

CRISIS IN THE WINE TRADE.

The Drought Will Only Be of Temporary Benefit to the Vineyardists of the State.

A Concert of Action Among the Dealers Favored in Several Instances.

LESS THAN A HALF CROP.

Charlie A. Wetmore Points Out How Certain P. Huntington Could Advantages Himself and the Retailer and at the Same Time Be the Providence of the Wine Producers of California.

There is a crisis in the wine trade. The drought and the inability to cultivate the vineyards owing to hardness of the soil will reduce the stock and force up prices, but this will be only of temporary benefit. A permanent reform is needed, and this seems most practicable in concert of action between the dealers and the producers to the advantage of both and of the State at large.

"Does not Mr. Geary yet know that our Sonoma county vineyardists are only getting 8 and often only 7 cents a gallon for their product?" asked one of the speakers at Metropolitan Hall the other evening.

It does not require much acquaintance with the subject to know that such prices mean ruin for the vineyardist, and very little reflection to foresee that it also means disaster to the wine dealer. The only bright thing in the dark clouds is the fact that mercantile and producers are being brought to a realization of the fact that their respective interests are not antagonistic. There may be an advantage for the dealer or for the producer or for the price which would result in loss on the vineyardist, but this condition of affairs must continue without destroying a profitable branch of commerce, or, in homely language, killing the goose that lays the golden egg.

FACTORS OF THE CRISIS.

A crisis has now reached such a critical stage that concert of action is being demanded and many wine-growers are building on their vineyards in the hope that it will be brought about. Another factor in the wine situation this year is the drought, which will certainly much reduce the output of wine and brandy, corresponding to a corresponding increase in the demand for wine and brandy. It is a difficult situation and a difficult one to deal with. It is a difficult situation and a difficult one to deal with.

Representative wine men. The most striking proposition comes from Charlie A. Wetmore of the Viticultural Commission, who suggests that the C. P. Huntington would make a good one venture should be organized a company and establish a vineyard in Sonoma county. The advantage is that the vineyard would not only be a paying investment, but would supply the capital needed to carry California wines over the two or three years required to get them, and, for the want of which the producers are being brought to the verge of ruin.

NEWS FROM THE VINEYARDS.

There is no question that the yield of the vineyards this year will be seriously affected by the recent dry weather and strong winds," said Secretary Wetmore of the Viticultural Commission. "In some sections of the country around the bay, which are the principal dry wine producing districts of the State, it is impossible to grow the vineyards. The dry season came on so unexpectedly that those who usually grow into did it out of the question to cultivate the soil. This certainly indicates a short year.

"Especially in the area of Sonoma county, I. de Zure, who is Viticultural Commission for the Sonoma district, reports that the three best half of the vineyards of the county have been worked; nor can they be unless there be some rain.

Small berries and a short yield are the accompaniments of this condition of affairs.

"Commissioner H. W. Crabb of the State Department says that the vineyards of the Napa valley are in better condition as regards planting, but in recent years the progress of the destruction of vineyards by phylloxera has been so steady that the total yield of the early harvest appears that it has been in late years. There has been next to no planting of new vineyards or replanting of old ones last season.

SAN FRANCISCO AND SANTA CLARA.

"As regards Alameda county, the condition of the fruit is fair. In the districts