

CELLAR HYGIENE AND MANAGEMENT.

HINTS TO WINEGROWERS.

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THE writer, who has just returned from a visit of inspection to the majority of the vineyards and cellars of the North Island, naturally observed many things, and, judging from these observations, the following hints should not come amiss to the vigneron who is also the proprietor of a wine-cellar.

CLEANLINESS.

The first and most essential thing in winemaking and in the management of a cellar is absolute cleanliness. The impression that a visitor gets when he sees a well-kept, well-ordered, and clean cellar is always a good one; it conveys to him the idea that the product of that particular establishment must be good. If, on the other hand, the place is dirty and ill-kept, the impression obtained is not by any means a good one. What person would like to think of buying milk or cream from a dairyman who works in a dirty cow-byre, and whose cows are milked by a dirty milker? The same thing applies to the winemaker.

To begin with, pick up all the stray bungs and chocks, and pack them away tidily in a handy box. When there is an overflow on to the floor clean it up at once. Dry wines, and especially the young and fairly aged wines, are very susceptible to innumerable diseases, and this is generally the way the trouble commences: The mess on the floor is not cleaned up; the buckets and tubs are not washed after being used; the hose which is used for drawing off wine is hung over a cask to drain, but rarely washed out. Wash everything always and every time it is used, and do not forget the pump. It does not take long, and will save time and endless worry. If this is not done the wine will later on probably become cloudy, and there will be a great difficulty in clearing it; perhaps it will not clear at all, and the vigneron actually wonders why.

Another point: when there is an overflow do not let the wine dry on the cask. When racking, have a bucket of water handy with a handful of ordinary washing-soda in it—or, better, a little