

15 January 1900

Monsieur le Rédacteur:

I have the honor to renew my request for the hospitality of your columns to reply to the article of M. Esclavy, President de la Ligue Vinicole, which appeared in your ^{Universelle} ~~columns~~ ^{Journals} on the 15 and 16 of December, 1899.

M. Esclavy criticises an official report of mine which he had never seen but judged from a fragmentary sketch in a New York journal. It is to be regretted that he did not come to my consulate and obtain an authentic copy. The report concerned itself solely with the importation of dried apples from the United States; apparently as harmless a bit of commercial information as was ever penned. My duty requires me to report any openings I may observe for a market for American products. This I did and nothing more.

But M. Esclavy professes to find a malign purpose in the fact that I stated that there was a large consumption of "Piquette" in France made from American dried apples. Of course I do not know the fact. I never saw the article made, but was aware of certain ^{things} ~~facts~~ which seem to me stronger than M. Esclavy's denial. (1) I know ^{has} ~~that~~ that France imported many million pounds of American dried apples from the United States during the last three years. (2) I know the exact quantity and quality of these imports, having been required officially to examine ~~some~~ ^{of} thousands of barrels of them entered at this port. (3) I naturally asked the importers, keen shrewd and most respectable appearing men, why they chose a particular grade of goods, and was told that it was not only ^{because of this} the cheapest but actually the best for

their purpose. When I asked what such fruit was used for, they answered, "Piquette." (4) An article in the most reliable ^{of} French statistical journals first directed my attention to the consumption of "cider made from dried apples" in Paris. Its discussion of the reasons for and the extent of the traffic induced me to consider its relation to the contemporaneous importation of American dried apples. The statistics of this traffic were the basis of the ^{reported} consumption of "Piquette."

M. Esclavy's statement that I recommended unsound fruit for the French market is not only inexact but peculiarly absurd. No one in America dries decayed apples, first because there is an immense surplus of sound ones, and second because one decayed apple spoils the sale of many sound ones. I was careful to state that all dried apples for this market "must be white, hard and of a spicy odor." No such result can be obtained with decayed or over-ripe fruit.

But the climax of M. Esclavy's discovery of a "new campaign against wine" comes when he cites as proof of my malignant design the fact that I advised Americans to "try piquette as a summer drink." He evidently thinks I desire to substitute "piquette" for claret. The truth is, that it could not possibly have any such effect. Probably one half of the American people do not use any alcoholic ^{beverages} drinks. I advised them to try piquette instead of certain decoctions known as "summer drinks" mostly soda-fountain mixtures. As to the other 40,000,000 of our people they use various alcoholic beverages, only a small porportion being French wines. This is not in consequence


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of any "new campaign against wine," but a simple result of causes which any one should recognize as sufficient. "Phylloxera", "black-rot", "vine-sickness" and "Bordeaux mixture" are not appetizing terms. The American who drinks wine no more relishes the product of such diseases flavored with such remedies, than M. Esclavy would relish "pique" made of wormy apples.

M. Esclavy especially denounces the statement that "the consumption of wine is diminishing in France." He admits that there has been "a decrease in Paris and other centers of population," but claims that the less populous regions have ~~gained enough~~ ^{made} to make up this loss and show a small gain. I should have said then, in order to be strictly accurate, according to the experts "The consumption ^{of wine} is diminishing in Paris and other great centers, but the less populous parts of the country have consumed enough more to show a small aggregate gain." It seems a curious statement when one considers the statistics of population in France for a few decades past. I was thinking of the ~~statistics in regard~~ ^{decrease in} to Paris when I wrote and it did not occur to me that the words used might cover a wider field. It is a matter of no concern to me or my countrymen which of these statements is correct. We are concerned only with the exterior commerce of France. No one now denies its decadence and its amendment is what the wine-trade of France especially requires. The United States is the most promising field. It needs nothing but work and confidence to establish its former predominance there. Scolding will not do it. Wine has been particularly favored in our reciprocal arrangements with France, which I have been especially active in promoting both as an official and an author. The report M. Esclavy criticises was not published until the end of November, so that the figures of exportation for the last quarter could not have been effected by his imaginary "campaign antivinique." For a century wine has stood

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at the head of the schedule of each exportation. The exports declared at this consulate during the last quarter of 1899, amounted to 6,607,000 francs. Almost every product of this consular district ~~show~~ shows a marked increase except wine; this has fallen to the fourth place. Why? The lack of "moral prestige" and the fact that any one who happens to express views which a brilliant imagination can construe as inconsistent with the opinions of experts, as to the quality or quantity of French wines, is regarded as an enemy and denounced as such. yet one can hardly read the journals especially devoted to this subject without being affected with a doubt of the infallibility of exports. ~~M. Esclavy's imputation of malign purpose with a~~
~~doubt in a statement which is admitted to be correct, and which it~~
~~requires close figuring to show inapplicable to the whole, is an ex-~~
~~ample of a policy which may be very satisfactory to the writer but~~
~~is not profitable to the exporter or producer.~~

In my opinion, M. Esclavy would serve the League Vinicole Universal much better by devising some way to restore the "moral prestige" of French wines in foreign countries than by seeking to win approval by combatting "a new crusade antivinique" which never had a shadow of existence except in his own super-heated imagination. 

By adopting the proper course any Bordeaux wine-exporter can greatly increase his exportation to the United States. This course the Consul of the United States of America has never failed to commend to those who have asked his ~~advise~~ ^{advice}. The course adopted by M. Esclavy may be very satisfactory to ~~a~~ ^{the} writer ~~of lively imagination~~

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but it would not increase the export of wine ~~to the United States~~
a liter in a century.

538 words in M. Erday
article

1078 can be
allowed for

(1180)