF-SUR-CHARENTE		Sparkling Sauternes (Extra Dry and Dry).
P. A. Maignen, 22 Great Tower-street, London		

BURGUNDIES.

Firms and Wholesale Agents.	*Brands.*	*Qualities.*	*On side of Corks.*
ANDRÉ & VOILLOT, BEAUNE		Romanée (White).	

Cock, Russell & Co., 63 Great Tower-		Nuits (do.).
street, London		Volnay (do.).
P. W. Engs & Sons, 131 Front-		Saint Péray.
street, New York		Pink and Red Wines.
		Romanée (White).
		Nuits (White and
LATOUR, LOUIS, BEAUNE		Red).
Reuss, Lauteren, & Co., 39 Crutched		Volnay (do.).
Friars, London		Saint-Péray (White).
		Chambertin (Red).
		Carte d'Or (White).
LIGER-BELAIR, COMTE, NUITS & VÔSNE		Carte Verte (do.).
		Carte Noire (Red
Fenwick, Parrot, & Co., 124 Fenchurch-		and White).

street, London

Carte Blanche (Red).

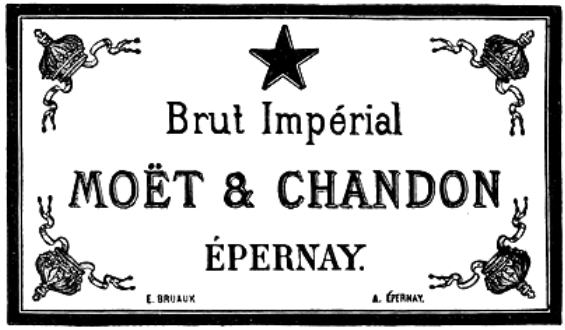
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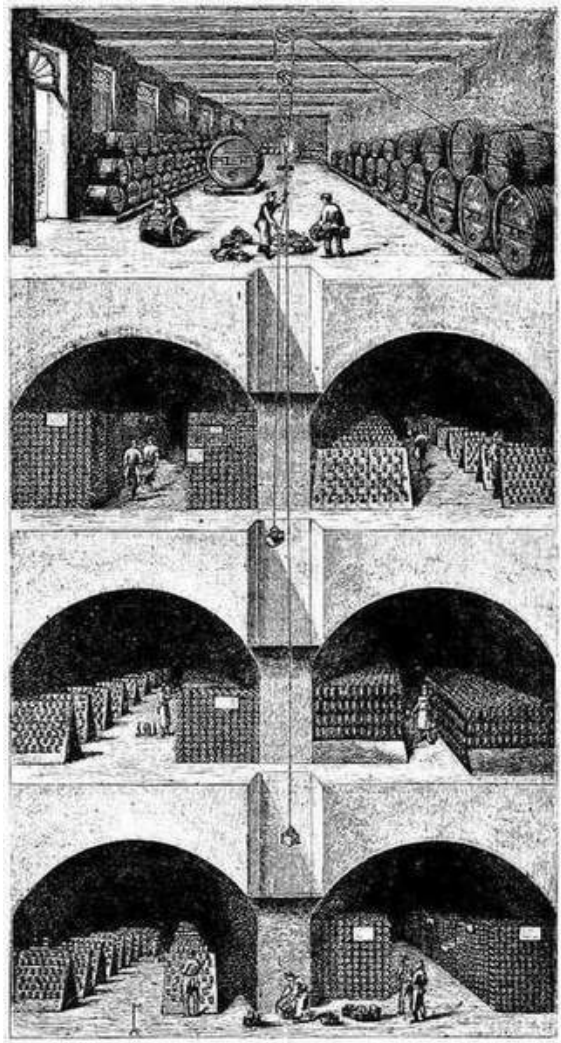
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Sectional View of a portion of the Caves in the Rue St. Hilaire.

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visit of the Prince to the club two years since. Deutz & Geldermann's "Gold Lack" was one of the Champagnes supplied at the late Ministerial Whitebait Dinner at the Trafalgar.'

WORLD.

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CH^ES. DE CAZANOVE,

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Facsimiles of Medallion



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FOOTNOTES:

[1] Diodorus.

[2] Idem.

[3] Max Sutaine's *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[4] This arch is said to have been called after the God of War from the circumstance of a temple dedicated to Mars being in the immediate neighbourhood. The sculptures still remaining under the arcades have reference to the months of the year, to Romulus and Remus, and to Jupiter and Leda. Reims formerly abounded with monuments of the Roman domination. According to M. Brunette, an architect of the city, who made its Roman remains his especial study, a vast and magnificent palace formerly stood nigh the spot now known as the Trois Piliers; while on the right of the road leading to the town were the arenas, together with a temple, among the ruins of which various sculptures, vases, and medals were found, and almost immediately opposite, on the site of the present cemetery, an immense theatre, circus, and xystos for athletic exercises. Then came a vast circular space, in the centre of which arose a grand triumphal arch giving entrance into the city. The road led straight to the Forum,—the Place des Marchés of to-day,—and along it were a basilica, a market, and an exedra, now replaced by the Hôtel de Ville. The Forum, bordered by monumental buildings, was of gigantic proportions, extending on the one side from half way down the Rue Colbert to the Place Royale, and on the other from near the

Marché à la Laine, parallel with the Rue de Vesle, up to the middle of the Rue des Elus, where it terminated in a vast amphitheatre used for public competitions.

Other buildings of less importance were situated here and there: the thermæ along the Rue du Cloître; a palace or a temple on the site of the archiepiscopal palace; another temple at the extremity of the Rue Vauthier le Noir, in the ruins of which a bas-relief and some small antique statues were discovered; a third temple in the Rue du Couchant, in which a votive altar was found. Four triumphal arches were erected at the four gates of the town: one dedicated to Mars; another to Ceres, on the same site as the gate of to-day; a third to Bacchus, in the present Rue de l'Université, in front of the Lycée; and the fourth to Venus, in the Rue de Vesle. Outside the walls, following the Rue du Barbâtre, the road was dotted with numerous graves according to the Roman custom; while on the site of the church of St. Remi there arose a temple and a palace, and on that of St. Nicaise a vast edifice which M. Brunette supposed to be the palace of the Consul Jovinus.

[5] Henderson's *History of Ancient and Modern Wines*.

[6] Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

[7] Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

[8] According to this document, published in Marlot's *Histoire de Reims*, he leaves to Bishop Lupus the vineyard cultivated by the vine-dresser Enias; to his nephew Agricola, the vineyard planted by Mellaricus at Laon, and also the one cultivated by Bebrimodus; to his

nephew Agathimerus, a vineyard he had himself planted at Vindonisæ, and kept up by the labour of his own episcopal hands; to Hilaire the deaconess, the vines adjoining her own vineyard, cultivated by Catusio, and also those at Talpusciaco; and to the priests and deacons of Reims, his vineyard in the suburbs of that city, and the vine-dresser Melanius who cultivated it. The will is also noteworthy for its mention of a locality destined to attain a high celebrity in connection with the wine of Champagne, namely, the town of Sparnacus or Epernay, which a lord named Eulogius, condemned to death for high treason in 499 and saved at the bishop's intercession, had bestowed upon his benefactor, and which the latter left in turn to the church of Reims. To this church he also left estates in the Vosges and beyond the Rhine, on condition of furnishing pitch every year to the religious houses founded by himself or his predecessors to mend their wine-vessels, a trace of the old Roman custom of pitching vessels used for storing wine.

[9] Marlot's *Histoire de Reims*.

[10] Henderson's *History of Ancient and Modern Wines*.

[11] Victor Fievet's *Histoire d'Epernay*.

[12] Bertin du Rocheret's *Mélanges*.

[13] Varin's *Archives Administratives de Reims*.

[14] 'Bien met l'argent qui en bon vin l'emploie.' *Poems of Colin Musset*, 1190 to 1220.

[15] Varin's *Archives Administratives de Reims*.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] J. Gondry du Jardinet's *Agréable Visite aux Grands Crûs de France*.

[19] 'Chanter me fait bon vin et rejouir.'

[20]

'Le vin en tonel,
Froit et fort et finandel,
Pour boivre à la grant chaleur.'

[21] Legrand d'Aussy's *Vie Privée des Français*.

[22]

'Espernai dist et Auviler,
Argenteuil, trop veus aviler
Très-tos les vins de ceste table.
Par Dieu, trop t'es fait conestable.

Nous passons Chaalons et Reims,
Nous ostons la goûte des reins,
Nous estaignons totes les rois.'

[23]

'Espernai, trop es desloiaus;
Tu n'as droit de parler en cour.'

[24] The 'vin d'Ausois,' or 'vin d'Aussai' (for it is spelt both ways in the poem), is not, as might be supposed, the wine of Auxois, an ancient district of Burgundy now comprised in the arrondissements of Sémur (Côte d'Or) and Avallon (Yonne), and still enjoying a reputation for its viticultural products. MM. J. B. B. de Roquefort and Gigault de la Bedollière, in their notes on Henri d'Andelys' poem, have clearly identified it with the wine of Alsace, that province having been known under the names in question during the Middle Ages. This explains its connection in the present instance with the Moselle.

[25] An incidental proof that the English taste for strong wine was an early one. As late as the close of the sixteenth century the Bordeaux wines are described in the *Maison Rustique* as 'thick, black, and strong.'

[26] Probably either Aquila in the Abruzzi, or Aquiliea near Friuli.

[27] The 'rouage' was a duty of 2 sous on each cart and 4 sous on each wagon laden with wine purchased by foreign merchants and taken out of the town. It was only one of many dues.

[28] The old livre was about equal to the present franc; the sol was the twentieth part of a livre; and the denier the twelfth part of a sol, or about $^{1}/_{24}$ *d.* English.

[29] Varin's *Archives Administratives de Reims*.

[30] The Beaune cost 28 livres the tun of two queues; the St. Pourçain, a wine of the Bourbonnais, very highly esteemed in the Middle Ages, 12 livres the queue; and the wine of the district, white and red, 6 to 10 livres the queue of two poinçons. A poinçon, or demi-queue, of Reims was about 48 old English, or 40 imperial, gallons; while the demi-queue of Burgundy was over 45 imperial gallons.

[31] Varin's *Archives Administratives de Reims*.

[32] A few examples of the retail price of wine throughout the century at Reims may here be noted. For instance, a judgment of 1303 provided that all tavern-keepers selling wine at a higher rate than six deniers, or about a farthing per lot, the rate fixed by ancient custom, were to pay a fine of twenty-two sous. The lot or pot, for the two terms are indifferently used, was about the third of an old English gallon, four pots making a septier,

and thirty-six septiers a poinçon or demi-queue, equal to about forty-eight gallons. The queue was therefore about ninety-six gallons at Reims, but at Epernay not more than eighty-five gallons. Not only had every district its separate measures,—those of Paris, for instance, differing widely from those of Reims, —but there were actually different measures used in the various lay and ecclesiastical jurisdictions into which Reims was divided.

In the accounts of the Echevinage, wine, chiefly for presents to persons of distinction, makes a continual appearance. In 1335 it is noted that 'the presents of this year were made in wine at 16 deniers and 20 deniers the pot,' or about 2¼ *d.* English per gallon. In 1337–8 prices ranged from ¾ *d.* to 4½ *d.* English per gallon, showing a variety in quality; and in 1345 large quantities were purchased at the first-mentioned rate, five quarts of white wine fetching 2 *d.* English. In 1352 from a 1 *d.* to 2¼ *d.* was paid per gallon, and five crowns for two queues. In 1363 the citizens, a hot-headed turbulent lot, who were always squabbling with their spiritual and temporal superior and assailing his officers, when not assaulting each other or pulling their neighbours' houses down, successfully resisted the pretensions of the archbishop to regulate the price of wine when the cheapest was worth 12 deniers per pot, or 1½ *d.* per gallon. The dispute continued, and in 1367 a royal commission was issued to the bailli of Vermandois, the king's representative, to inquire into the right of the burghers to sell wine by retail at 16 deniers, as they desired. The report of the bailli was that a queue of old French wine being worth about 20 livres, or 16 *s.* 8 *d.*, and wine of Beaune and other better and stronger wines being sold in the town at higher rates,

French wine might be sold as high as 3½*d.* English per gallon, and Beaune at 4½*d.* The great increase in production, and consequent fall in price, is shown by the wine found in Archbishop Richard Pique's cellar in 1389 being valued, on an average, at only 1*s.* 6*d.* per queue.

[33] Froissart's *Chronicles*.

[34] Idem.

[35] Idem.

[36] What with one kind of assessment being adopted for wine sold wholesale and another for that disposed of by retail, with one class of dues being levied on wine for export and another on that for home consumption, and with the fact of certain duties being in some cases payable by the buyer and in others by the seller, any attempt to summarise this section of the story of the wines of Reims would be impossible. The difficulty is increased when it is remembered that in the Middle Ages Reims was divided into districts, under the separate jurisdictions of the eschevins, the archbishop, the chapter of the cathedral, the Abbeys of St. Remi and St. Nicaise, and the Priory of St. Maurice, in several of which widely varying measures were employed down to the sixteenth century, and between which there were continual squabbles as to the rights of vinage, rouage, tonnieu, &c.

[37] Varin's *Archives Administratives de Reims*.

[38] Froissart's *Chronicles*.

[39] Baron Taylor's *Reims; la Ville de Sacres*.

[40] Amongst the better known are Chamery, where the archbishop had a house, vineyard, and garden, let for 3*s.* per annum, about five

jours of vineyard and two *jours* of very good vineland; Mareuil, whence he drew ten hogsheads of wine annually; Rilly, Verzenay, Sillery, Attigny, &c. The *jour* cost from 5 to 8 livres per annum for cultivation, and the stakes for the vines 4 sols, or 2 *d.*, a hundred.

[41] The chapter of the Cathedral, the church of Notre Dame, the abbeys of St. Remi and St. Nicaise, had vineyards or 'droits de vin' at Hermonville, Rounay les Reims, Montigny, Serzy, Villers Aleran, Maineux devant Reims, Mersy, Sapiecourt, Sacy en la Montagne, Flory en la Montagne, Prouilly, Germigny, Saulx, Bremont, Merfaud, Trois Pins, Joucheri sur Vesle, Villers aux Neux, &c.; the last named also possessing a piece of 'vingne gonesse' at 'a place called Mont Valoys in the territory of Reims.'

[42] At his château at the Porte Mars were forty-four queues of red and white wine, nineteen of new red and white wine, and four of old wine, valued, on an average, at 36 sols or 1 *s.* 6 *d.* the queue; at Courville there were fifty queues of new wine (valued at 30 sols the queue), twenty of old wine (worth nothing), and four 'cuves' for wine-making; and at Viellarcy, eighteen tuns of new wine, valued at 60 sols or 2 *s.* 6 *d.* per tun. To take charge of all these, Jehan le Breton, the defunct prelate's assistant butler, was retained by the executors for half a year, at the wages of 74 sols or 3 *s.* 2 *d.* At the funeral feast there were consumed three queues of the best wine in the cellars, valued at 2 *s.* 7½ *d.* per queue, three others at 1 *s.* 3 *d.*, and five pots of Beaune at 1⅔ *d.* English per pot, showing it to have been four times as valuable as native growths.

[43]

'En Picardie sont li bourdeur,
Et en Champagne li buveur....
Telz n'a vaillant un Angevin
Qui chascun jor viant boire vin.'

[44]

'Champagne est la forme de tout bien
De blé, de vin, de foin, et de litière.'

[45] Mss. de Rogier, Max Sutaine's *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*, &c.

[46] This wine, no doubt, came from a considerable distance round, for we find P. de la Place, a mercer of Reims, seeking in 1409 to recover the value of five queues and two poinçons 'of wine from the cru of the town of Espernay, on the river of Esparnay,' delivered at Reims to J. Crohin of Hainault, the origin of the same being certified by S. de Laval, a sworn wine-broker, 'who knows and understands the wines of the country around Reims.'

[47] Varin's *Archives Administratives de Reims*.

[48] Max Sutaine's *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[49] Varin's *Archives Administratives de Reims*. The Hôtel de la Maison Rouge occupies to-day the site of the old hostelry at which the parents of Jeanne Darc were housed.

[50] Varin's *Archives Administratives de Reims*.

[51] The cost of the wine thus presented seems to have averaged from 2¼ *d.* to 3 *d.* per gallon. In 1477 a queue of old wine was valued at no less than 30 *s.*

[52] The twelve peers of France first appear at the coronation of Philip Augustus. There were six lay peers and six ecclesiastical peers:

Duke of Burgundy.
„ Normandy.
„ Guienne or Aquitaine.

Count of Toulouse.
„ Flanders.
„ Champagne.

Archbishop Duke of Reims.

Bishop Duke of Laon.
„ „ Langres.

Bishop Count of Beauvais.
„ „ Chalons.
„ „ Noyon.

As the titles of the lay peers grew extinct, and their fiefs lapsed to the crown, it became customary for them to be represented by some great nobles at the coronations of the kings of France.

[53] The following is the full text of this singular sentence. The injunction at the end, respecting the payment of tithes without fraud, shows that even in a matter like this the Church did not lose sight of its own interests.

'In the name of the Lord, amen. Having seen the prayer or petition on behalf of the inhabitants of Villenauxe, of the diocese of Troyes, made before us, official of Troyes, sitting in judgment upon the *bruhecs* or *éruches*, or other similar animals, which, according to the evidence of persons worthy of belief and as confirmed by public rumour, have ravaged for a certain number of years, and this year also, the fruit of the vines of this

locality, to the great loss of those who inhabit it and of the persons of the neighbourhood,—petition that we warn the above-named animals, and that, using the means at the Church's disposition, we force them to retire from the territory of the said place. Having seen and attentively examined the motives of the prayer or petition above mentioned, and also the answers and allegations furnished in favour of the said *éruches* or other animals by the councillors chosen by us for that purpose; having heard also on the whole our promoter, and seeing the particular report, furnished at our command by a notary of the said Court of Troyes, on the damage caused by the said animals amongst the vines of the locality of Villenauxe already named; though it would seem that to such damage one can bring no remedy except through the aid of God; however, taking into consideration the humble, frequent, and pressing complaint of the above-mentioned inhabitants; having regard, especially, to the ardour with which, to efface their past great faults, they lately gave, at our invitation, the edifying spectacle of solemn prayers; considering that, as the mercy of God does not drive away the sinners who return to Him with humility, neither should His Church refuse, to those who run to her, succour or consolation,—We, the official above named, no matter how novel the case may be, yielding to the earnestness of these prayers, following in the footsteps of our predecessors presiding at our tribunal, having God before our eyes and full of belief in His mercy and love, after having taken counsel in the proper quarter, we deliver sentence in the following terms:

'In the name and in virtue of the omnipotence of God, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy

Ghost; of the blessed Mary, mother of our Lord Jesus Christ; of the authority of the holy apostles Peter and Paul; and of that with which we ourselves are invested in this affair, we charge by this act the above-named animals—*bruches*, *éruches*, or of any other name by which they may be called—to retire (under penalty of malediction and anathema, within the six days which follow this warning and in accordance with our sentence) from the vines and from the said locality of Villenauxe, and never more to cause, in time to come, any damage, either in this spot or in any other part of the diocese of Troyes; that if, the six days passed, the said animals have not fully obeyed our command, the seventh day, in virtue of the power and authority above mentioned, we pronounce against them by this writing anathema and malediction! Ordering, however, and formally directing the said inhabitants of Villenauxe, no matter of what rank, class, or condition they may be, so as to merit the better from God, all-powerful dispensator of all good and deliverer from all evil, to be released from such a great plague; ordering and directing them to deliver themselves up in concert to good works and pious prayers; to pay, moreover, the tithe without fraud and according to the custom recognised in the locality; and to abstain with care from blaspheming and all other sins, especially from public scandals.—Signed, N. HUPPEROYE, Secretary.'

[54] It has been asserted that the Champagne, and notably the town of Troyes, enjoyed the dubious honour of furnishing fools to the court of France. There is certainly a letter of Charles V. to the notables of Troyes, asking them, 'according to custom,' for a fool to replace one named Grand Jehan de Troyes, whom he had

had buried in the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, and who has been immortalised by Rabelais. But Brusquet was a Provençal; Triboulet, his predecessor, immortalised by Victor Hugo in the 'Roi s'amuse,' a native of Blois; Chicot the Jester, the fool of Henry III., and the favourite hero of Dumas, a Gascon; and Guillaume, his successor, a Norman.

[55] The wine of Reims provided at the coronation of Francis II., in 1559, cost from 11 *s.* 8 *d.* to 15 *s.* 10 *d.* per queue of ninety-six gallons, and the Burgundy 16 *s.* 8 *d.* per queue, which, allowing for the cost of transport, would put them about on an equality. At the coronation of Charles IX., in 1561, Reims wine cost from 23 *s.* 4 *d.* to 28 *s.* *4d.*; and at that of Henry III., in 1575, from 45 *s.* to 62 *s.* 6 *d.* per queue,—a sufficient proof of the rapidly-increasing estimation in which the wine was held.

[56] Paulmier's treatise *De Vino et Pomaceo* (Paris, 1588).

[57] Jehan Pussot's *Mémorial du Temps*.

[58] Ibid. Many details respecting the yield of the vines and vineyards of the Mountain and the River are preserved in this *Mémorial*, which extends from 1569 to 1625, and the author of which was a celebrated builder of Reims. During the last thirty years of the century the vines seem to have suffered greatly from frost and wet. Sometimes the wine was so bad that it was sold, as towards the end of 1579, at 5 *s.* 6 *d.* the queue; at others it was so scarce that it rose, as at the vintage of 1587, to 126 *s.* 8 *d.* the queue. At the vintage of 1579 the grapes froze on the vines, and were carried to the press in sacks. At the commencement of the vintage the new wine fetched from 12 *s.* to 16 *s.* the queue, but it turned out so bad that

by Christmas it was sold at 5*s.* 6*d.*

[59] *Maison Rustique* (1574).

[60] Jehan Pussot's *Mémorial du Temps*.

[61] During the first twenty-five years of the century Pussot shows the new wine to have averaged from about 23*s.* to 46*s.* the queue, according to quality. In 1600 and 1611 it was as low as 16*s.*, and in 1604 fetched from merely 12*s.* to 32*s.* On the other hand, in 1607, it fetched from 57*s.* to 95*s.*, and in 1609 from 79*s.* to 95*s.*

[62] Feillet's *La Misère aux temps de la Fronde*.

[63] Dom Guillaume Marlot's *Histoire de Reims*.

[64] Pluche's *Spectacle de la Nature*.

[65] St. Simon's *Mémoires*.

[66] *Mémoire sur la manière de cultiver la vigne et de faire le vin en Champagne.*

[67] Lavardin, Bishop of Le Mans, and himself a great *gourmet*, was one day at dinner with St. Evremond, and began to rally the latter on the delicacy of himself and his friends the Marquis de Bois Dauphin and the Comte d'Olonne. 'These gentlemen,' said the prelate, 'in seeking refinement in everything carry it to extremes. They can only eat Normandy veal; their partridges must come from Auvergne, and their rabbits from La Roche Guyon, or from Versin; they are not less particular as to fruit; and as to wine, they can only drink that of the good *coteaux* of Ay, Hautvillers, and Avenay.' St. Evremond having repeated the story, he, the marquis, and the count were nicknamed 'the three coteaux.' Hence Boileau, in one of his satires, describes an epicurean guest as 'profès dans l'ordre des coteaux.'

[68] St. Evremond's Works (London, 1714).

[69] *L'Art de bien traiter ... mis en lumière*, par L. S. R. (Paris, 1674).

[70] Brossette's notes to Boileau's Works (1716). Bertin du Rocheret, in correcting this error in the *Mercure* of January 1728, points out that neither the family of Colbert nor that of Le Tellier ever owned a single vinestock of the River, and that their holdings on the Mountain were very insignificant.

[71]

'Il n'est cité que je préfère à Reims,
C'est l'ornement et l'honneur de la France;
Car sans conter l'ampoule et les bons vins,
Charmants objets y sont en abondance.' *Les Rémois.*

[72]

'Sur quelle vigne à Reims nous avons hypothèque;
Vingt muids, rangés chez moi, font ma bibliothèque.'
Le Lutrin, chant iv. 1674.

[73] St. Simon's *Mémoires*.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Max Sutaine's *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*, 1845.

[77] Henderson's *History of Ancient and Modern Wines*.

[78] *Æneid*, i. 738.

[79] Henderson's *History of Ancient and Modern Wines*.

[80] Max Sutaine's *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[81]

————‘Petars de Chaalons,
Qui le ventre enfle et les talons.’

[82] Louis Perrier’s *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*, 1865.

[83] *De Naturali Vinorum Historiâ.* Rome, 1596.

[84] *L’Art de bien traiter*, &c.

[85] *Maison Rustique*, 1574.

[86] Max Sutaine’s *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[87] Pluche’s *Spectacle de la Nature*.

[88] Idem and *Maison Rustique*, 1582. M. Louis Perrier, in his *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*, says that the Ay wines yield but little *mousse*.

[89] Max Sutaine’s *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[90] St. Evremond’s letter to the Comte d’Olonne, already noticed. In another epistle to Lord Galloway, dated 29th August 1701, he observes: ‘As to M. de Puisieux (Roger Brulart, Marquis de Puisieux et de Sillery and Governor of Epernay), in my opinion he acts very wisely in falling in with the bad taste now in fashion as regards Champagne wine, in order the better to sell his own. I could never have thought that the wines of Reims could have been changed into wines of Anjou, from their colour and their harshness (*verdeur*). There ought to be a harshness (*vert*) in the wine of Reims, but a harshness with a colour, which turns into a sprightly tartness (*sêve*) when it is ripe; ... and it is not to be drunk till the end of July.... The wines of Sillery and Roncières used to be kept two years, and they were admirable, but for the first four months they were nothing

but verjuice. Let M. de Puisieux make a little barrel (*cuve*) after the fashion in which it was made forty years ago, before this depravity of taste, and send it to you.' St. Evremond's Works, English edition of 1728.

[91] Max Sutaine's *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[92] Dom Guillaume Harlot's *Histoire de Reims*.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Henderson's *History of Ancient and Modern Wines*.

[95] Letter of Dom Grossart to M. Dherbès of Ay. The measurement of the arpent varied from an acre to an acre and a half.

[96] Varin's *Archives Administratives de Reims*.

[97] Pluche's *Spectacle de la Nature*.

[98] Letter of Dom Grossart to M. Dherbès of Ay.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Bertall's *La Vigne*. Paris, 1878.

[102] *Mémoire sur la Manière de cultiver la Vigne et de faire le Vin en Champagne.* This work is believed to have been written by Jean Godinot, a canon of Reims, born in 1662. Godinot was at the same time a conscientious Churchman, a skilled viticulturist, and a clever merchant, who enriched himself by disposing of the wine from his vineyards at Bouzy, Taissy, and Verzenay, and distributed his gains amongst the poor. He died in 1747, after publishing an enlarged edition of the *Mémoire* in 1722, in which the phrase 'for the last three years' becomes 'the last seven or eight years.' Godinot's friend Pluche used the *Mémoire* as

the basis for the section ‘Wine’ in his *Spectacle de la Nature*.

[103] Letter of Dom Grossart to M. Dherbès of Ay.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Louis Perrier’s *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[106] Letter of M. le Pescheur, 1706.

[107] Pluche’s *Spectacle de la Nature*.

[108] In Brossette’s notes to his edition of Boileau’s Works of 1716.

[109] The inscription above given is an exact transcript from the black-marble slab, and any errors in orthography are due either to the original author or to the mason who incised it.

[110] The following account of Dom Perignon and his discoveries is contained in a letter dated 25th October 1821, and addressed from Montier-en-Der, Haute Marne, to M. Dherbès of Ay, by Dom Grossart, the last procureur of the Abbey of Hautvillers. Dom Grossart, who had fled from France during the troublous times of the Revolution, was at the date of the letter in his seventy-fourth year.

‘You know, sir, that it was the famous Dom Perignon, who was procureur of Hautvillers for forty-seven years, and who died in 1715, who discovered the secret of making sparkling and non-sparkling white wine, and the means of clearing it without being obliged to *dépoter* the bottles, as is done by our great wine-merchants rather twice than once, and by us never. Before his time one only knew how to make straw-coloured or gray wine. In bottling wine, instead of corks of cork-wood, only tow was made use of, and this species of stopper was

saturated with oil. It was in the marriage of our wines that their goodness consisted; and this Dom Perignon towards the end of his days became blind. He had instructed in his secret of fining the wines (*de coller les vins*) a certain Brother Philip, who was for fifty years at the head of the wines of Hautvillers, and who was held in such consideration by M. Le Tellier, Archbishop of Reims, that when this brother went to Reims he made him come and sit at table with him. When the vintage drew near, he (Dom Perignon) said to this brother, "Go and bring me some grapes from the Prières, the Côtes-à-bras, the Barillets, the Quartiers, the Clos Sainte Hélène," &c. Without being told from which vineyard these grapes came, he mentioned it, and added, "the wine of such a vineyard must be married with that of such another," and never made a mistake. To this Brother Philip succeeded a Brother André Lemaire, who was for nearly forty years at the head of the cellars of Hautvillers, that is to say, until the Revolution.... This brother being very ill, and believing himself on the point of death, confided to me the secret of clarifying the wines, for neither prior nor procureur nor monk ever knew it. I declare to you, sir, that we never did put sugar in our wines; you can attest this when you find yourself in company where it is spoken of.

Monsieur Moët, who has become one of the *gros bonnets* of Champagne since 1794, when I used to sell him plenty of little baskets, will not tell you that I put sugar in our wines. I make use of it at present upon some white wines which are vintaged in certain *crûs* of our wine district. This may have led to the error.

'As it costs much to *dépoter*, I am greatly surprised that no wine-merchant has as yet

taken steps to learn the secret of clearing the wine without having to *dépoter* the bottles when once the wine has been put into them.'

[111] Louis Perrier's *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[112] *Mémoire* of 1718.

[113] Ibid. Pluche, in his *Spectacle de la Nature*, 1732, also says: 'If the wine be drawn off towards the end of March, when the sap begins to rise in the vine, it will froth to such a degree as to whiten like milk, to the very bottom of the glass, the moment it is poured out. Wine will sometimes acquire this quality if it be drawn off during the ascent of the sap in August, which makes it evident that the froth is occasioned by the operation of the air and sap, which then act with vigour in the wood of the vine, and likewise in the liquor it produced. This violent ebulition, which is so agreeable to some persons, is thought by connoisseurs to be inconsistent with the goodness of the wine, since the greenest may be made to whiten into a froth, and the most perfect wines seldom discover this quality.' In an article in the *Journal de Verdun* of November 1726, the following passage occurs: 'A wine merchant of Anjou having written some time back to a celebrated magistrate in Champagne, Bertin du Rocheret, begging him to forward the secret of making *vin mousseux* during the vintage, the magistrate answered, "That *vin mousseux* was not made during the vintage; that there was no special soil for it; that the Anjou wines were suitable, since poor wine froths as well as the most excellent, frothing being a property of thin poor wine. That to make wine froth, it was necessary to draw it off as clear as could be done from the lees, if it had not been already racked; to

bottle it on a fine clear day in January or February, or in March at the latest; three or four months afterwards the wine will be found effervescent, especially if it has some tartness and a little strength. When the wine works (like the vine) your wine will effervesce more than usual; a taste of vintage and of fermentation will be found in it." The excellent wines of Ay and our good Champagne wines do not froth, or very slightly; they content themselves with sparkling in the glass.'

[114] St. Simon's *Mémoires*.

[115] Ibid.

[116] *Mémoire* of 1718.

[117] Ibid.

[118] Antony Réal's *Ce qu'il y a dans une Bouteille de Vin*.

[119] Legrand d'Aussy's *Vie Privée des Français*.

[120]

'Là le nombre et l'éclat de cent verres bien nets
Répare par les yeux la disette des mets;
Et la mousse petillante
D'un vin délicat et frais
D'une fortune brillante
Cache à mon souvenir les fragiles attraits.'

[121]

'Quant à la muse de St. Maur
Que moins de douceur accompagne.
Il lui faut du vin de Champagne
Pour lui faire prendre l'essor.'

[122]

'Alors, grand' merveille, sera
De voir flûter vin de Champagne.'

[123]

‘Sur ce rivage emaillé,
Où Neuillé borde la Seine,
Reviens au vin d’Hautvillé
Mêler les eaux d’Hypocrène.’

[124]

‘Phébus adonc va se désabuser
De son amour pour la docte fontaine,
Et connoîtra que pour bon vers puiser
Vin champenois vaut mieux qu’eau
d’Hippocrène.’

[125] The father, Adam Bertin du Rocheret, was born in 1662, and died in 1736; his son, Philippe Valentin, the *lieutenant criminel* at Epernay, was born in 1693, and died in 1762. Both owned vineyards at Epernay, Ay, and Pierry, and were engaged in the wine-trade, and both left a voluminous mass of correspondence, &c., extracts from which have been given by M. Louis Perrier in his *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*. The Marshal was an old customer. At the foot of a letter of his of the 20th December 1705, asking for ‘two quartaux of the most excellent vin de Champagne, and a pièce of good for ordinary drinking,’ Bertin has written, ‘I will send you, as soon as the river, which is strongly flooded, becomes navigable, the wine you ask for, and you will be pleased with it; but as the best new wine is not of a quality to be drunk in all its goodness by the spring, I should think that fifty flasks of old wine, the most exquisite in the kingdom that I can furnish you with, together with fifty other good ones, will suit you instead of one of the two caques.’

[126] *Tocane* was a light wine obtained, like the best Tokay, from the juice allowed to drain

from grapes slightly trodden, but not pressed. It had a flavour of *verdeur*, which was regarded as one of its chief merits, and would not keep more than six months. Though at one time very popular, and largely produced in Champagne, it is now no longer made. The wine of Ay enjoyed a high reputation as *tocane*.

[127] Louis Perrier's *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[128] Letter of Dom Grossart.

[129] Louis Perrier's *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[130] Ample details of the systems of viticulture and wine-making pursued in the Champagne at the commencement of the eighteenth century are to be found in the anonymous *Mémoire* published in 1718. These are reproduced to a great extent in the *Spectacle de la Nature* of Noel Antoine Pluche, a native of Reims, who composed this work (published in 1732) for the benefit of the son of Lord Stafford, to whom he was tutor. The Abbé Pluche, after being professor of humanity and rhetoric at the University of Reims, was about to enter into holy orders, but being denounced as an opponent of the Bull Unigenitus, abandoned all ideas of preferment, and devoted himself to private tuition and the composition of his great work, the *Spectacle de la Nature*. This last is a perfect encyclopædia, in the form of a series of dialogues, recalling those in Mrs. Barbauld's *Evenings at Home*, the interlocutors being the Count, the Countess, the Chevalier, and the Prior; and the style may be best judged from the following extracts from the contemporary translation of Mr. Samuel Humphries.

In Dialogue XIII. on ‘Vines,’ the Count remarks that, after studying the methods of viticulture followed in different provinces, he ‘could not discover any to be ranked in Competition with those Precautions that have been taken by the Inhabitants of Champaign’ in the production of their wine. By ‘a long Course of Experience’ they had ‘acquired the proper Method of tinging it with the Complexion of a Cherry, or the Eye of a Partridge. They could likewise brighten it into the whitest Hue, or deepen it into a perfect Red.’

In the succeeding Dialogue on ‘Wines,’ the Count states that ‘Vines vary in their Qualities. Some are planted in a very light and strong Soil, and they yield a bright and fragrant Wine; others are placed in a more nourishing Tract of Land, and they produce a Wine of a greater Body. The reasonable Combination of these different Fruits will produce an exquisite Liquor, that will have all the Advantages of a sufficient Body, a Delicacy of Flavour, a Fragrancy of Scent, and a Liveliness of Colour, and which may be Kept for several Years without the least Alteration. It was the Knowledge of those Effects that result from intermixing the Grapes of three or four Vines of different Qualities, which improved the celebrated Wines of Sillery, Ai, and Hautvillers to the Perfection they have now acquired. Father Parignon, a Benedictine of Hautvillers on the Marne, was the first who made any successful Attempt to intermix the Grapes of the different Vines in this manner, and the Wine of Perignon d’Hautvillers bore the greatest Estimation amongst us till the Practise of this Method became more extensive.’

The Count notes that white wines from white grapes being deficient in strength, and apt to

grow yellow and degenerate before the next return of summer, had gone out of repute, except for some medicinal prescriptions, whilst 'the grey Wine, which has so bright an Eye and resembles the Complexion of Crystal, is produced by the blackest Grapes.' 'The Wine of a black Grape may be tinged with any Colour we think proper; those who desire to have it perfectly White have recourse to the following Method. The People employed in the Vintage begin their Labours at an early Hour in the Morning; and when they have selected the finest Grapes, they lay them gently in their Baskets, in order to be carried out of the Vineyard; or they place them in large Panniers, without pressing them in the least or wiping off the dewy Moisture or the azure Dye that covers them. Dews and exhaling Mists greatly contribute to the Whiteness of the Wine. 'Tis customary to cover the Baskets with wet Cloths in a hot Sunshine, because the Liquor will be apt to assume a red Tincture if the Grapes should happen to be heated. These Baskets are then placed on the Backs of such Animals as are of a gentle Nature, and carry their Burdens with an easy Motion to the Cellar, where the Grapes continue covered in a cool Air. When the Warmth of the Sun proves moderate, the Labours of the Vintage are not discontinued till Eleven in the Morning; but a glowing Heat makes it necessary for them to cease at Nine.'

Yet even these precautions were liable to fail, since 'the Heat of the Sun and the Shocks of the Carriages are sometimes so violent, and produce such strong Effects upon the exterior Coat of the Grapes, that the Fluids contained in that Coat, and which are then in Motion, mix themselves with the Juice of the Pulp at the first Pressing; in consequence of which, the

Extraction of a Wine perfectly white is rendered impracticable, and its Colour will resemble the Eye of a Partridge, or perhaps some deeper Hue. The Quality of the Wine is still the same; but it must be either entirely White or Red, in order to prove agreeable to the Taste and Mode which now prevail.'

The Count describes the two pressings and five cuttings, the latter term derived from the squaring of the mass of grapes with the cutting peel, and the system of 'glewing' this wine, 'the weight of an *ecu d'or*' of 'Fish Glew, which the Dutch import amongst us from Archangel,' being added to each *pièce*, with the addition sometimes of a pint of spirits of wine or brandy. He then explains the method practised of drawing off the wine without disturbing the barrels, by the aid of a tube and a gigantic pair of bellows. The vessels were connected by the former, and the wine then driven from one to the other by the pressure of air pumped in by means of the latter. A sulphur-match was burnt in the empty vessels, so that it might 'receive a Steam of Spirits capable of promoting the natural Fire and bright Complexion of the Liquor.'

Noting that the wines should be again 'glewed' eight days before they are bottled, Pluche says: 'The Month of March is the usual Season for glewing the most tender Wines, such as those of Ai, Epernai, Hautvilliers, and Pieri, whose chief Consumption is in France; but this Operation should not be performed on such strong Wines as those of Sillery, Verzenai, and other Mountain Wines of Reims, till they are twelve Months old, at which Time they are capable of supporting themselves for several Years. When these Wines are bottled off before they have exhaled their impetuous Particles,

they burst a Number of Bottles, and are less perfect in their Qualities. The proper Method of bottling Wine consists in leaving the Space of a Finger's Breadth between the Cork and the Liquor, and in binding the Cork down with Packthread; it will also be proper to seal the Mouths of the Bottles with Wax, to prevent Mistakes and Impositions. The Bottles should likewise be reclined on one Side, because if they are placed in an upright Position, the Corks will grow dry in a few Months for want of Moisture, and shrink from their first Dimensions. In Consequence of which a Passage will be opened to the external Air, which will then impart an Acidity to the Wine, and form a white Flower on the Surface, which will be an Evidence of its Corruption.'

The *Mémoire* of 1718 also points out the necessity of leaving a space between the cork and the wine, saying that without this, when the wine began to work at the different seasons of the year, it would break a large number of bottles; and that even despite this precaution large numbers are broken, especially when the wine is a little green. The ordinary bottles for Champagne, styled *flacons*, or flasks, held 'a *pinte de Paris*, less half a glass,' and cost from 12 to 15 francs the hundred; and as wood abounded in the province, several glass-works were established there for their manufacture. As the bottling of the wine, especially in the early years, was mostly to order, many customers had their flasks stamped with their arms, at a cost of about 30 per cent more. The corks—'solid, even, and not worm-eaten'—cost from 50 to 60 sols per hundred. Wire was as yet quite unknown. The cost of bottling a poinçon of wine in 1712 was: for 200 bottles, 30 livres; 200 corks, 3 livres; 2 baskets and packing, 8

livres; bottling, string, and sealing, 3 livres; total, 44 livres, or say 36 shillings.

It would appear from the *Mémoire* that the pernicious practice of icing still Champagne, already noticed, continued in vogue as regards sparkling wine. The wine was recommended to be taken out of the cellar half an hour before it was intended it should be drunk, and put into a bucket of water with two or three pounds of ice. The bottle had to be previously uncorked, and the cork lightly replaced, otherwise it was believed there was danger of the bottle breaking. A short half an hour in the ice was said to bring out the goodness of the wine. Bertin du Rocheret counselled the use of ice to develop the real merits of a vinous wine of Ay.

[131] Max Sutaine's *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[132] *Mémoires* of 1718 and 1722.

[133] Ibid.

[134] Max Sutaine's *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[135] *Mémoire* of 1718. The perils to which it was exposed during this transit are pointed at in a letter to the elder Bertin from a customer in Paris in 1689: 'I thought it better to wait before giving you any news of the wine you sent me until it was fit to drink. I tapped it yesterday, and found it poor. I can hardly believe but that the boatmen did not fall-to upon it whenever they had need, and took great care to fill it up again, for it could not have been fuller than they delivered it.'

[136] Pluche's *Spectacle de la Nature*, 1732.

[137] *Mémoire* of 1718.

[138] Louis Perrier's *Mémoire sur le Vin de*

Champagne. In the *Mémoire* of 1718, Ay, Epernay, Hautvillers, and Cumières are alone classed as *Vins de Rivière*; Pierry, Fleury, Damery, and Venteuil being reckoned only as *Petite Rivière*; and there being no mention of Avize and the neighbouring vineyards.

[139] As at Vertus, where the red wine, so highly esteemed by William III. of England, was replaced by sparkling wine.

[140] Max Sutaine's *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[141] *Ergo vinum Belnense potuum est suavissimus, ita et saluberrimus.*

[142] *An vinum Remense sit omnium saluberrimum.*

[143] Of Ay, Avenay, and Hautvillers (note of Tallemant's editor).

[144] Tallemant des Réaux's *Historiettes*.

[145] Champagne has been accused of producing not only gout, but stone, gravel, and rheumatism. As to the first-named complaint, Bertin du Rocheret disposes of it by noting, in a list compiled by him of all the deaths of any moment at Epernay, from 1644 downwards, the decease, at the age of seventy-five, on January 1, 1733, of Jeanne Maillard, 'the only person in the district ever attacked by the gout.' His brother-in-law, Dr. Jacques de Reims, in a letter to Helvetius in 1730, asserts that this complaint is only known by name in the Champagne; and that, as regards the stone, not more than ten people were affected therewith within a radius of ten leagues. He maintained that the *non-mousseux* white wine of the Champagne, drunk at maturity and tempered with water, was the best of all beverages for preserving general health; and

the eminent Dr. Camille Falconnet held the same opinion. Arthur Young, moreover, furnishes spontaneous testimony with regard to rheumatism. Extolling the sparkling wine of Reims in 1787, he says, 'I suppose fixed air is good for the rheumatism; I had some writhes of it before I entered Champagne, but the *vin mousseux* has absolutely banished it;' and on reaching Ove, he regrets that 'the *vin de Champagne*, which is forty sous at Reims, is three livres here, and execrably bad; so there is an end of my physic for the rheumatism' (*Travels in France in 1787–9*).

[146] *An vinum Remense Burgundico suavius et salubrius.*

[147] In his ode entitled *Vinum Burgundum*, the passage aspersing the wines of Reims runs as follows:

'Nam suum Rhemi licet usque Bacchum
Jactitent: æstu petulans jocoso
Hic quidam fervet cyathis, et aura
Limpidus acri.

Vellicat nares avidas; venenum
At latet: multos facies fefellit,
Hic tamen spargat modico secundam
Munere mensam.'

The French version, by M. de Bellechaume, entitled an 'Ode au Vin de Bourgogne,' and published in his *Recueil des Poésies latines et françaises sur les Vins de Champagne et de Bourgogne*, Paris 1712, is as follows:

'Vante, Champagne ambitieuse,
L'odeur et l'éclat de ton vin,
Dont la sève pernicieuse
Dans ce brillant cache un venin,
Tu dois toute ta gloire en France,

A cette agréable apparence,
Qui nous attire et nous séduit;
Qu'à Beaune ta liqueur soumise
Dans les repas ne soit admise,
Que sagement avec le fruit.'

M. de la Monnoye, himself a Burgundian, has rendered this passage somewhat differently in an edition published the same year at Dijon:

'Jusqu'aux cieux le Champagne élève
De son vin pétillant la riante liqueur,
On sait qu'il brille aux yeux, qu'il chatouille le cœur,
Qu'il pique l'odorat d'une agréable sève.

Mais craignons un poison couvert,
L'aspic est sous les fleurs, que seulement par grâce;
Quand Beaune aura primé, Reims occupant la place,
Vienne légèrement amuser le dessert.'

[148] *Campania vindicata; sive laus vini Remensis a poeta Burgundo eleganter quidam, sed immerito culpati.* Offerebat civitati Remensi Carolus Coffin. Anno Domini MDCCXII.

[149]

'Quantum superbas vitis, humi licet
Prorepat, anteit fructibus arbores
Tantum, orbe quæ toto premuntur
Vina super generosiora

Remense surgit. Cedite, Massica
Cantata Flacco Silleriis; neque
Chio remixtum certet audax
Collibus Aïacis Falernum.

Cernis micanti concolor ut vitro
Latex in auras, gemmeus aspici,

Scintellet exultim; utque dulces
Naribus illecebras propinet.

Succi latentis proditor halitus
Ut spuma motu lactea turbido
Crystallinum lætis referre
Mox oculis properet nitorem.'

La Monnoye renders this as follows:

'Autant que, sans porter sa tête dans les cieux,
La vigne par son fruit est au-dessus du chêne;
Autant, sans affecter une gloire trop vaine,
Reims surpasse les vins les plus délicieux.

Qu'Horace du Falerne entonne les louanges
Que de son vieux Massique il vante les attraits;
Tous ces vins fameux n'égaleront jamais
Du charmant Silleri les heureux vendanges.

Aussi pur que la verre ou la main l'a versé,
Les yeux les plus perçants l'en distinguent à peine;
Qu'il est doux de sentir l'ambre de son haleine
Et de prévoir le goût par l'odeur annoncé,

D'abord à petits bonds une mousse argentine
Etincelle, petille et bout de toutes parts,
Un éclat plus tranquille offre ensuite aux regards
D'un liquide miroir la glace cristalline.'

[150]

'Non hæc malignus quidlibet obstrepat
Livor; nocentes dissimulant dolos
Leni veneno. Vina certant
Inguenuos retinere Gentis

Campana mores. Non stomacho movent
Ægro tumultum; non gravidum caput
Fulagine infestant opacâ.'

Bellechaume renders these lines in the Recueil as follows:

'Il n'a point, quoiqu'on insinue
De poison parmi ses douceurs,
Et de sa province ingénue
La Champagne a gardé les mœurs.
Il n'excite point de tempête
Dans les estomacs languissants;
Son feu léger monte à la tête,
Eveille et réjouit les sens.'

La Monnoye gives them thus:

'Taisez-vous envieux dont la langue cruelle
Veut qu'ici sous les fleurs se cache le venin;
Connaissez la Champagne, et respectez un vin
Qui des mœurs du climat est l'image fidèle.

Non, ce jus qu'à grand tort vous osez outrager
De images fâcheux ne trouble point la tête,
Jamais dans l'estomac n'excite de tempête;
Il est tendre, il est net, délicat et léger.'

[151]

'Ergo ut secundis (parcere nam decet
Karo liquori) se comitem addidit
Mensis renidens Testa; frontem,
Arbitra lætitiæ, resolvit

Austeriorum. Tune cyathos juvat
Siccare molles: tunc hilaris jocos
Conviva fundit liberales;

Tunc procul alterius valere.’

Bellechaume has rendered this:

‘Sitôt que sur de riches tables
De ce nectar avec le fruit
On sert les coupes délectables,
De joie il s’élève un doux bruit;
On voit, même sur le visage
Du plus sévère et du plus sage,
Un air joyeux et plus serein:
Le ris, l’entretien se reveille;
Il n’est plus de liqueur pareille
A cet élixir souverain.’

La Monnoye’s version is as follows:

‘Vers la fin du repas, à l’approche du fruit,
(Car on doit ménager une liqueur si fine),
Aussitôt que parait la bouteille divine,
Des Grâces à l’instant l’aimable chœur la suit

Parmi les conviés, s’élève un doux murmure;
Le plus stoïque alors se deride le front.’

[152] That of Utrecht, concluded the following year, 1713.

[153] *Ad clarissimum virum Guidonem-Crescentium Fagon regi a secretoribus consiliis, archiatrorum comitem; ut suam Burgundo vino prestantiam adversus Campanum vinum asserat.*

[154] The original lines and the translation, published by Bellechaume the same year in his *Recueil*, prove, as do the extracts already quoted from Coffin, that a sparkling wine was meant. The former run thus—

‘Hinc inversa scyphis tumet, fremitque;
Spumasque agglomerat furore mixtas
Æstuans, levis, inquies proterva;’

Bellechaume's translation is as above—

'Enflés du même orgueil tous ses vins
bondissants
N'élèvent que des flots écumeux frémissants
Leur liqueur furieuse, inconstante et légère
Etincelle, petille, et bout dans la fougère.'

[155] These epigrams and their translation are given anonymously, as follows, in Bellechaume's *Recueil*:

'Quid medicos testa implores Burgunda?
Laboras
Nemo velit medicam poscere sanus
opem.
Cur fugis ad doctum, Burgundica testa,
Fagonem?
Arte valet multa, sed nimis ægra jaces.'

'A ce que je me persuade
Sur la qualité des bons vins,
Grenan, ta cause est bien malade,
Tu consultes les médecins.
Quand on s'adresse au médecin
C'est qu'on éprouve une souffrance;
Bourgogne, vous n'êtes pas sain
Puisqu'il vous faut une ordonnance.'

[156] *Decretum medica apud insulam Coon facultatis super poetica lite Campanum inter et Burgundum vinum ortâ post editum a poeta Burgundo libellum supplicem.* By several writers this poem has been ascribed to Grenan; but M. Philibert Milsaud, in his *Procés poétique touchant les Vins de Bourgogne et de Champagne* (Paris, 1866), clearly shows that, although in favour of Burgundy, the judgment is an ironical one, and that the signature C. C. R. stands for Carolus Coffin Remensis.

[157] *Ode à Messieurs Coffin et Grenan,*

Professeurs de Belles Lettres, sur leurs Combats poétiques au sujet des Vins de Bourgogne et de Champagne, in Bellechaume's *Recueil*.

[158]

'Pour connaître la différence
Du nectar de Beaune et de Reims,
Il faut mettre votre science
A bien goûter de ces deux vins.'

[159] In an anonymous letter addressed to Grenan on February 1712, and published in the *Recueil*.

[160]

'Un franc Bourguignon se fait gloire
D'être avec un Remois à boire;
Ils sont tous deux bons connaisseurs,
Et ne sont pas moins bons buveurs.'

[161] *Les Célébrités du Vin de Champagne*. Epernay, 1880. Maucroix died in his ninetieth year in 1708.

[162] Henderson's *History of Ancient and Modern Wines*.

[163] In the *Journal des Savants*.

[164]

'Vieux Bourguignon, jeune Champagne
Font l'agrément de nos festins.'

From *La Critique*, an opera of Panard's, produced in 1742.

[165] 'With what vivacity,' he exclaims, with a strange blending of poetry and science, 'does this divine liquid burst forth in sparkling foam-bells! And what an agreeable impression it produces upon the olfactory organs! What a delicious sensation it creates upon the delicate

fibres of the palate! ... It is fixed air which, by its impetuous motion, forms and raises up that foam, the whiteness of which, rivalling that of milk, soon offers to our astonished eye the lustre of the most transparent crystal. It is this same air that, by its expansion and the effervescence it produces, develops the action of the vinous spirit of which it is the vehicle, in order that the *papillæ* of the nerves may more promptly receive the delicious impression.... Vainly calumny spreads the report on all sides that the sparkle of our wines is injurious; vainly it asserts that they have only a hurtful fire and a worthless flavour. Incapable of hiding under an insidious appearance a perfidious venom, they will always present a faithful image of the ingenuousness of their native province.'

[166] Max Sutaine's *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[167] Henderson's *History of Ancient and Modern Wines*. Pluche, in his *Spectacle de la Nature*, notices the controversy regarding the respective merits of the wines of the Marne and the Côte d'Or in the following terms:

'Count: If we will be determined by the finest palates, the Champaign wine is much preferable to Burgundy.

Prior: It is a sufficient honour for Champaign to be admitted to the same degree of estimation with Burgundy; and it may very well dispense with the priority. I always thought Burgundy had some similitude with a solid understanding, which affects us with lasting impressions, and that Champaign resembles a lively wit, which glitters more upon the imagination, but which is not always serviceable to its possessor.

Count: If you had made the froth of some Champaign wines and the sallies of a sprightly wit your parallel, I should have thought it unexceptionable; and several pleasant remarks might be made on this sprightliness without solidity. But such a Champaign wine as that of Sillery unites all the vigour of Burgundy, with an agreeable flavour peculiar to itself.

Prior: I prefer useful qualities to those that are merely agreeable. Burgundy seems to be a more salutary wine than Champaign, and will always be triumphant for that reason. Its colour alone declares it to be a wine of a good body, and I must confess I am apt to be diffident of all dazzling appearances.

Count: People believe that this deep colour, so esteemed in Burgundy wines, is an indication of their wholesomeness; but it is observable in the grossest wines, and results from an intermixture of the husky parts of the grape. Wine, in proportion to the quantity of these particles blended with it, will be less qualified for digestion. The gout, therefore, and the stone, with which the inhabitants of wine-countries are so frequently afflicted, are distempers hardly known either at Reims or on the banks of the Marne, where the wines are very moderately coloured.... Wines may be made almost as white in Burgundy as they are in Champaign, though not so good; and, on the other hand, the Champenois press a wine as red as the Burgundy growth, and the merchants sell it either as the best species of Burgundy to the wine-conners, who are the first people that are deceived in it, or as red Champaign to the connoisseurs, who prefer it to any other wine. If we may judge of the merit of wines by the price, we shall certainly assign the preference to Champaign, since the

finest species of this wine is sold in the vaults of Sillery and Epernai for six, seven, or eight hundred livres, when the same quality of the best Burgundy may be purchased for three hundred.

Countess: Let me entreat you, gentlemen, to leave this controversy undecided. The equal pretensions that are formed by these two great provinces promote an emulation which is advantageous to us. The partisans for Burgundy and Champaign form two factions in the State; but their contests are very entertaining, and their encounters not at all dangerous. It is very usual to see the zealots of one party maintaining a correspondence with those of the other; they frequently associate together without any reserve, and those who were advocates for Burgundy at the beginning of the entertainment are generally reconciled to Champaign before the appearance of the dessert.'

[168] *Letters, &c.* Hamburg and Paris, 1788. The translator adds, as a note, 'People do not any longer get drunk on Champagne.'

[169] *Mémoires du Duc de St. Simon.*

[170] *Journal de Barbier.*

[171] A curious proof of the popularity of sparkling Champagne, and of the singular system of provincial government into which France was broken up during the reign of Louis XV., is found in a decree of the Council of State, dated May 25, 1728. The decree in question begins by setting forth that, by the *Ordonnance des aides de Normandie*, wine was forbidden to be brought into Rouen or its suburbs in bottles, jugs, or any less vessels than hogsheads and barrels—with the exception of *vin de liqueur* packed in boxes—

under pain of confiscation and one hundred livres' fine, and that carriers were prohibited from conveying wine in bottles in the province without leave from the *fermier des aides*. Nevertheless, petitions had been presented by the *maire* and *échevins* of Reims, stating 'that the trade in the gray wines of Champagne had considerably increased for some years past, through the precautions taken at the place of production to bottle them during the first moon of the month of March following the vintage, in order to render them *mousseux*; that those who make use of the gray wine of Champagne prefer that which is *mousseux* to that which is not; and that this gray wine cannot be transported in casks into the interior of the kingdom or to foreign countries without totally losing its qualities,'—a statement probably intentionally overdrawn, since Bertin du Rocheret used to export it in casks to England. Yet the *fermiers des aides de Normandie* claimed to prohibit the transport of wines in bottle; and if their pretension held good, the trade in the gray wine of Champagne would be destroyed. 'Shifting the cause, as a lawyer knows how,' the decree recapitulates the plea of the *fermiers* that the transport of wine in bottles offered facilities for defrauding the revenue, since a carrier with a load could easily leave some of it *en route* with innkeepers, and these in turn could hide bottles holding a *pinte de Paris* from the officers in chests, cupboards, &c., and sell them subsequently, to the detriment of the *droits de détail*.

The foregoing duly rehearsed, there follows the decree permitting 'to be sent in bottles into the province of Normandy, for the consumption of the said province, gray wine of Champagne in baskets, which must not hold

less than one hundred bottles,' but prohibiting the introduction in bottles of any other growth or quality, under the penalty of confiscation and one hundred livres' fine. Permission is also given to pass gray and red wine of Champagne, or of any other *cru* or quality, in baskets of fifty or one hundred bottles for conveyance into other provinces, or for shipment to foreign parts by the ports of Rouen, Caen, Dieppe, and Havre. The wagoners, however, in all cases are to have certificates signed and countersigned by all manner of authorities, and are only to enter the province by certain specified routes. All wine, too, is to pay the *droit de détail*, except in the case of people not continuously residing in the province, who may be going to their estates, or those bound for the eaux de Forges, a celebrated watering-place, both of whom may take a certain quantity in bottle with them for their own consumption free of duty.

[172] 'To be drunk as *nouveau* or bottled,' says M. Louis Perrier in his *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[173] D'Argenson's *Mémoires*.

[174] Bois-Jourdain's *Mélanges Historiques*. The editor of the *Journal de Barbier* observes in a note to a passage referring to the King's suppers at La Muette with Madame de Mailly, under the date of November 1737: 'These suppers were drinking bouts. It was there that the King acquired a taste for Champagne.'

[175] Clauteau's *Relation de ce qui s'est passé au Passage du Roi*. Reims, 1744.

[176] Ibid.

[177] Varin's *Archives Administratives de Reims*.

[178] Louis Paris' *Histoire de l'Abbaye*

d'Avenay.

[179] Amongst these may be cited the Abbé Bignon, who, in a letter to Bertin du Rocheret dated January 1734, says: 'The less the wine is *mousseux* and glittering, and the more, on the contrary, it shows at the outset of what you style *liqueur*, and I, in chemical terms, should rather call balsamic parts, the better I shall think of it.'

[180] Louis Perrier's *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[181]

'Chloris, Eglé me versent de leur main
D'un vin d'Ay dont la mousse pressée,
De la bouteille avec force élancée,
Comme un éclair fait voler son bouchon.
Il part, on rit; il frappe le plafond:
De ce vin frais l'écume pétillante
De nos Français est l'image brillante.'

[182]

'De ce vin blanc délicieux
Qui mousse et brille dans le verre,
Dont les mortels ne boivent guères;
Et qu'on ne sert jamais qu'à la table des dieux
Ou des grands, pour en parler mieux,
Qui sont les seuls dieux de la terre.'

[183] Desaulx, a canon of Reims Cathedral, rendered Lebatteux's ode as follows:

'Ce n'est point sur les monts de Rhodope et de Thrace
Que j'irai t'invoquer; ces monts couverts de glace,
Sont-ils propres à tes faveurs?
Non, Reims te voit régner bien plus sur ses collines;

Là je t'offre mes vœux; de nos côtes voisines
Embrases moi de tes ardeurs.

Soit que d'un lait mousseux l'écume pétillante,
Soit qu'un rouge vermeil, par sa couleur brillante,
T'annonce à mes regards surpris,
Viens, anime mes vers; ma muse impatiente
Veut devoir en ce jour les accords qu'elle enfante
A la force de tes esprits.'

[184]

'Non, telles gens ne boivent pas
De cette sève délectable,
L'âme et l'amour de nos repas,
Aussi bienfaisante qu'aimable.
Leur palais corrompu, gâté,
Ne veut que du vin frelaté,
De ce poison vert, apprêté,
Pour des cervelles frénétiques.
Si, tenons-nous pour hérétiques
Ceux qui rejettent la bonté
De ces *corpusculs balsamiques*
Que jadis Horace a chantés.

Non, telles gens ne boivent pas
De cette sève délectable,
L'âme et l'honneur de nos repas,
Aussi bienfaisante qu'aimable.
De ce vin blanc délicieux,
Qui désarme la plus sévère;
Qui pétille dans vos beaux yeux
Mieux qu'il ne brille dans mon verre.
Buvons, buvons à qui mieux mieux,
Je vous livre une douce guerre;
Buvons, buvons de ce vin vieux,
De ce nectar délicieux,
Qui pétille dans vos beaux yeux
Mieux qu'il ne brille dans mon verre.'

The above was set to music by M. Dormel, organist of St. Geneviève.

[185] Marmontel's *Mémoires d'un Père pour l'instruction de ses Enfants*. M. Louis Paris, in his *Histoire de l'Abbaye d'Avenay*, identifies this spot as one known indifferently as Le Fay or Feuilly. He furnishes some interesting details respecting Mademoiselle de Navarre, who, after being the mistress of Marshal Saxe, married the Chevalier de Mirabeau, brother to the *Ami des Hommes* and uncle of the celebrated orator, and then goes on to say: 'In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the wines of Avenay shared with those of Hautvillers the glory of rivalling the best of Ay. "*Avenay, les bons raisins*," was the popular saying inscribed on the banner of its *chevaliers de l'Arquebuse* (a corps of local sharpshooters). La Bruyère, St. Evremond, Boileau himself, Coulanges, L'Atteignant, and many others had celebrated the tender and delicate wines of our vineyards; and that of Madame l'Abbesse especially had acquired such a reputation, that several great families, strangers to the locality, thought it the right thing to have a *vendangeoir* at Avenay, and to pass part of the autumn in the renowned Val d'Or.'

[186]

'Vois ce nectar charmant
Sauter sous ces beaux doigts;
Et partir à l'instant;
Je crois bien que l'amour en ferait tout autant.

Et quoi sous ces beaux doigts
Bouchon a donc sauté pour la première fois?
Croyez-vous que l'amour
Leur fit un pareil tour?'

[187]

‘Le jus que verse Ganimède
A Jupiter dans ses repas
A ce vin de Champagne cède,
Et nous sommes mieux ici bas.’

From the edition of his *Poesies* published in 1757.

[188]

‘Et quand je décoiffe un flacon
Le liège qui pette
Me fait entendre un plus beau son
Que tambour et trompette.’

Panard’s *Œuvres*, Paris, 1763.

[189]

‘Diaphorus au marchand de vin
Vend bien cher un extrait de rivière;
Le marchand vend au médecin
Du Champagne arrivé de Nanterre,
Ce qui prouve encor ce refrain-ci
A trompeur, trompeur et demi.’

[190]

‘Pour jouir d’un destin plus tranquille et plus doux
De ce bruyant séjour, amis, éloignons nous,
Allons, dans mon cellier, du Champagne et du Beaune
Goûter les doux appas.
Les plaisirs n’y sont pas troublés par l’embarras,
Et le funeste ennui qui monte jusqu’au trône
Dans les caveaux ne descend pas.’

[191]

‘C’est alors qu’un joyeux convive,
Saisissant un flacon scellé,

Qui de Reims ou d'Ai tient la liqueur captive,
Fait sauter jusqu'à la solive
Le liège deficellé;
Tout le cercle attentif porte un regard avide
Sur cet objet qui les ravit;
Ils présentent leur verre vide,
Le nectar pétillant aussitôt les remplit.
On boit, on goûte, on applaudit,
On redouble et par l'assemblée
La mousse Champenoise à plein verre est sablée.
De là naissent les ris, les transports éclatans,
La sève et tout son feu, jusqu'au cerveau montants,
Font naître des débats, des querelles polies
Qui réveillent l'esprit de tous les assistants.'

[192] An allusion to the *vin gris* of the Champagne.

[193]

'Grâce à la liqueur
Qui lave mon cœur,
Nul souci ne me consume.
De ce vin gris
Que je chéris
L'écume,
Lorsque j'en boi
Quel feu chez moi
S'allume!
Nectar enchanteur,
Tu fais mon bonheur;
Viens, mon cher ami! Que j't'hume!

Champagne divin,
Du plus noir chagrin
Tu dissipes l'amertume.
Tu sais mûrir,

Tu sais guérir
Le rhume.
Quel goût flatteur
Ta douce odeur
Parfume!
Pour tant de bienfaits
Et pour tant d'attraits;
Viens, mon cher ami! Que j't'hume!'

[194] Max Sutaine's *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[195] M. Sutaine observes that in 1780 a merchant of Epernay bottled 6000 bottles, and that the importance of this *tirage* was noted as something remarkable; and this statement has been repeated by every other writer on Champagne. Yet here is a *tirage* of 6000 bottles taking place thirty-four years previously. The extent of the bottled-wine trade is confirmed by Arthur Young, who in 1787 visited Ay, where M. Lasnier had 60,000 bottles in his cellar, and M. Dorsé from 30,000 to 40,000. Marmontel in 1716 mentions Henin de Navarre's cellars at Avenay as containing 50,000 bottles of Champagne.

[196] E. J. Maumené's *Traité du Travail des Vins*, 1874.

[197] Ibid. The *casse* of 1776 has never been forgotten at Epernay; and M. Perrier, in a letter of August 1801, mentions a recent one at Avize amounting to 85 per cent. That of 1842 flooded the cellars throughout the Champagne. Even in 1850 M. Maumené mentions a *casse* in a Reims cellar which had reached 98 per cent at his visit, and was still continuing.

[198] Max Sutaine's *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*. The Abbé Bignon confirms this in a letter of December 20, 1736, to Bertin du Rocheret, respecting wine received from him.

'The wine sealed with a cipher in red wax,' he observes, 'seemed to me very delicate, but having as yet some *liqueur* which time may get rid of, though after that I am afraid there will not remain much strength. Another, also sealed with red wax, but with a coat-of-arms, seems to have more quality and vinosity, though also very delicate and very light, both *sablant* perfectly, though they cannot be called *mousseux*. As to that which is sealed with black, the people who esteem foam would bestow the most magnificent eulogies upon it. It would be difficult to find any that carries this beautiful perfection further. Three spoonfuls at the bottom of the glass is surmounted with the strongest foam to the very brim; on the other hand, I found in it a furious *vert*, and not much vinosity.'

[199] In 1734 he speaks of his *mousseux sablant*, and forwards to the Marquis de Polignac both *mousseux* and *petillant*. In 1736 he offers M. Véron de Bussy his choice of *demi-mousseux*, *bon mousseux*, and *saute bouchon*; and the following year distinguishes his Ay *mousseux* from his *saute bouchon*.

[200] Respecting the price of sparkling Champagne during the first half of the eighteenth century, a few instances from the correspondence of Bertin du Rocheret may here he quoted. In 1716 he offers Marshal d'Artagnan 1500 bottles at 35 sols, cash down, and taken at Epernay. In 1725 he offers *flacons blancs mousseux liqueur* at from 30 to 50 sols, and *ambrés non mousseux, sablant*, at 25 sols. Ten years later *saute bouchon* is quoted by him at 40 and 45 sols, and in 1736 at 3 livres, *demi-mousseux* ranging from 36 to 40 sols, and *bon mousseux* from 45 to 50 sols. The following year *saute bouchon* fetched 3 livres 6 sols, and

mousseux 42 sols. In 1736 he insisted upon his *flacons* holding a *pinte*; and a royal decree of March 8, 1755, which regulated the weight and capacity of sparkling-wine bottles, required these to weigh 25 ounces, and to hold a *pinte de Paris*, or about 1.64 imperial pint. They were, moreover, to be tied crosswise on the top of the cork, with a string of three strands well twisted. Their cost was 15 livres per hundred in 1734 and 1738, and from 17 to 19 livres in 1754.

[201] Louis Perrier's *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[202] It would appear from Bidet that the wines of the Mountain had not been transformed into *vin mousseux* as late as 1752, as, in his book on wine published during that year, he only includes in the list of places producing sparkling wine Ay, Avenay, Mareuil, Dizy, Hautvillers, Epernay, Pierry, Cramant, Avize, and Le Mesnil.

[203]

'Votre palais, usé, perclus
Par liqueur inflammable,
Préfère de mousseux verjus
Au nectar véritable.'

[204] Louis Perrier's *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*. In the thesis in favour of Champagne, written by Dr. Xavier of Reims in 1777, the acidulous character of the wine is confirmed by the author, who naïvely remarks that it is as efficacious in preventing putrefaction as are other acids. He also compares it to acidulated waters.

[205] Legrand d'Aussy's *Vie privée des Français*, 1782.

[206] Louis Perrier's *Mémoire sur le Vin de*

Champagne. The pretended secret of Dom Perignon, quoted from the *Mémoire* of 1718, and mentioning the addition of sugar to the wine of Hautvillers, is flatly contradicted by Dom Grossart's letter to M. Dherbès (see page 41 *ante*). But it is probable that the suggestion thus made public was acted upon, though at first only timidly.

[207] Chaptal's *Art de faire du Vin*. As Minister of the Interior, he forwarded the results of his experiments to the *préfets*, with the recommendation to spread them throughout their departments.

[208] Louis Perrier's *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[209] Letter of M. Nicolas Perrier to M. Cadet-Devaux, dated August 1801.

[210] As *bourru*, *tocane*, and *en nouveau*.

[211] Louis Perrier's *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[212] The letter in which he mentions this is extant, but the secret which was enclosed in it is missing.

[213] Dom Grossart, who had retired to Montier-en-Der in 1790, was unacquainted with this plan when he wrote to M. Dherbès in 1821, although it had been practised for twenty years past.

[214] In a MS. quoted in Varin's *Archives Administratives de Reims*.

[215] The gifts presented by the municipality on this occasion included flowers, pears, and gingerbread, Reims being as famed for the latter as for its wines. The guild of gingerbread-makers at Reims was established in the sixteenth century, and from that time

forward was engaged in continual squabbles with the bakers and pastrycooks of the city, who could not be brought to understand that they had not the right to make gingerbread. Countless reams of paper were scribbled over by the lawyers of the two contending interests; but though the Bailli of Reims on several occasions pronounced a formal verdict, to the effect that no one but a sworn and accepted gingerbread-maker should have act or part in the making of the indigestible delicacy, the contumacious bakers continued to treat his edicts as naught. Eventually a royal edict of 1776, which suppressed the privileges of the majority of the guilds in France, deprived the Reims gingerbread-makers for ever of the right of figuring with swords by their sides and three-cornered hats on their heads at all local ceremonies, civil or religious, and threw their trade open to all.

It was at the close of Louis XIV.'s reign that the *pain d'épice* of Reims reached the summit of its renown. At the coronation of his successor, the *échevins* of Reims presented the monarch with several baskets of it; and when Maria Leczinska passed through Reims in January 1725, the notables offered her twelve wicker baskets, covered with damask and ornamented with ribbons, containing fresh and dried pears, conserves, preserved lemons, almond-cakes, and a new kind of gingerbread, which received the name of *nonnette à la Reine*.

[216] This escutcheon shows the arms of Reims, which at first consisted of *rinçeaux* or branches; subsequently a cross and a crozier, placed saltire-wise, and a sainte Ampoule, were added. When the government of the city passed from the archbishop, the entwined olive-branches and chief strewn with fleurs de

lis were adopted, the old motto, 'Dieu en soit garde,' being retained. The iron gates of the Porte de Paris were removed to their present position in 1843, to allow of the passage of the canal.

[217] From the days of Charles VIII. to those of Louis XIV., it was customary on these occasions for the keys to be presented by a young girl styled the Pucelle de Reims; and J. M. C. Leber, in his work *Des Cérémonies du Sacre*, is of opinion that this custom arose in some way from the visit of Joan of Arc. Louis XV. was the first who received them from the lieutenant.

[218] Baron Taylor's *Reims, la Ville de Sacres*.

[219] N. Menin's *Traité du Sacre et Couronnement des Rois*.

[220] P. Tarbé's *Reims, ses Rues et ses Monuments*.

[221] H. Taine's *L'Ancien Régime*.

[222] Ibid.

[223] Arthur Young's *Travels in France in 1787–9*.

[224] Ibid. Another grievance alleged against the monasteries was the presence of the innumerable fishponds belonging to them scattered throughout the country. The *Cahier des Plaintes, Doléances, et Remontrances du Tiers Etat du Baillage de Reims*, on the Assembly of the States General under Louis XVI., ask that 'all fishponds situate outside woods and, above all, those which lie close to vineyards, may be suppressed, as hurtful to agriculture.'

[225] H. Taine's *L'Ancien Régime*.

[226] Instructions of local *directeurs des aides*, quoted from the *Archives Nationales* by Taine.

[227] H. Taine's *L'Ancien Régime*.

[228] *Les Célébrités du Vin de Champagne*, Epernay, 1880.

[229] H. Taine's *L'Ancien Régime*. At Rethel a poinçon of the *jauge de Reims* paid 50 to 60 francs for the *droit de détail* alone.

[230] Arthur Young's *Travels in France in 1787–9*.

[231] H. Taine's *L'Ancien Régime*.

[232] Crebillon the younger's *Les Bijoux Indiscrets*.

[233] A MS. account of the wine culture of Poligny in the Jura states that in 1774 attempts were made to imitate the gray and pink wines of the Champagne, then selling at 3 livres 10 sous the bottle.

[234] Erckmann-Chatrian's *Histoire d'un Paysan*.

[235] 'Suppose Champagne flowing,' says Carlyle, when describing this banquet in his *French Revolution*.

[236] Carlyle's *French Revolution*.

[237] The date 'An 1er de la liberté' may possibly refer to the 'Year One' of the Republican calendar (1792), in which Mirabeau fell in a duel at Fribourg. But an earlier edition of the same caricature seems to have been published, according to De Goncourt in the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût*, in May 1790.

[238]

'Malgré les calembours, les brocards, les
dictons,
Je veux à mes repas vuider mes deux flacons,'

are the lines assigned to him in *Le Vicomte de Barjoleau, ou le Souper des Noirs*, a two-act comedy of the epoch.

[239]



LE GOURMAND: AN INCIDENT OF LOUIS XVI.'S FLIGHT FROM PARIS
(From a caricature of the period).

This caricature, which is neither signed nor dated, is simply entitled 'Le Gourmand;' though Jaime, in his *Histoire de la Caricature*, states that it represents Louis XVI. at Varennes. According to Carlyle, however, the king reached Varennes at eleven o'clock at night, was at once arrested in his carriage, and taken to Procureur Sausse's house. Here he 'demands refreshments, as is written; gets bread-and-cheese, with a bottle of Burgundy, and remarks that it is the best Burgundy he ever drunk.' At six o'clock the following morning he left Varennes, escorted by ten thousand National Guards. Very likely there may have been a story current at the time to the effect that the arrest was due to the king's halting to gratify his appetite. Or the caricature may represent some incident that occurred, during his return to Paris, as he passed through the Champagne district, and halted at the Hôtel de

Rohan at Epernay.

[240] De Goncourt's *Société Française pendant la Révolution*.

[241] Ibid.

[242] St. Aubin's *Expédition de Don Quichotte*.

[243] *Aux voleurs! aux voleurs!* quoted by De Goncourt.

[244] *Lettres du Père Duchêne*, quoted by De Goncourt.

[245] *Les Célébrités du Vin de Champagne*, Epernay, 1880.

[246] *Journal de ce qui s'est passé d'intéressant à Reims en 1814*.

[247] Ibid.

[248] G. A. Sala's *Paris Herself Again*.

[249] Gronow's *Celebrities of London and Paris*, 1865.

[250] Gronow's *Reminiscences*, 1862.

[251]

'J'aime mieux les Turcs en campagne
Que de voir nos vins de Champagne
Profanés par des Allemands.'

Béranger's *Chansons*.

[252]

'Rôtis sur la haute montagne
Tout flamme et miel, le Médéah,
Le Mascara, le Milianah
Feront pâlir le gai Champagne.'

Poésies de J. Boese, de Blidah.

[253]

‘Il a conduit Pomponnette
Chez Vachette,
Dans le cabinet vingt-deux;
Et là, même avant la bisque,
Il se risque
A lui déclarer ses feux.

Elle demeure accoudée,
Obsédée,
Résolue à résister,
Inexorable et charmante
Dans sa mante,
Qu’elle ne veut pas quitter.

Un troisième personnage,
A la nage
Dans un seau d’argent orné,
Se soulève sur la hanche,
Tête blanche,
Cou de glace environné.

C’est le Champagne; il susurre:
“Chose sûre!
Quand mon bouchon partira,
Tout à l’heure, cette belle
Si rebelle
Mollement s’apaisera.

Bientôt tu verras, te dis-je,
Ce prodige
Cesse d’invoquer l’enfer;
Ton courroux est trop facile;
Imbécile,
Arrache mon fil de fer!

Car je suis maître Champagne,
Qu’accompagne
Le délire aux cent couplets;
Je dompte les plus sévères.
A moi, verres,
Coupes, flûtes et cornets!”

Aussi dit le vin superbe,
Moins acerbe,
La femme se sent capter.
C'est une cause que gagne
Le Champagne;
Son bouchon vient de sauter.'

Le Parfait Vigneron, Paris, 1870.

[254] Titi Livii Foro-Juliensis *Vita Henrici Quinti*. The author was a *protégé* of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester.

[255] Francisque Michel's *Histoire du Commerce et de la Navigation à Bordeaux*. It was not till the marriage of Henry III. with Eleanor of Aquitaine that we began to import Guienne wine from Bordeaux.

[256] Varin's *Archives Administratives de Reims*.

[257] Ibid.

[258] Victor Fiévet's *Histoire d'Epernay*.

[259] Francisque Michel's *Histoire du Commerce et de la Navigation à Bordeaux*.

[260] Published in 1615.

[261] That of 1574. Surflet's translation appeared in 1600.

[262] Venner's *Via recta ad longam Vitam*, 1628.

[263] Writing to Sir Walter Mildmay in 1569, the Earl of Shrewsbury, who had charge of the royal prisoner, complains that his regular allowance of wine duty free is not enough. 'The expenses I have to bear this year on account of the Queen of the Scots are so considerable as to compel me to beg you will kindly consider them. In fact, two butts of wine a month hardly serve for our ordinary use; and besides this, I have to supply what is

required by the Princess for her baths and similar uses.'

[264] Clarendon's *Memoirs*.

[265] Letter of Guy Patin, 1660.

[266] Otway's *Soldier's Fortune*, act iv. sc. 1, 1681.

[267] Ibid.

[268] Redding's *History and Description of Modern Wines*.

[269] Otway's *Friendship in Fashion*, 1678.

[270]

'Nous parler toujours des vins
D'Ay, d'Avenet, et de Reims.'

Œuvres de Saint-Evremond.

[271]

'Perdre le goût de l'huitre et du vin de
Champagne
Pour revoir la leur d'un débile soleil
Et l'humide beauté d'une verte campagne,
N'est pas à mon avis un bonheur sans
pareil,
La faveur de la Marne, hélas, est terminée,
Et notre montagne de Reims,
Qui fournit tant d'excellens vins,
A peu favorisé nostre goût cette année.
O triste et pitoyable sort!
Faut-il avoir recours aux rives de la
Loire,
Ou pour le mieux au fameux port,
Dont Chapelle nous fait l'histoire!
Faut-il se contenter de boire
Comme tous les peuples du Nord?
Non, non, quelle heureuse nouvelle!
Monsieur de Bonrepaus arrive, il est

icy,
Le Champagne pour lui tousjours se
renouvelle,
Fuyez, Loire, Bordeaux! fuyez, Cahors,
aussy!'

Œuvres de Saint-Evremond:
Sur la Verdure qu'on met aux cheminées en Angleterre.

In these verses we trace the custom, elsewhere spoken of, of drinking the Marne wines when new. St. Evremond himself, in a passage of his prose works, says that the wines of Ay should not be kept too long, or those of Reims drunk too soon.

[272] Sparkling is not used here in the modern sense of effervescing: see page 90.

[273] Sir George Etherege's *Man of the Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter*, act iv. sc. 1, 1676.

[274] Otway's *Friendship in Fashion*, act ii. sc. 1, 1678.

[275] Etherege's *She wou'd if she cou'd*, act iv. sc. 2, 1668.

[276] Sir Charles Sedley's *Mulberry Garden*, act ii. sc. 2, 1668.

[277] Otway's *Friendship in Fashion*, act i. sc. 1, 1678.

[278] Shadwell's *Virtuoso*, act ii. sc. 2, 1676.

[279] By Dr. Charleton, and published as late as 1692.

[280] Oldham's *Paraphrases from Horace*, book i. ode xxxi., 1684.

[281] Oldham's *Works*, &c., 1684.

[282] Butler's *Hudibras*, part ii. canto i., 1664. Stum is unfermented wine; and the term brisk

applied to Champagne is here employed not to denote effervescence, but to indicate the contrast between the thick immature fluid and the clear carefully-made wines of the Champagne.

[283] Butler's *Hudibras*, part iii. canto iii., 1678.

[284] Sedley's *The Doctor and his Patients*. No date, but Sedley died in 1701.

[285] Thomson's Poems.

[286] Cyrus Redding's evidence before the Parliamentary Committee on the Wine-Duties, 1851.

[287] Redding's *French Wines*.

[288] Varin's *Archives Administratives de Reims*.

[289] Louis Perrier's *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[290] St. Simon's *Mémoires*.

[291] Redding's *French Wines*.

[292] Farquhar's *Love and a Bottle*, act ii. sc. 2, 1698.

[293] An evident allusion to its effervescence; whilst the words 'straw doublet' most likely refer to the covering of the flask.

[294] Cibber's *Love makes a Man*, act i. sc. 1, 1700.

[295] Farquhar's *The Inconstant, or the Way to win Him*, act i. scene 2, 1703.

[296] Epilogue to the *Constant Couple, or a Trip to the Jubilee* of Farquhar, spoken by Wilks in 1700. Locket's tavern, which stood on the site now occupied by Drummond's bank at Charing Cross, was especially famous for its Champagne. In the *Quack Vintners*, a satire

against Brooke and Hilliers, published in 1712, we read:

‘May Locket still his ancient fame maintain
For Ortland dainties and for rich Champaign,
Where new-made lords their native clay refine,
And into noble blood turn noble wine.’

[297] Farquhar’s *Twin Rivals*, act v. sc. 1, 1705.

[298] Several other writers, who speak of ‘bottles’ of other wines, use the word ‘flask’ when referring to Champagne.

[299] Farquhar’s *Beaux’ Stratagem*, act iii. sc. 3, 1706.

[300] *Memoir*, prefixed to Leigh Hunt’s edition of Congreve’s works.

[301] Cunninghame’s *History of Britain from the Revolution to the Hanover Succession*.

[302] Farquhar’s *The Constant Couple, or a Trip to the Jubilee*, act v. sc. 1, 1700. M. Francisque Michel, in his *Histoire du Commerce et de la Navigation à Bordeaux*, clearly establishes that from the beginning to the middle of the eighteenth century all the best growths of the Médoc were bought and shipped for England. It was not until after 1755 that any went to Paris.

[303]

‘Vos, ô Britanni (fœdera nam sinunt
Incœpta pacis) dissociabilem
Tranate pontum. Quid cruento
Perdere opes juvat usque Marte.

Lætis Remensam quam satius fuit
Stipare Bacchum navibus; et domum
Anferre funestis trophæis

Exuvias pretiosiores!’

Coffin’s *Campania vindicata*, 1712. The force of the reference to England is better understood when it is mentioned that no other nation is alluded to as purchasing the wines of the Champagne.

[304] A practice not lost sight of at a later date, to judge from Borachio’s observation, ‘I turn Alicant into Burgundy and sour cider into Champagne of the first growth of France.’ Jephson’s *Two Strings to your Bow*, act i. sc. 2.

[305] *The Tatler*, No. 131, Feb. 9, 1709.

[306] Mrs. Centlivre’s *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*, act v. sc. 1, 1718.

[307] Gay’s poem *On Wine*, published in 1708.

[308] Gay’s *Welcome from Greece*.

[309] Prior’s *Alma, or the Progress of the Mind*.

[310] Prior’s *Alma, or the Progress of the Mind*.

[311] Prior’s *Bibo and Charon*.

[312] Shenstone’s *Verses written at a Tavern at Henley*.

[313] Vanbrugh’s *Journey to London*, act i. sc. 2. Left unfinished at his death in 1726.

[314] Swift’s *Journal to Stella*, March 12, 1712–13.

[315] Ibid. Feb. 20, 1712–13.

[316] Ibid. April 9, 1711.

[317] Ibid. March 18, 1710.

[318] Ibid. March 29, 1711–12.

[319] Ibid. Dec. 21, 1711.

[320] Ibid. April 7, 1711.

[321] Letter to Mr. Congreve, April 7, 1715.

[322] Mrs. Centlivre's *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*, act i. sc. 1, 1718.

[323] Fielding's *The Miser*, 1732.

[324] *The Rake's Progress, or the Humours of Drury Lane*: a poem published in 1735, to accompany a set of prints pirated from Hogarth's.

[325] Blunt's *Geneva*: a poem dedicated to Sir R. Walpole, 1729.

[326] Hoadley's *Suspicious Husband*, act iv. sc. 1, 1747.

[327] This wine, though sometimes sent by way of Dunkirk, was usually forwarded *viâ* Calais, by the intermediary of a Sieur Labertauche, a commission-agent at that port, the cost of transport from Epernay to Calais being from 70 to 75 livres per queue. A *bobillon* of wine was sent with each lot of casks for filling up. Moreover, from 1731 Bertin annually despatches a certain quantity of cream of tartar, destined to cure the ropiness to which all white wines were especially subject before the discovery that tannin destroys the principle engendering this disease.

[328] Chabane appears to have been fully cognisant of the method of *collage* and *soutirage* (fining and racking) practised in the Champagne; and Bertin, in one of his letters dated July 1752, mentions the enclosure of a receipt for a kind of *collage*, by following which all necessity to *dépoter* the bottles is obviated. This enclosure is unfortunately lost.

[329] Ms. correspondence of Bertin du Rocheret, quoted by M. Louis Perrier in his *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*. M. Perrier states that the prohibition was removed by an

act of the 1st Nov. 1745; and a letter of Bertin to Chabane, the following year, bears this out. It is therefore singular to find the following entry in Bubb Doddington's *Diary*, under the date of Feb. 1, 1753: 'Went to the House to vote for liberty to import Champaign in bottles. Lord Hillsborough moved it; Mr. Fox seconded it. We lost the Motion. Ayes, 74; Noes, 141.'

[330] Letter to Sir Horace Mann, June 18, 1751.

[331] Jesse's *Selwyn and his Contemporaries*. It is very probable that the name printed as Prissieux is really Puissieux, a title of the Sillery family.

[332] Lady Mary Wortley Montague's *Letter from Arthur Grey, the Footman, to Mrs. Murray*. Written in the autumn of 1721.

[333] Lady M. W. Montague's *The Lover*. This is generally designated 'a ballad to Mr. Congreve,' but is headed in Lady Mary's note-book, 'To Molly,' and, as Mr. Moy Thomas has suggested, was probably addressed to Lord Hervey, Pope's 'Lord Fanny.'

[334] Note to his *Letter on Bowles*.

[335] *Westminster Magazine*, 1774.

[336] Grainger's *The Sugar Cane*, 1764.

[337] Coleman and Garrick's *Clandestine Marriage*, act i. sc. 2, 1766.

[338] Garrick's *Bon Ton, or High Life above Stairs*, act i. sc. 2, 1775.

[339] Ibid.

[340] Ibid. act ii. sc. 1.

[341] Townley's *High Life below Stairs*, act ii. sc. 1, 1759.

[342] So in Mrs. Cowley's *Which is the Man?* Burgundy is extolled and 'vile Port' denounced; and in Cumberland's *The Fashionable Lover* (1772) a sneer is levelled at a 'paltry Port-drinking club.' Burgundy, too, is in favour in Holcroft's *The Road to Ruin*, 1792.

[343] Foote's *The Lame Lover*, act iii. sc. 1, 1770.

[344] Garrick's *The Country Girl*, act v. sc. 1.

[345] Foote's *The Fair Maid of Bath*, act i. sc. 1, 1771.

[346] Holcroft's *The Road to Ruin*, act iv. sc. 2, 1792.

[347] Sir Edward Barry's *Observations, Historical, Critical, and Medical, on the Wines of the Ancients, and the analogy between them and Modern Wines*, 1775.

[348] Tickell's *Poems*.

[349] Timbs' *Clubs and Club Life*.

[350] In the *Encyclopédie Méthodique*.

[351] Arthur Young's *Travels in France in the Years 1787–9*.

[352] Sheen's *Wine and other fermented Liquors*.

[353] Amongst other English customers of the firm in 1788, 1789, and 1790 were 'Milords' Farnham and Findlater, the latter of whom was supplied with 120 bottles of the vintage of 1788; Manning, of the St. Alban's Tavern, London, who ordered 130 bottles of vin de Champagne, at 3 livres or 2*s.* the bottle, to be delivered in the autumn by M. Caurette; Messrs. Felix Calvert & Sylvin, who took two sample bottles at 5*s.*; and Mr. Lockhart, banker, of 36 Pall Mall, who in 1790 paid 3*s.* per bottle for 360 bottles of the vintage of 1788. The high rate of exchange in our favour

is shown by the 54 *l.* covering this transaction being taken as 1495 livres 7 sols 9 deniers, or about 28 livres per pound sterling.

[354] Walker's *The Original*.

[355] 'The Fair of Britain's Isle' (*Convivial Songster*, 1807).

[356] *Diary of Mrs. Colonel St. George, written during her Sojourn amongst the German Courts in 1799 and 1800.*

[357] Moore's *The Twopenny Post-bag*, 1813.

[358] Moore's *Parody of a Celebrated Letter*.

[359] The compound known as 'the Regent's Punch' was made out of 3 bottles of Champagne, 2 of Madeira, 1 of hock, 1 of curaçoa, 1 quart of brandy, 1 pint of rum, and 2 bottles of seltzer-water, flavoured with 4 lbs. bloom raisins, Seville oranges, lemons, white sugar-candy, and diluted with iced green tea instead of water (Tovey's *British and Foreign Spirits*).

[360] Captain Gronow's *Reminiscences*.

[361] Ibid.

[362] Prince Puckler Muskau's *Letters*.

[363] Miss Burney's *Memoirs*.

[364] Henderson's *History of Ancient and Modern Wines*, 1824. Henderson, who appears to have visited the Champagne in 1822, remarks of the remaining *crûs* of the province: 'The wines of the neighbouring territories of Mareuil and Dizy are of similar quality to those of Ay, and are often sold as such. Those of Hautvillers, on the other hand, which formerly equalled, if not surpassed, the growths just named, have been declining in repute since the suppression of the monastery, to which the principal vineyard belonged.'

[365] Moore's *The Fudge Family Abroad*, 1818.

[366] Moore's *The Sceptic*.

[367] Moore's *Illustration of a Bore*.

[368] Moore's *The Summer Fête*, 1831.

[369] Ibid.

[370] Ibid.

[371] Moore's *Diary*, June 1819.

[372] Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott*.

[373] Scott's *Diary*, November 15, 1826.

[374] Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, 1808.

[375] Byron's *Don Juan*, canto xv. stanza lxv., 1821.

[376] Ibid. canto xvi. stanza ix.

[377] Ibid. canto xiii. stanzas xxxvii., xxxviii.

[378] According to recent statistics issued by the Chamber of Commerce of Reims, the department of the Marne contains 16,500 hectares of vineyards (40,755 acres), of which 2465 hectares are situated in the district of Vitry-le-François; 555 hectares in that of Châlons; 700 in that of Sainte Menehould; 7624 in that of Reims; and 5587 in the Epernay district, where the finest qualities of Champagne are grown. The value of the wine produced annually in these districts exceeds 60,000,000 francs (nearly 2½ millions sterling). During the last thirty years, the value of these vineyards has increased fourfold. The 'population vigneronne' of the department is 16,093 inhabitants.

[379] In the year 1871.

[380] The blending of black and white grapes together, although its advantages had been

recognised in the *Maison Rustique* of 1574, appears not to have been successfully carried out at Ay till the days of Dom Perignon. 'Formerly,' remarks Pluche, 'it was very difficult to preserve the wine of Ay longer than one year. When the juice of the white grapes, whose quantity was very great in that vineyard, began to assume a yellowish hue, it became predominant, and created a change in all the wine; but ever since the white grapes have been disused, the Marne wines may be easily kept for the space of four or five years' (*Spectacle de la Nature*, 1732).

[381] From time immemorial the vineyards of Ay and Dizy paid tithes to the Abbey of Hautvillers, the former a sixtieth and the latter an eleventh of their produce. These dues were, by a decree of 1670, levied at the gate of Ay. In 1772, Tirant de Flavigny, a large wine-grower, who farmed, amongst other vineyards, 'Les Quartiers' at Hautvillers, insisted on leaving the tithe of grapes at the foot of the vine for collection by the abbey tithe-collectors. The Abbot Alexandre Ange de Talleyrand Périgord refused to accept them, and insisted in turn that the whole of the grapes should either be brought to the gate of Hautvillers or converted into wine in the vineyard, and the eleventh part of this wine handed to his representative. From a *procès verbal* drawn up by the Mayor of Ay, it seems that the inhabitants were willing to pay a monetary commutation, as was the prevailing custom, or to leave the abbot's share of grapes in the vineyards; but objected to the tithe being taken, usually with considerable delay, on each basket, whereby the remaining grapes were bruised, and the possibility of bright white wine being made from them rendered exceedingly doubtful. It was not till 1787 that

it was finally settled that the tithes should be paid in money at the rate of so much per arpent, and it is plain that the abbot's chief object was to throw as much difficulty as he could in the way of rival makers of fine wines.

[382] This curse is alluded to in the following verse from a sixteenth-century ballad written against the men of Ay:

'Tu n'auras ni chien ni chat
Pour te chanter *Libera*,
Et tu mourras mau-chrétien,
Toi qu'a maudit Saint Trézain.'

The fountain of St. Tresain, which enjoys the reputation of curing diseases, and in the water of which it is pretended stolen food cannot be cooked, still exists at Mareuil.

[383] The yield from the Ay vineyards averages five pièces, or 220 gallons per acre. Arthur Young, writing in 1787, estimated that the arpent (rather more than the acre) produced from two to six pièces of wine, or an average of four pièces, two of which sold for 200 livres, one for 150 livres, and one for 50 livres. He valued the arpent of vines at from 3000 to 6000 livres. Henderson, in his *History of Ancient and Modern Wines*, says that in 1822 there were a thousand arpents on the hill immediately behind the village of Ay valued at from 10,000 to 12,000 francs the arpent, and that one plot had shortly before fetched 15,000 francs per arpent.

[384] In 1873, two years later, the price mounted as high as 1000 francs; while in 1880, owing to the yield being far below an average one and the quality promising to be exceedingly good, the wine was bought up before the grapes were pressed at prices

ranging from 1100 to 1400 francs the pièce.

[385] In one of these, dated 1243, mention is made of the ‘vinea parva’ belonging to the Abbey of Avenay, and of the ‘vineam Warneri in loco qui dicetur Monswarins,’ perhaps the existing clos Warigny. In another of Philip the Fair, dated 1300, and confirming the abbey in the possession of property purchased from Jeanne de Sapigneul, we read of ‘unam vineam dictam la grant vigne domine Aelidis sitam en Perrelles’ and ‘unam vineam dictam a la Perriere.’ In charters of the fourteenth century vineyards are mentioned at Avenay and Mutigny, under the titles of Les Perches, Haut-Bonnet, Praëlles, Les Foissets, Fond de Bonnet, Berard, Chassant, &c. One sold to the abbey in 1334 by Guillaume de Valenciennes was at a spot then, as now, styled Plantelles. In 1336 the justices at Château-Thierry confirmed the Abbess, Madame Clémence, in the ‘droit de ban vin’—that is, the right of selling her wine before any one else in the territory of Avenay. This was again confirmed in 1344 by the Bailly of Sézanne, who held that she alone had the right of selling during the month after Christmas, the month after Easter, and the month after Pentecost. Amongst other records is one noting the condemnation of Perresson Legris, clerk, of Avenay, who was sentenced in 1460 by the Bailly of Epernay to a fine of 60 sols, for selling his wine during the month after Christmas without permission of the Dames d’Avenay. The charters of the fifteenth century also abound in references to vineyards, or ‘droits de vinage,’ appertaining to the abbey at Les Coutures, Champ Bernard, Auches, Bois de Brousse, Thonnay, &c., in the territory of Avenay, and Les Charmières, Torchamp, Saussaye, &c., at Mutigny.

[386] In 1668, an epoch at which the wines of Avenay had acquired a high reputation, the abbey owned 43 arpents of vineland at Avenay, Mutigny, and Mareuil, yielding the preceding year 200 poinçons of wine, the sale of which produced 6000 livres. It also had 13 pressoirs banaux, which were farmed for 50 poinçons of wine, and tithes of wine at Mareuil amounting to 14 poinçons and 460 livres in money, and at Ambonnay amounting to 3 poinçons, the total of 67 poinçons fetching 1206 livres. The valet who looked after the vines had 50 livres per annum, and the cooper who looked after the wines, 40 livres. The total cost of stakes, manure, culture, pruning, wine-making, and casks was 2700 livres per annum. Ten pièces of wine 'of the best of the abbey, and worth 300 livres,' were annually given away in caques and bottles to 'persons of quality and friends of the house, and travellers of condition who pass;' whilst 120 poinçons, valued at 3000 livres, were consumed at the abbey itself. The abbey was partially destroyed by fire in 1754; and its destruction was completed during the Revolution, at which epoch its vineyards yielded a net revenue of 2500 livres.

[387] In addition to Madame de la Marck, who was connected, by the marriage of one of her brothers to a princess of the house of Bourbon, with Henri Quatre, and to whose influence with that monarch the execution of the 'Traité des Vendanges' was mainly due, the roll of the Abbesses of Avenay comprises several illustrious personages, amongst them St. Bertha; Bertha II., daughter of the Emperor Lothaire; the ex-Empress Teutberga; Bénédicte de Gonzague, daughter of the Duke de Nevers, and sister of the Princess Palatine, who took such an active part during the troubles of the

Fronde; and ladies of the illustrious families of Saulx Tavannes, Craon, Levis, Beauvillers, Brulart de Sillery, Boufflers, &c. M. Louis Paris, in his *Histoire de l'Abbaye d'Avenay*, gives some curious instances of the exercise of the 'haut et basse justice' possessed by these ladies. In 1587, under the rule of Madame de la Marck, we find the Bailly of Avenay, acting as 'first magistrate of Madame l'Abbesse,' sentencing one man and four women 'to be hung, strangled, and burnt, and the goods belonging to them confiscated to the profit of the Lady Justiciary,' for the crime of sorcery. In 1645 we find a 'sentence of the Bailly of Avenay against Simeon Delacoste, accused and convicted of the crime of homicide committed upon the person of Jean Bernier, and for this condemned to be hung and strangled by the executioner on a gallows erected in the public market-place, with confiscation of 300 livres, to be levied on his goods, to the profit of the Lady Justiciary.' When the criminal could not be caught, as was the case with Nicholas Thimot, vine-grower at Avenay in 1555, the sentence ran that he should 'be hung in effigy, and his goods confiscated to the profit of Madame.'

[388] The following lines, quoted by M. Philibert Milsand in his *Procès poétique touchant les Vins de Bourgogne et de Champagne*, may be taken as referring either to the wine or the scenery:

'Si quis in hoc mundo vult vivere corde jocoso,
Vadat Cumerias sumere delicias.'

[389] In Arthur Young's time (1787–9) an arpent of vineyard at Hautvillers, valued at 4000 livres, yielded from two to four pièces, or hogsheads, of wine, which sold from 700 to

900 livres the queue (two pièces). This is more than the wine would ordinarily realise to-day, although in years of scarcity it has fetched 700 francs the pièce, and in 1880 as much as 1000 francs.

[390] Cazotte, ex-Commissary-General of the Navy and author of the *Diable Amoureux*, who was guillotined as a Royalist in 1792, had a magnificently fitted mansion at Pierry. He distinguished himself by his opposition to the pretensions of the Abbey of Hautvillers, which in 1775 claimed the right of taking tithes at Pierry not only in the vineyards, but on the wine in the cellars. Cazotte argued that unless the monks chose to take their due proportion of grapes left for them at the foot of each vine, all they were entitled to was a monetary commutation of the tithe; for the wine being usually made of grapes from a dozen different sources, many of them beyond their domain, it would be impossible to ascertain the proportion that was their due. The Parliament of Paris decided, however, that the abbey might take the fortieth of the wine a month after it was barrelled, unless the vine-growers preferred to give them the fortieth part of all the grapes brought to the press. The fact was that the monks really wished to check the practice of mixing grapes from different districts at the press, for fear wine equal to their own should result from this plan, first satisfactorily put in practice by Dom Perignon. Arthur Young mentions that an arpent of vines at Pierry was valued at 2000 livres, half the price the same extent commanded at Hautvillers.

[391] M. Armand Bourgeois, in his work on *Le Sourdon et sa Vallée*, mentions a local tradition to the effect that Saint Remi, who from his will

is shown to have owned vinelands of some extent in a part of this district still known as the Evêché, installed a hermit in this said grotto of the Pierre de Saint Mamert to supervise his vineyards.

[392] Bertin du Rocheret writes thus in 1744, and adds that the aspect of Avize had at that epoch become entirely changed by the numerous fine 'maisons de vendange' erected there.

[393] In 1205 Gilbert Belon conferred an annual gift on the Abbey of St. Martin of seven hogsheads of *vinage* derived from the vineyards of Oger.

[394]

'Je fus jadis de terre vertueuse
Nez de Virtuz, pais renommé,
Où il avait ville très gracieuse,
Dont li bon vin sont en maints lieux nommés.'

Eustache Deschamps' poem on the Burning of Vertus.

[395]

'Quant vient de si noble racine
Come du droit plan de Beaune,
Qui ne porte pas couleur jaune
Mais vermeille, franche, plaisant,
Qui fait tout autre odeur taisant,
Quand elle est aportée en place.'

Deschamps' *La Charte des Bons Enfans de Vertus*.

[396]

'Si vous alez au benefice
Mieulx vous vauldra que ung clistère.'—Ibid.

[397] In 1880 the Vertus wine realised the remarkably high price of from 1200 to 1400 francs the pièce.

[398] St. Evremond's *Letters* (London, 1728).

[399] St. Simon's *Mémoires*.

[400] Bertin du Rocheret's MS. extracts from the *Registre des Assemblées du peuple de la ville d'Epernay*.

[401] Henderson's *History of Ancient and Modern Wines*.

[402] Arthur Young's *Travels in France in 1787–8–9*.

[403] Anonymous *Journal de ce qui s'est passé d'intéressant à Reims en 1814*.

[404] Dom Chatelain, in his MS. notes on the *History of Reims*, relates that Henri Quatre, being one day at Sully's, asked the Minister for some breakfast, and after drinking a glass or two of wine, exclaimed, 'Ventre Saint Gris, this is a grand wine; it beats mine of Ay and all others. I should like to know where it comes from.' '"Tis my friend Taissy,' answered Sully, 'who sends it to me.' 'Then I must be introduced to him,' said the King; which was accordingly done. The wines of Taissy had a high reputation as late as the eighteenth century. They were classed by St. Evremond and Brossette, the commentator of Boileau, amongst the best vintages of the Champagne, and their reputation was maintained by the care bestowed by the Abbé Godinot on the vineyards which he owned here.

[405]

'Qu'Horace du Falerne entonne les louanges,
Que de son vieux Massique il vante les attraits;

Tous ces vins si fameux n'égaleront jamais
Du charmant Sillery les heureuses vendanges!'

Translation by Le Monnoye in the *Recueil des Poésies Latines et Françaises*, &c., Paris, 1712.

[406] The wine of Verzenay, like that of Bouzy, owes much of its reputation to the example set in the eighteenth century by the Abbé Godinot, author of the *Mémoire* on the cultivation of the grape and the manufacture of wine in the Champagne, published in 1711. He owned extensive vineyards at Verzenay and Bouzy, and his prolonged investigations as to the species of vines and composts best suited to the district led to a complete revolution in the system of culture and mode of pressing the fruit. Bertin du Rocheret praises 'the excellent wine of Verzenay' served at the banquets celebrating the conclusion of the assembly of the Etats de Vitry, held at Châlons in 1744.

[407] The value in 1880 of a hectare of vines, equivalent to nearly two and a half acres, was as follows:

At	Verzy, Verzenay, and Sillery,	35 to	38,000	francs.
„	Bouzy and Ambonnay,	38 „	40,000	„
„	Ay and Dizy,	40 „	45,000	„
„	Hautvillers,	20 „	22,000	„
„	Pierry,		18,000	„
„	Cramant and Avize,	38 „	40,000	„
„	Le Mesnil,	22 „	25,000	„

[408] This was far from being the first appearance of the pest in this district. From

1779 to 1785 similar ravages drove the vignerons to despair; but the weather during the last-named year suddenly turning wet and cold, just at the epoch of the butterflies emerging from their chrysalids, the evil disappeared as though by enchantment, an event duly acknowledged by parochial rejoicings and religious processions. In 1816 similar ravages took place; and from 1820 to 1830 the pyrale also caused great devastation.

In the year 1613, Jehan Pussot, the local chronicler of Reims, notes that a large proportion of the vines were destroyed by 'a great concourse of worms,' which attacked those plants which the frost had spared. This would establish that either the pyrale or the cochylis was known to the Champenois viticulturists at the commencement of the seventeenth century.

[409] In 1873, in all the higher-class vineyards, as much as two francs and a quarter per kilogramme (11 *d.* per lb.) were paid, being more than treble the average price. And yet the vintage was a most unsatisfactory one, owing to the deficiency of sun and abundance of wet throughout the summer. The market, however, was in great need of wine, and the fruit while still ungathered was bought up at most exorbitant prices by the *spéculateurs* who supply the *vin brut* to the Champagne manufacturers.

In 1874 the grapes of the Mountain sold from at 55 to 160 francs the caque, according to the crus; and those of the Côte d'Avize at from 1 f. 25 c. to 2 f. per kilogramme. In 1875, on the other hand, grapes could be obtained at Verzenay, Verzy, Ambonnay, and Bouzy at from 45 to 55 francs the caque; and at Vertus, Le Mesnil, Oger, Grauves, Cramant, and Avize,

at from 40 to 70 centimes the kilogramme. By far the highest price secured by the growers for their grapes was in 1880, when the produce of the grand crus of the Mountain fetched as much as 220 f. the caque, equal to nearly 3 f. 60 c. the kilogramme, or about 1 *s.* 5 *d.* per lb. It was, as usual, scarcity rather than quality that caused this unprecedented rise in price.

[410] M. Mauméné relates in his *Traité du Travail des Vins* that on one occasion, when, as an experiment, 3000 first-class bottles, which had already been used, were employed anew, only fifteen or sixteen of the whole number resisted the pressure. Moreover, if much broken glass is remelted down and used in the manufacture, the bottles do not turn out well, the second fusion of silicates never having the same cohesion as the first. The glass-works of Sèvres and Bercy, which melt down most of the broken glass collected in Paris, have never been able to supply bottles strong enough for sparkling wines.

[411] Loivre is about seven miles from Reims on the road to Laon.

[412] It is calculated that wine, the grape sugar in which yields ten per cent of alcohol, according to the average in Champagne, would, if bottled immediately after pressing, produce enough carbonic acid gas to develop a pressure of thirty-two atmospheres. But such a pressure is never developed, as the wine is not bottled directly it leaves the press; besides which no bottle could stand it. From four to six atmospheres insure a lively explosion and a brisk creamy foam. It is necessary, therefore, that fermentation should have been carried on till at least three-fourths of the sugar have been converted into alcohol and carbonic acid

gas before the wine is drawn off for bottling, for even the very best bottles burst under a pressure of eight atmospheres.

A few words on the origin and development of the effervescent properties of Champagne will not be out of place here. These are due, as already explained, to the presence of a large quantity of carbonic acid gas, the evolution of which has been prevented by the bottling of the wine prior to the end of the alcoholic fermentation. The source of carbonic acid gas exists in all wines, and they may be all rendered sparkling by the same method of treatment. Still, no effervescent wine can compare with the finest growths of the Champagne, for these possess the especial property of retaining a large portion of their sugar during, and even after, fermentation; besides which, the soil imparts a native bouquet that no other wine can match.

Carbonic acid gas is one of the two products of the fermentation of grape sugar, the other being alcohol. In wine fermented in casks it rises to the surface, and escapes through the bunghole left open for the purpose. The case is different with wine fermenting in bottles tightly secured by corks. Part of the gas developed rises into the chamber or vacant space left in the bottle, where, mingling with the atmospheric air, it exercises a constantly increasing pressure on the surface of the wine. This pressure at length becomes so strong as to keep all the gas subsequently formed dissolved in the wine itself, which it saturates, as it were, and thereby converts into sparkling wine. Upon the bottle being opened, the gas accumulated in the chamber rushes into the air, producing a slight explosion, or pop, and freeing from pressure the gas which had

remained dissolved in the wine, and which in turn escapes in the shape of numberless tiny bubbles, forming the foam so pleasing to the eye on rising to the surface.

Sometimes on opening a bottle of Champagne the pop is loud, but the effervescence feeble and transitory; and, on the other hand, there is merely a slight explosion, and yet the wine froths and sparkles vigorously and continuously. The two bottles may contain the same quantity of gas, but in the one there is more in the chamber and less dissolved in the wine, and hence the loud pop and slight sparkle; while in the other the pressure is low, and the explosion consequently slighter, but there is more gas in the wine itself, and the effervescence is proportionately greater and more lasting. In the former case the wine has received the addition of, or has contained from the outset, some matter calculated to diminish its power of dissolving carbonic acid gas, and is unsuitable for making good sparkling wine. The nature of the effervescence is one of the best tests of the quality of the wine. Gas naturally dissolved does not all escape at once on the removal of the pressure, but, on the contrary, about two-thirds of it are retained by the viscidity of the wine. The better and more natural the wine, the more intimately the carbonic acid gas remains dissolved in it, and the finer its bubbles.

The form of the glass out of which Champagne is drunk has an influence on its effervescence. The wine sparkles far better in a glass terminating in a point, like the old-fashioned *flûte*, or the modern goblet or patera, with a hollow stem, than in one with a rounded bottom. The reason is that any point formed around the liquid, as instanced in the pointed

bottoms of these glasses, or in the liquid, as may be proved by putting the end of a pointed glass rod into the wine, favours the disengagement of the gas. Powder of any kind presents a number of tiny points, and hence the dropping of a little powdered sugar into Champagne excites effervescence. Porous bodies like bread-crumbs produce the same effect. Even dust has a similar action; and the wine will froth better in a badly-wiped glass than in one perfectly clean, though it would hardly do to put forward such an excuse as this for using dirty goblets.

The lively pop of the cork is less esteemed in England than in certain circles in France, where many hosts would be sadly disappointed if the wine they put before their guests did not go off with a loud bang, causing the ladies to scream and the gentlemen to laugh. A brisk foam, too, is absolutely necessary for the prestige of the wine, and 'grand mousseux' is a quality much sought after by the general public on the other side of the Channel. It is not rare to meet with wines of a high class in which the removal of the cork produces a loud explosion; but unfortunately the brisk report and sharp but transitory rush of foam are features easily imparted by artificial means. The ordinary white wines of Lorraine and other provinces receive a certain addition of spirit and liqueur, and are then artificially charged with carbonic acid gas obtained from carbonate of lime, chalk, and similar materials, after the fashion in which soda-water is made. These wines, sold as Champagne, eject their corks with a loud pop, but three-fourths of the carbonic acid gas escape at the same time, and the wine soon becomes flat and dead; whereas a naturally sparkling wine of good quality left

open for three hours and then recorked will be found fresh and drinkable the next day.

Both the explosion and the subsequent effervescence are aided by a high temperature, which assists the development of the gas. Cold has the opposite effect, and iced wine neither pops nor sparkles. It, however, retains, if genuine, the whole of the carbonic acid gas held dissolved, which is not the case with the imitations spoken of.

Were it not that the question has been seriously started on more than one occasion, and only solved to the satisfaction of the questioner by a chemico-anatomical explanation, it would hardly be worth while touching upon the supposed hurtfulness of the carbonic acid gas contained in sparkling wines. The fact of accidents frequently occurring in breweries, distilleries, wine-presses, &c., from the accumulation of this gas, to breathe which for a few seconds is mortal, has led some people to wonder how Champagne, whilst containing so large a proportion of it, can be swallowed with impunity. The gas, however, which produces fatal results when inhaled into the lungs, by depriving the blood of the oxygen which it should find there, has in the stomach a beneficial effect, serving to promote digestion. In drinking Champagne it is conveyed direct to this latter region, so that no danger whatever exists, any more than in the mineral waters.—Mainly condensed from E. J. Mauméné's *Traité du Travail des Vins*.

[413] For a long time the most erroneous ideas as to the cause of such breakage and the means of preventing it prevailed. Tasting, which was most relied on for ascertaining how far fermentation had gone, could not be depended upon with accuracy, though the rule

of thumb laid down by some makers was that the time to bottle with the least risk of breakage was when the sweet taste had disappeared, and vinous flavour developed itself. The aerometers subsequently introduced failed to answer the purpose, because the saccharine matter was not the only thing capable of influencing them. The result usually was either the bottling of a must so full of effervescence as to break the bottles, or of wine already completely fermented and incapable of effervescing at all.

[414] In some establishments tables made after the same fashion replace the racks, whilst another plan of coaxing the sediment down towards the cork is to stack the bottles at the outset in double rows, with their necks inclining downwards, laths placed between each layer maintaining them in their position. This method effects a great economy of time and space, the bottles requiring on an average only a few days on the racks prior to shipment to thoroughly complete the operation.

[415] As the real origin of this system is a matter which has excited no small amount of controversy, and as several claimants to the honour of its discovery have had their names put forward by different writers, the following extracts from a letter from M. Alfred Werlé, of the house founded by Madame Clicquot, may serve to render honour where it is really due: ‘Already, in 1806 (I am unable to speak of an earlier period with absolute certainty), the bottles were placed on tables, like to-day, with their heads downwards; each bottle being taken out of its hole, raised in the air, and shaken with the hand, so as to cause the cream of tartar and the deposit it contained to fall upon the cork, the holes being round, and the

bottles placed straight downwards. This lasted till 1818, when a man named Müller, an employé of Madame Clicquot, suggested to her that the bottles should be left in the table whilst being shaken, and that the holes should be cut obliquely, so that the bottles might remain inclined. He maintained that one would thus obtain a wine of far greater limpidity. The trial was made, and every day, with a view of keeping this new process a secret, Müller and Madame Clicquot shut themselves up alone in the cellars, and shook the bottles unperceived. In 1821 Müller was assisted by a workman named Mathieu Binder; and in 1823 or 1824, Madame Clicquot having purchased from M. Morizet a *cuvée* of wine which was shaken and prepared in this merchant's cellars, one of his employés named Thomassin became acquainted with the new method, and resolved to practise it; since when it gradually spread, and eventually was generally adopted. M. Werlé senior recollects perfectly well that when he arrived at Madame Clicquot's in 1821 it was only at her establishment that the bottles were shaken in this manner. The practice of shaking the bottles was a very old one, and no more invented by Müller than by Thomassin; but the former certainly effected great improvements by employing the system of oblique holes, and shaking the bottles in the table and not in the air.'

[416] M. Mauméné has pointed out that if a solution of tannin or alum has been added to the *cuvée* at the time of fining, the deposit is certain to be granular and non-adherent. But he justly remarks that these solutions, especially the latter, though doing good to the wine, have a precisely opposite effect upon the human stomach that consumes it.

[417] The Regiment de Champagne was one of the most famous of the *vieux corps*, and claimed to be the second oldest regiment in the French army.

[418] The system of dosing the wine does not appear to have been practised prior to the present century.

[419] The high favour in which sugar-candy is held for mixing with this Champagne liqueur dates from the latter part of the last century, when there was a perfect mania for everything in a crystallised form, as being the height of condensation and purity. The competition between the first houses of Reims and Epernay to secure the largest and finest crystals was very keen, and it was considered disgraceful for any firm of standing to make use of sugar-candy of a yellow tinge or in small crystals. Latterly it has been demonstrated that these expensive crystals contain more water and less saccharine matter than an equal weight of loaf-sugar, and that they sometimes contain a glutinous element capable of imparting an insipid flavour to the wine.—Mauméné's *Traité du Travail des Vins*.

[420] Instances have been known of additions of 25 and even 30 per cent of liqueur, though the average may be taken to be for Germany and France, 15 to 18 per cent; America, 10 to 15 per cent; England, 2 to 6 per cent.

[421] The corrosive action of rust upon the wire has led to several attempts to replace it, and some Champagne houses have adopted more or less ingenious appliances of metal, &c. Tinned iron wire has been found to resist rust, but is too expensive; whilst an experiment with galvanised wire resulted in serious illness amongst the workmen handling it, owing to the poisonous fumes evolved by the zinc when

acted upon by the acids of the wine.

[422] M. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'Architecture du Vme au XVIme Siècle*.

[423] An engraving of this tower, removed while the present work was passing through the press, will be found on p. 50.

[424] See the engraving on p. 16.

[425] Read before the Academy of Reims in February 1845, printed by them in their Transactions, and subsequently republished in volume form.

[426] It is generally supposed that the gate took its name from a hospital standing a short distance without the walls, and destined for the reception either of lepers or of pilgrims arriving after nightfall. The prevalent opinion is that it bore the inscription *Dei merito*, translated as Dieu le mérite, which became corrupted into Dieu-Lumière. Under Louis XI. it certainly figures as Di Merito.

[427] A curious old engraving copied from an ancient tapestry represents the entry of the royal procession into Reims through the Porte Dieu-Lumière. Joan of Arc, beside the king and in company with the Dukes of Bourbon and Alençon, bears the banner of France; whilst her father and mother are seen arriving with the king's baggage by another road.

[428] A.D. 499.

[429] Victor Fievet's *Histoire d'Epernay*.

[430] M. A. Nicaise's *Epernay et l'Abbaye de St. Martin*.

[431] Ibid.

[432] Victor Fievet's *Histoire d'Epernay*. In December 1540, when the eschevins fixed the 'vinage,' the queue of wine was valued at eight

to nine livres.

[433] The partiality of Charles V. for the wine of Ay has been elsewhere spoken of. The vendangeoir mentioned was in existence in 1726.

[434] Victor Fievet's *Histoire d'Epernay*.

[435] M. A. Nicaise's *Epernay et l'Abbaye de St. Martin*.

[436] Ibid.

[437] The thoroughfare at Epernay known as the Rempart de la Tour Biron commemorates the above event.

[438] Victor Fievet's *Histoire d'Epernay*.

[439]

'Ce diable à quatre
A le triple talent
De boire et de battre,
Et d'être vert-galant.'

[440]

'On lui verse le vin de la côte voisine,
Pétillant, savoureux qui soudain l'illumine
D'étincelants rayons de joie et de gaîté;
Redevenant poëte, il chante la beauté
Qui l'aide à conquérir doucement la
Champagne.'

M. Camille Blondiot's *Henri IV. au Siège d'Epernay*.

[441]

'Viens aurore,
Je t'implore,
Je suis gai quand je te voi;
La bergère
Qui m'est chère

Est vermeille comme toi.

Elle est blonde,
Sans seconde,
Elle a la taille à la main;
Sa prunelle
Etincelle
Comme l'astre du matin.

De rosée,
Arrosée,
La rose a moins de fraîcheur;
Une hermine
Est moins fine,
Le lis a moins de blancheur.

D'ambroisie,
Bien choisie,
Dupuis se nourrit à part;
Et sa bouche
Quand j'y touche
Me parfume de nectar.'

[442] From the *Extrait du Registre et Papiers des Assemblés du Peuple de la Ville d'Epernay*, preserved in the MSS. of Bertin du Rocheret.

[443] Bertin du Rocheret's MSS.

[444] Ibid.

[445] *Mémoire concernant la Ville d'Epernay*, by Maître François Stapart, notaire au bailliage, published in 1749.

[446] Max Sutaine's *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[447] Arthur Young's *Travels in France in the Years 1787–8–9*.

[448] Victor Fievet's *Histoire d'Epernay*. In the list of expenses incurred on the passage of Louis XVI. and his family, four hundred livres

are set down to ‘the Sieur Memmie Cousin, innkeeper and merchant at Epernay, for the dinner of the king, the queen, and the royal family, as well as for an indemnity for the furniture broken at the said Cousin’s.’

As regards the price of the wines of the River during the Revolutionary epoch, an old account-book of Messrs. Moët & Chandon shows that in 1797 the firm paid for the white wine of Epernay and Avize 200 francs, for that of Chouilly 180 francs, and for that of Pierry and Cramant 150 francs per pièce; whilst that of Ay cost from 565 to 600 francs the queue. Bottles in 1790 only cost 16 livres 10 sols the hundred.

[449] The Clos St. Pierre is now the property of M. Charles Porquet, and the ancient seignorial residence of the monks of St. Pierre, at Pierry, is occupied by M. Papelart. Both these gentlemen are wine-merchants.

[450] Cazotte, writing in October 1791, speaks of the village as peopled with ‘gros propriétaires;’ and in November, that it had ‘thirty-two households of well-to-do people.’ Amongst its inhabitants were the Marquis Tirant de Flavigny, Dubois de Livry, Quatresols de la Motte, De Lastre d’Aubigny, De Lantage, &c., most of whose residences are still extant. In October 1792 several accusations were made against soldiers for picking and eating grapes in the vineyards of Pierry and Moussy, belonging to Cazotte, De la Motte, De Lantage, D’Aubigny, &c.

[451] Part of it now serves as the ‘maison communale’ and school-house of the village.

[452] Arrested at Pierry in August 1792, in consequence of the discovery, on the sacking of the Tuileries, of a new plan of escape for the

royal family, sent by him to his friend Ponteau, secretary of the Civil List, Cazotte was brought to Paris and immured, in company with his daughter Elizabeth, in the prison of the Abbaye. Arraigned before the self-constituted tribunal presided over by the butcher Maillard, on the night of the 3d September, the fatal words 'To La Force,' equivalent to a sentence of death, were pronounced; and Cazotte was about to fall beneath the sabres already raised against him, when Elizabeth covered his body with her own, and by her heroic appeals induced the assassins to forego their prey. She even had the courage to drink with them to the Republic, and with her father was escorted home in triumph. A few days later, however, he was rearrested, condemned to death by the Revolutionary Tribunal, and on the 25th September ascended the scaffold, from whence he cried with a firm voice to the multitude, 'I die as I have lived, faithful to God and my king.'

Under date of the 10 Prairial An II. (1793), the citizen Bourbon was appointed by the municipality of Pierry to cultivate the vineyards 'du gillotiné (*sic*) Cazotte.'

[453] In 1775 the Abbot of Hautvillers, as *décimateur* of Pierry, claimed to take tithe of a fortieth of all wines in the cellars of the village. This claim being rejected by the baillage of Epernay in 1777, he appealed to the Parliament of Paris. Cazotte undertook the case of his fellow-proprietors, pleading that the abbey, which, according to strict law, was bound to take the tithe in the shape of grapes left at the foot of each vine, had long since replaced this by a monetary commutation; and that the inhabitants of Pierry, like the other

wine-growers of the Champagne, being 'obliged, in order to obtain perfection in their wines, to mix the grapes of several crus and different tithings, it would be impossible to tithe the wine itself.' He also argued that the question had been settled by a decision on the same point in favour of the inhabitants of Ay and Dizy. However, the monks obtained a decree from parliament authorising them to take the fortieth of the vintage a month after the wines had been barrelled, unless the wine-growers preferred 'to pay the tithe at the wine-press, in form of the fortieth load of grapes free from all mixture.' The inhabitants appealed in 1780, pleading the impossibility of this plan of tithing at the press, on account of the expense and of the difficulty of sorting out the grapes from those brought from Moussy, Vinay, Monthelon, Cuis, Epernay, and other districts in which they had also vineyards. The Revolution cut the Gordian knot of this affair, which really arose from the wish of the monks to hinder as much as possible that plan of mixing grapes from different sources, to which the perfection of their own wine was due.

[454] In January 1790 the inhabitants of Pierry unanimously elected Cazotte their first mayor under the new *régime*. A decree signed by him in this capacity, and dated April 11, 1790, fixes the price for a day's work in the vineyards at 12 sols. In 1793 the municipality of the adjoining district of Moussy fixed the day's hire of the vintager at 25 sous, of horses employed in the vintage at 7 livres 10 sous, and of asses at 5 livres. As regards the price of the local cru, amongst the items of the accounts of the syndic of Moussy for the years 1787–8 is the following: 'For thirteen bottles of stringed wine (vin fisselé) sent to Paris to the procureur of the community (Failly

lawsuit), 13 livres.' The community were then engaged in a lawsuit with the Count de Failly respecting a wood. During the Revolutionary epoch it was decreed by the municipality of Pierry that a vineyard known as les Rennes should, on account of the resemblance to les Reines, be in future styled les Sans-culottes. It has since resumed its old name.

[455] The story of Cazotte prophesying not only his own fate, but that of the king and queen, Condorcet, Bailly, Malesherbes, Nicolai, the Duchess de Grammont, and others who perished during the Terror, at a dinner given at an Academician's in 1788, has been proved to be a mere invention on the part of La Harpe. Nevertheless there seems but little doubt that he distinctly foresaw many coming evils; and a native of Pierry, M. Armand Bourgeois, asserts that his maternal grandfather was one day at Cazotte's house in the village, when the entire company were completely upset by their host's prophecies of a coming revolution.

[456] P. Jannet's *Recueil des Poésies françaises des 15me et 16me Siècles*.

[457] Louis Perrier's *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[458] St. Evremond's *Letters*, &c. (London, 1714).

[459] Max Sutaine's *Essai sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[460] Bertin du Rocheret's MSS. *Histoire d'Epernay*.

[461]

'Ay produit les meilleurs vins—
J'en prends à témoin tout le monde;
Mais vous préférez ceux de Reims,

Ay produit les meilleurs vins.
Ce sont les premiers, les plus fins,
Et Saint Evremont me seconde.
Ay produit les meilleurs vins—
J'en prends à témoin tout le monde.

Charles Quint s'y connoissoit bien
Il en faisoit la différence;
Et mieux que son maître Adrien,
Charles Quint s'y connoissoit bien,
Pour en boire, il ne tint a rien
Qu'il ne vînt demeurer en France.
Charles Quint s'y connoissoit bien
Il en faisoit la différence.

Pour qu'on ne pût le mélanger,
Et que sa table fût complète,
Lui même faisoit vendanger,
Pour qu'on ne pût le mélanger.
Léon craignant même danger,
D'un pressoir d'Ay fit emplète,
Pour qu'on ne pût le mélanger,
Et que sa table fût complète.'

The Adrien mentioned in the second verse was Pope Adrian VI., who had been the Emperor's preceptor, and who by his influence obtained the tiara on the death of Leo X. Unlike his predecessor, he was very simple in his habits.

[462] *Maison Rustique*, edition of 1574.

[463] Louis Perrier's *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[464] An allusion to the curse pronounced by St. Tresain against the men of Ay.

[465] *Maison Rustique* (1582), translated by Richard Surflet (London, 1600).

[466] Ibid.

[467] Ibid.

[468] Paulmier's treatise, *De Vino et Pomaceo* (1588).

[469] *Maison Rustique* (1582).

[470] Legrand d'Aussy's *Vie privée des Français*.

[471] Louis Perrier's *Mémoire sur le Vin de Champagne*.

[472] *Recueil des Poésies latines et françaises sur le Vin de Champagne* (Paris, 1712). Gonesse, a village of the department of Seine-et-Oise, about ten miles to the north of Paris, had a high reputation for its bread for several centuries.

[473]

'Notre bon roi, le grand Henry,
En régaloit sa belle hôtesse,
Quand il couchoit à Damery,
Notre bon roi, le grand Henry,
C'étoit-là son jus favori;
Et son pain, celui de Gonesse,
Notre bon roi, le grand Henry,
En régaloit sa belle hôtesse.'

Published in the *Mercure* of January 1728. Henry was accustomed to speak of the Présidente as his 'belle hôtesse.'

[474] Circa 1590.

[475] *Théâtre de l'Agriculture et Mesnage des Champs* (1600).

[476] Published at Orleans, 1605. As regards the price of the newly-made wine of Ay at this epoch, Jehan Pussot says that, in 1604, it fetched from 25 to 45 livres; in 1605, from 60 livres upwards; and in 1609, from 100 to 120 livres, at the epoch of the vintage.

[477] Chaulieu says that St. Evremond

‘Ne chante dans ses vers heureux
Que l’inconstance et la Tocane’—

Tocane being usually made of the wine of Ay.

[478] St. Evremond’s *Works* (London, 1714).

[479] Chaulieu extols the Tocane of Ay, and some verses of Voltaire have been quoted on p. 61.

[480] Arthur Young’s *Travels in France in the Years 1787–8–9*.

[481]

CHAMPAGNE.

Less for thy grace and glory, land of ours,
Than for thy dolour, dear,
Let the grief go; and here—
Here’s to thy skies, thy women, and thy flowers!
France, take the toast, thy women and thy roses;
France, to thy wine, more wealth unto thy store!
And let the lips a grievous memory closes
Smile their proud smile once more!

Swarthy Falernian, Massica the Red,
Were ye the nectars poured
At the great gods’ broad board?
No, poor old wines, all but in name long dead,
Nectar’s Champagne—the sparkling soul of mirth,
That, bubbling o’er with laughing gas,
Flashes gay sunbeams in the glass,
And like our flag goes proudly round the earth.

‘I am the blood Burgundian sunshine makes;
A fine old feudal knight,
Of bluff and boisterous might,
Whose casque feels—ah, so heavy when one

wakes!'
'And I, the dainty Bordeaux, violets'
Perfume, and whose rare rubies
gourmets prize;
My subtile savour gets
In partridge wings its daintiest allies.'

Ah, potent chiefs, Bordeaux and Burgundy,
If we must answer make,
This sober counsel take:
Messeigneurs, sing your worth less haughtily,
For 'tis Champagne, the sparkling soul of
mirth,
That, bubbling o'er with laughing gas,
Flashes gay sunbeams in the glass,
And like our flag goes proudly round the earth.

Ay, 'tis the true, the typic wine of France;
Ay, 'tis our heart that sparkles in our
eyes,
And higher beats for every dire mischance.
It was the wit that made our fathers
wise,
That made their valour gallant, gay,
When plumes were stirred by winds of waving
swords,
And chivalry's defiance spoke the words:
'A vous, Messieurs les Anglais, les
premiers!'

Let the dull beer-apostle till he's hoarse
Vent his small spleen and spite—
Fate fill his sleepless night
With nightmares of invincible remorse!
We sing Champagne, the sparkling soul of
mirth,
That, bubbling o'er with laughing gas,
Flashes gay sunbeams in the glass,
And like our flag goes proudly round the earth.

Transcriber's Note:

This e-text is based on the 1882 edition. The original spelling, as well as the use of punctuation and quotation marks, have been retained.

The following errors have been corrected:

p. xi: 'Sauturnes' → 'Sauternes'
p. 52: 'which ne declares' → 'which he declares'
p. 154: 'its owes' → 'it owes'
p. 204: 'Bonaporte' → 'Bonaparte'
p. 220: 'histriographer' → 'historiographer'
p. 229: 'Reputatiou' → 'Reputation'
p. 256: 'Saint-Poray; → 'Saint-Péray;
Footnote 412: 'tho gas' → 'the gas'

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A HISTORY OF CHAMPAGNE, WITH NOTES ON THE OTHER SPARKLING WINES OF FRANCE ***

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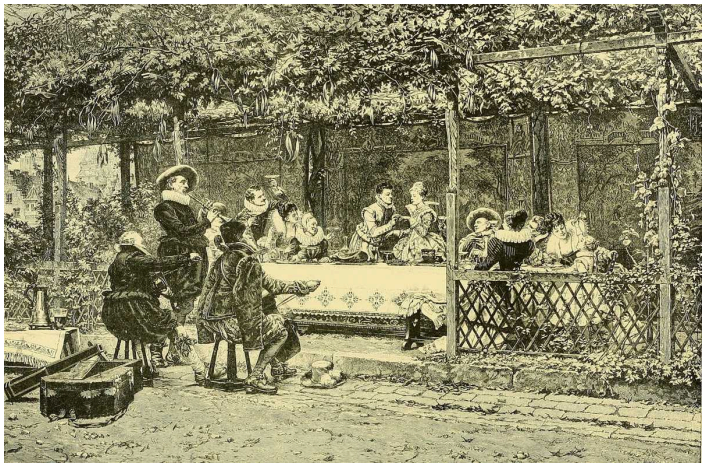
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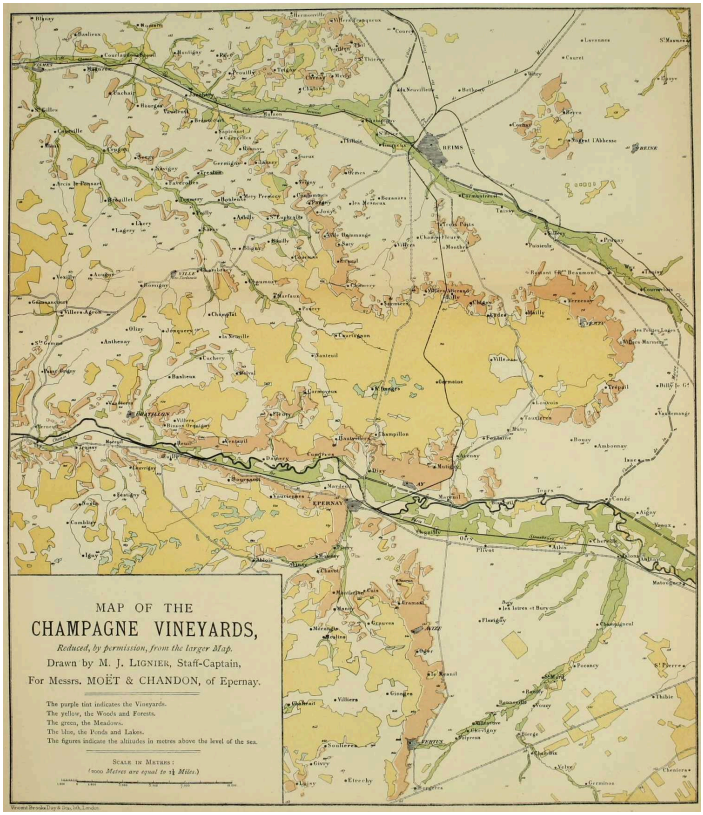
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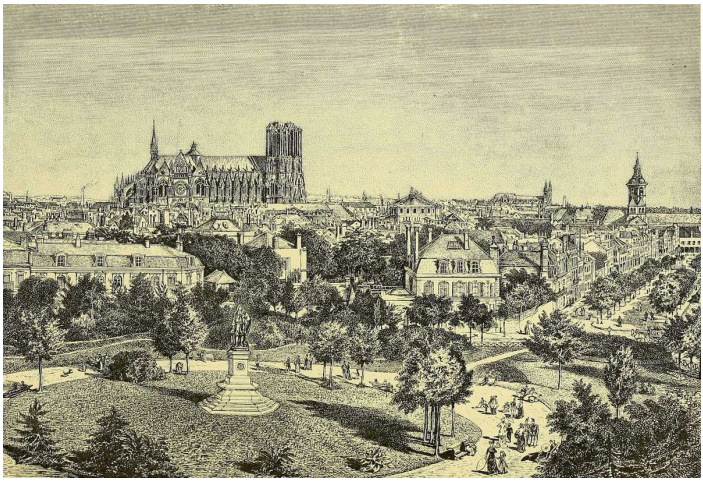
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For Messrs. MOËT & CHANDON, of Epernay.
The purple tint indicates the Vineyards.
The yellow, the Woods and Forests.
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The figures indicate the altitudes in metres above the level of the sea.
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(1000 Metres are equal to 3/4 Miles.)
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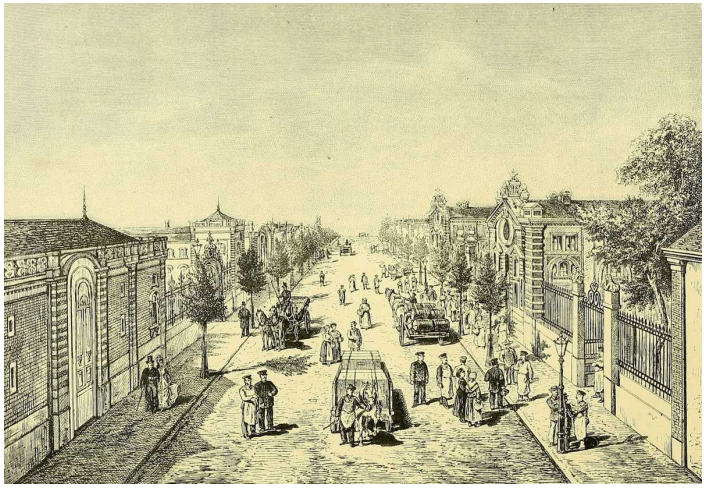
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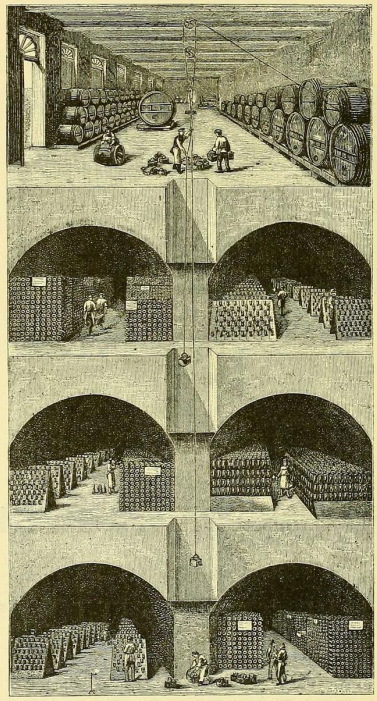
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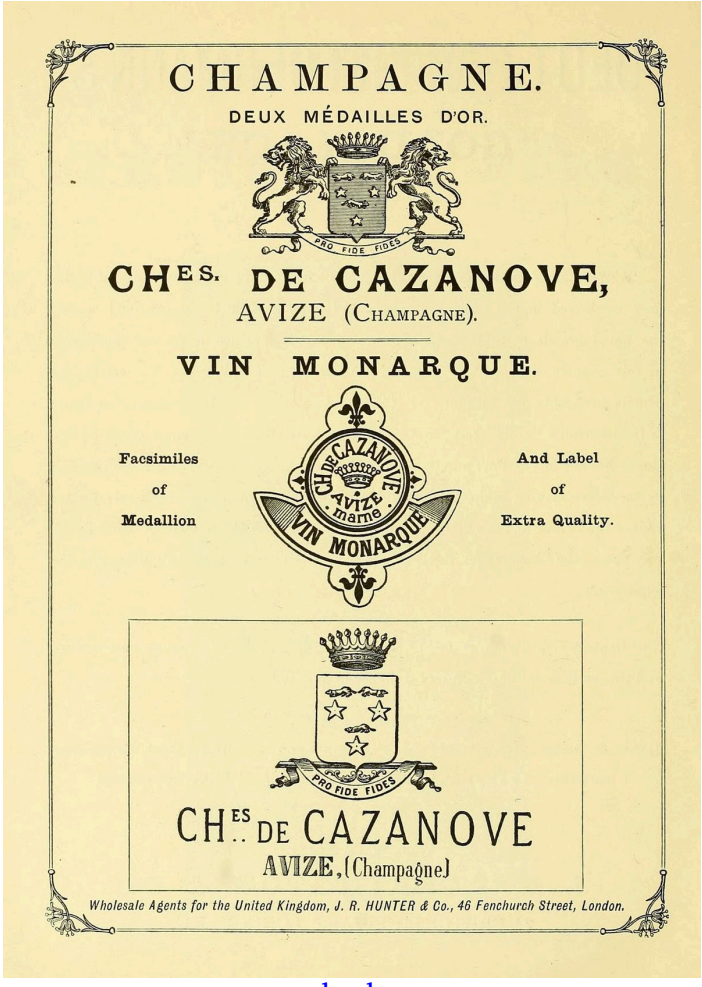
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