

**A BRIEF DISCOURSE ON WINE:
EMBRACING AN HISTORICAL AND
DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT OF THE VINE,
ITS CULTURE AND PRODUCE IN ALL
COUNTRIES, ANCIENT AND MODERN**

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A Brief Discourse on Wine: Embracing an Historical and Descriptive Account of the Vine, Its Culture and Produce in All Countries, Ancient and Modern by James Lemoine Denman

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JAMES LEMOINE DENMAN

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THE VINE,

Its Culture and Produce in all Countries,

ANCIENT AND MODERN.

DRAWN FROM THE BEST AUTHORITIES.



207 a. 48.

"I pr'ythee take the cork out of thy mouth,
That I may drink thy tidings."—*As You Like It.*

LONDON:
J. L. DENMAN, 65, FENCHURCH STREET.

MDCCLXI.

191. h. 122.

" Then took a gobletkin fill'd with precious wine,
Mellifluous, undecaying, and divine !
The gift of Macon of Euantheus' line,
(The priest of Phoebus at th' Ismaurian shrine),
Which, now some ages from his race conceal'd,
The hoary sire in gratitude reveal'd.
Such was the wine,—to quench whose fervent steam,
Scarce twenty measures from the living stream
To cool one cup sufficed: the goblet crown'd
Breath'd aromatic fragrances around."

ODYSSEY, b. ix.





L'ENVOI.

THE policy of the British Government having by recent legislation been fairly directed towards measures tending to promote a large and early developement of increased consumption of foreign wines in this kingdom, a new era is opening for the daily use and enjoyment by all classes of that refreshing beverage. For generations past, high and prohibitive fiscal duties had served to exclude the lighter wines of Europe, and the people being thus limited to the knowledge of a few leading and expensive sorts, their taste and judgment were much contracted, if not perverted. Yet no production of the soil, perhaps, demands more uniform care and forethought than the grape, to make it yield in full perfection. Nor should this be matter of doubt or surprise when the many delicate circumstances which affect the health of the vine and the quality of the fruit are fairly considered. A single year of slovenly cultivation, an injudicious mode of training or pruning, an untimely season of frost, or rain, or blight may deteriorate for years the properties of any particular growth. Carelessness, too, in harvesting the fruit, negligence in the manipulations and subsequent process, imperfect fermentation, unskilful treatment of the must,

unclean casks or inadequate storage, to say nothing of the frequent poverty and ignorance of the farmers themselves,—all tend to modify the strength and virtues of the product, and so multiply the sources of uncertainty, that uniform quality is not attainable even by cultivators of the highest repute.

To herald the emancipation of hilarious Bacchus from fiscal shackles of more than a century and a half's duration, neither senatorial eloquence nor sanguine anticipations were wanting, and England's parliament resounded with echoing sympathy and applause. It could not be gainsaid, that the substitution of a cheap and wholesome beverage would do more to wean an industrial people from confirmed habits of inebriety than all the custom-house restrictions or Maine liquor laws in the world. The expansion thus wisely inaugurated for the increase of commercial activity in wines, will doubtless promote the importation of vintages hitherto unavailable or unknown in this country; and as sound and timely suggestions in aid of a true appreciation and judicious selection for private use may be appropriate and serviceable at such a juncture, this slight attempt to elucidate succinctly and correctly some of the chief points connected with a subject of so much interest is respectfully proffered to an indulgent public.

LONDON, *December, 1860.*

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
SECTION 1. Early Origin and Description of the Vine	1
" 2. The Vintages of the Antients	15
" 3. Ambrosial Nectar of the Antients : their gorgeous Cups and Festal Customs	22
" 4. Modern Wines : their Character and Qualities	29
" 5. Of the Wines of Portugal	44
" 6. " Spain	56
" 7. " France	63
" 8. " Germany and Hungary	77
" 9. " South Africa	88
" 10. " Madeira and the Canaries	94
" 11. " Italy and Greece	100
" 12. " Persia and India	119
" 13. " Columbia	126
" 14. On the Choice and Preservation of Wine	131





A BRIEF DISCOURSE ON

WINE :

How to Choose it, and how to Use it.



Early Origin & Description of the Vine.

THE invention of wine, like the origin of many other important arts, is enveloped in the obscurity of the remotest ages of the world ; but in the history of ancient nations it has been commonly ascribed to those chiefs and heroes who contributed most to advance and civilize their respective countries, and to whom divine honours were often rendered in acknowledgment of the benefits which they had conferred on mankind. Without dwelling on the fabulous traditions handed down on the subject, it may be sufficient to observe, that the use of wine could not have remained long unknown to those portions of the globe where the vine freely grows. Bacchus, after his training by the Nyssean nymphs, is said to have traversed nearly the whole known world, introducing the culture of the grape, and diffusing refinement wherever he went.