

**THE WINE-QUESTION: A  
REVIEW. REPRINTED FROM  
"WORDS FOR THE NEW  
CHURCH"; NO. X, PP. 422-448**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649260713

The Wine-question: A Review. Reprinted from "Words for the New Church"; No. X, pp. 422-448  
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PUBLISHED FOR THE ACADEMY OF THE NEW CHURCH.  
PHILADELPHIA.

1882.

## PREFACE.

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IT has been thought that a wider dissemination of this review, which is at the same time a thorough and searching investigation of the Wine Question in the light of the New Church, of reason and of science could not fail to be of use to the New Church at the present time. The action of an Association of the Church in this country in substituting for the wine in the Holy Supper "the must of unfermented wine," and the action of the Conference in Great Britain in voting down a motion to ascertain from the Word and the Writings what kind of wine and bread should be used at the Holy Communion, show that the New Church is at present passing through a severe infestation on this subject, and that it is the duty of those acquainted with the Divine Truth as presented in the Word and in the Writings of the Church, to stem the flood of these fallacies and falsities, and boldly to declare the truth.

This task is rendered an unpleasant one, because the whole movement is accompanied with imputations and insinuations as to the personal character of those who do not yield to it, and with complacent claims of superior righteousness and sanctity for those who join in the movement; claims well calculated to infatuate and seduce the self-love of the unregenerate and to bribe the judgment of the unwary.

It is only as the clouds of these fallacies and falsities are dissipated, that the sunshine of the Divine Truth is restored to us; it is only thus that we can, untrammelled by the scruples of a false and perverted conscience, enjoy the "wine that maketh glad the heart of man" and "which excites the things which are of charity;" and again it is only as these falses are dispersed that the consociation of Heaven and the Church in the Holy Communion and their conjunction with the Lord can rest secure from the desecration and profanation which ensues when elements selected by the self-intelligence of man are substituted for those ordained by God.

We hope that the truths herein set forth may contribute to preserve and to spread the rational and heavenly use of wine in the Church of the Lord, that the hearts of its members may give thanks to the Lord with gladness, and that friendship and mutual love may be thereby excited among its members to an ever more heavenly activity.

*Editors of "The Words for the New Church."*

## NOTES AND REVIEWS.

### *The Wine Question.*

THE WINE QUESTION, in the light of the New Dispensation. By JOHN ELLIS, M.D. Published by the Author. New York, 1882.

THIS book contains, in two hundred and twenty-eight pages, the author's defense of his position of total abstinence. It is divided into fourteen chapters, treating respectively of alcohol as a poison, fermented and unfermented wines, their history and Biblical use, communion wine, and counter-reviews of articles in New Church periodicals.

It would seem at first sight that so external a question as What shall we eat or drink? however important it may be on its own natural and sensual plane, should not be discussed in a publication devoted chiefly to the consideration of spiritual subjects. But there is one aspect of the question which is important and vital to the Church; and this is the use of wine as the representative and correspondent of the Divine Truth in the Holy Supper. For this reason it is deemed useful to consider the subject in its varied aspects and at some length.

The plan pursued in the book readily admits of a consideration of the question under four heads: the linguistic, the scientific, the historic, and the theological.

The consideration of certain terms occupies a large portion of the book. These are: wine (Hebrew, יַיִן, *yayin*; Greek, οἶνος, *oinos*; Latin, *vinum*); must (Hebrew, מֵיִשׁ, *meish*; Greek, γλεύκος, *gleukos*; Latin, *mustum*); strong drink (Hebrew, שֵׂכָר, *shekar*; Latin, *sicera*); and finally honey (Hebrew, עֲבֵץ)\*. As the author writes as one having knowledge and authority, we naturally ask what qualifications he brings to the inquiry.

From a careful perusal of the work we are convinced that the author either has no adequate knowledge of the sacred tongues, or he has grossly perverted them. Common charity forbids the latter conclusion. But how far it is compatible with true charity to claim to teach authoritatively that which we do not understand, and concerning which we do not even use the

\* *debash*



means of instruction always at hand, namely, dictionaries, and works of unbiased learned men, we leave to the decision of the reader.

Further, we are met with the query, Does the author sufficiently understand his own mother tongue, or does he use words with a meaning foreign to their recognized sense? This question is forced on us by statements like the following: "We know there are wines and strong drinks which are never unholly or unclean,—wines every way suitable for use in the most holy ordinance of the Lord's Supper,—wines that never 'maketh drunken.'" (p. 44.) "It is not *wines*, but *intoxicating* wines that earnest Christian leaders seek to have exchanged for the ancient un-intoxicating wines." (p. 197.) *Wine*, according to Worcester and Webster, signifies "the fermented juice of grapes." How, then, can wine, fermented juice, be called "wine that never maketh drunken," and how can it be claimed that some "fermented grape-juice" is intoxicating wine, while other wine (fermented grape-juice) is un-intoxicating? It is evident that the author uses the word wine in an unauthorized sense. We are indeed well aware that he wishes to make it appear as if Worcester and Webster define wine as *unfermented* grape-juice. But he does not, as would be naturally expected, turn to the definition of *wine*, but evasively inquires into the definition of *must*. Worcester is careful to call *must* "the juice of the grape," and does *not* call it simply wine, but *new wine*. Webster, less careful, defines it as "wine pressed from the grape not fermented," thus contradicting his own definition of the word *wine*. Yet the author, in his blind zeal, exclaims: "So that both authorities say that the unfermented juice of the grape is wine." (p. 167.) The straightforward course which would be chosen by any one desirous of finding out the real truth, would be to go to Worcester's and Webster's definition of *wine*. Here he would at once see that both these authorities are very clear, and agree perfectly; for Worcester defines *wine* as: "The fermented juice of the grape, a spirituous liquor," and also "the fermented juice of certain fruits," thus not allowing any application to unfermented beverages at all; and Webster defines it as: "1. The fermented juice of grapes; a beverage prepared from grapes by squeezing out their juice, and allowing it to ferment. 2. Hence a liquor or beverage resembling that prepared from grapes yielded by other kinds of fruit. 3. The effect of drinking wine in excess, intoxication." Thus we see that the author in claiming for himself these authorities has allowed his zeal to outstrip his discretion. We dwell so long on this point because it illustrates the general mode of demonstration of the writers on abstinence, and of our author in particular. There is everywhere apparent an attempt to confuse common perception by some misleading twist or turn.

Since scholars are aware that the recognized meaning of the English word

*vinus* is the *fermented* juice of the grape, or of other fruits, it is evident that when the Latin dictionaries translate *vinum* with *wine* they thereby declare that *vinum* in Latin signifies the *fermented* juice of the grape, and so, when Swedenborg uses the word *vinum* unqualified, he means fermented grape-juice.

The author indeed endeavors to show that Swedenborg recognizes two kinds of wine, both called *vinum*, the one fermented and the other unfermented; but the only passage which he brings to support this strange assertion is mistranslated, and thus rendered is quoted eighteen times in the course of the book. It is found first on the title-page, and reads: "Such wines and strong drink as (?) cause drunkenness." This would seem to imply that there are also wines and strong drink which do not cause drunkenness. Any scholar would at once know that since *wine* is fermented grape-juice, and *strong drink* is in the original "intoxicating drink," the passage, as the author quotes it, would mean: "Such fermented grape-juice and intoxicating drink as cause intoxication." And as this would be evidently absurd, the scholar would at once go to the Latin to rectify the mistranslation. If the author had pursued this course he would have seen that the passage simply reads in the original: "Wine and strong drink which cause intoxication," thus leaving no support whatever to his fancies.

When we consult the Greek, we find that the term used for wine in the New Testament is *οἶνος* (*oinos*). The meanings of this word, as given in our largest Greek Lexicon, that of Liddel and Scott, are the following: "1. The fermented juice of the grape; 2. The fermented juice of apples, pears, etc., cider, perry; 3. A fermented liquor made from barley or wheat, a kind of beer." And this very complete dictionary of the Greek tongue knows of no unfermented liquor under the name of *οἶνος*. There is no doubt therefore that the beverage into which the water was changed at Cana, being *οἶνος*, was also "fermented grape-juice." The ingenious way in which the author tries to circumvent these well-established definitions acknowledged by all scholars and learned men, is as remarkable as his misapplication of Worcester and Webster.

The Hebrew word *יַיִן*, *yayin* (wine), according to the great authorities, Fürst and Gesenius, signifies *wine*, which, as we have seen, is understood by the learned to mean "fermented grape-juice." Gesenius distinctly declares it to be equivalent to *οἶνος* and to *vinum*.

*Must*, Latin *mustum*, is translated *fresh, new or unfermented wine*. But as the fresh or new wine speedily begins to ferment, *must* also signifies partially fermented grape-juice. This much is granted by the author (p. 48).

When we pass to the Greek this is still more manifest. The term which

the author quotes as signifying the sweet, unfermented juice of the grape is γλεῦκος (*gleukos*), which in Liddel and Scott's Greek Lexicon is regarded as equal to the Latin *mustum*, must, and is translated *sweet new wine*. Still even this *must*, in the only passage in which it is found in the New Testament, signifies fermented and intoxicating wine: "Others mocking said, These men are full of *must* (γλεῦκος, *gleukos*). But Peter . . . said . . . These are not drunken (μεθύσαντες), seeing it is but the third hour of the day." (Acts ii. 13-15.) Indeed, it is well known that more drunkenness occurs in the wine-producing countries about the time of new wine than at any other, and this from drinking the partially fermented *must* while it still retains some of its sweetness. While we see that the γλεῦκος in the New Testament is fermented and intoxicating, still more is this the case with the *new wine*, which is compared to the truths of the New Testament and the New Church (A. R. 316). This is conclusively proved by two considerations: *First*, Swedenborg, in translating it does not use the ambiguous term *mustum*, but the term *vinum*, which, as we have seen, is "the fermented juice of the grape;" and, *Second*, This term is the translation of the Greek οἶνος νέος, and οἶνος, as we have seen, signifies fermented grape-juice. The author of the work before us indeed devotes several pages to show that a fermented wine would not in any case burst the (skins) bottles. But he merely proves his unacquaintance with the subject. Those who are acquainted with wine-making know that the primary fermentation is followed by secondary fermentations, occurring periodically for several years, until full purity is reached. On account of this secondary fermentation it is that new wine (οἶνος νέος) needs new bottles.

In the Hebrew, too, the term translated *must* or *new wine* generally means fermented wine. Gesenius, who is one of the chief authorities in Hebrew, says in his great dictionary: "שׁוֹרֵשׁ\* *new wine*, so called because it gets possession of the brain and inebriates." In sustaining this derivation he quotes *Hosea* iv. 11: "Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart," i.e., the understanding. Fürst defines it as *mead*, which seems a less felicitous rendering, and he gives to it the meaning of *what is gotten* from grapes and other fruits. As Swedenborg uses the Latin term *mustum* to translate *širosh*, and as *širosh* is recognized as intoxicating in the Hebrew, the same force must evidently apply to the term *mustum* when used by Swedenborg. The English translator of the Hebrew Lexicon of Gesenius has the following remarks on שׁוֹרֵשׁ, *širosh*: "All the passages [in the Word] go to show that שׁוֹרֵשׁ is *new wine* of the first year, the *wine-crop* or *vintage* of the season; and hence it is mostly coupled with wine and oil as a *product* of the land. That it was intoxicating is shown by *Hosea* iv. 11." Thus we see that not only is wine always used for the fer-

\*širosh'