

Harrow as next year's venue

COMMITTEE WILL RUN NATIONAL CONFERENCE

AS desired by those who attended the National Conference at Bournemouth in the spring, a steering committee has now been set up to organise a similar Amateur Winemakers' National Conference and Show every year. This was the outcome of an enthusiastic and extremely encouraging meeting at Andover on 29th October.

The Editor of the "Amateur Winemaker" was deputed at this year's Conference to set up such a committee, but this was obviously an invidious task for a single individual, and it was important that all Circles should be given an opportunity of airing their views and being represented. So he circularised every known Circle—88 of them—and invited them to send a representative to this meeting.

Fifty people turned up, representing no less than 20 Circles: Andover, Bishops Cleeve, Bournemouth, Bristol, Cardiff, Cheltenham, Croydon, Farnborough, Gosport, Harrow, Hertford, New Forest, Rickmansworth, Southdown, Southsea, Twickenham, Watford, Weald of Kent, West Surrey, and Winchester. Thus, although Circles in the extreme east and west were represented, most of them were south of the London-Bristol line, no doubt due to travelling difficulties, but several of the Midlands and Northern Circles sent letters voicing their views. It was felt, however, that this was a most encouraging response, and that it promised well for the 1961 Conference.

Mr. C. J. Berry, in the chair, welcomed the "delegates," and explained that the idea of setting up a national committee was in order that there should be some body responsible for the year-to-year organisation of the conference in order to relieve any individual Circle of financial embarrassment or risk. Such a risk might prevent some Circles from volunteering their services as "hosts" in their own town to the national conference, whereas, if a national committee existed that risk would be removed and advice on the running of the conference would always be available, the committee being the organisers and the local club acting as their local agents.

Southsea favoured the idea of a Regional rather than a national conference, but after Mr. R. C. Lucas (of Bournemouth) had described how his Circle had run this year's conference, Mr. Turner (Harrow) proposed, and it was agreed, that a National Conference and Show be held in 1961. Upon the proposition of Mr. L. Gilbertson, Cardiff, it was also agreed that a national conference committee be set up.

There was a great deal of discussion about the name to choose, some favouring "Conference" some "Conference and Show," some "Show," and some "Convention," but Mr. Lucas (Bournemouth) and Mr. Jakeway (Cheltenham) both pointed out that to obtain civic facilities in recognised "conference" towns the word "conference" must be embodied in the title. Mr. Tonks, Bournemouth, proposed "The Amateur Winemakers' National Conference and Show," but the use of the word show was strenuously opposed by Mrs. Dunlop, of Southsea. Finally, the thorny decision was left to the committee (At a subsequent meeting, the committee decided to use on letterheadings the title "Amateur Winemakers' National Conference" but elsewhere, as necessary or expedient, add the words "and

Show"—thereby getting the best of both worlds!).

The size of the desired committee was another knotty point: Hertford (Mr. S. Andrews) suggested 10 members, Andover (Wg. Cmdr. R. Woodley) 20, and Dr. Webb (Bristol) six, (plus in each case the chairman, secretary and treasurer). Finally Dr. Webb's proposal was thought the most practical, in view of the difficulties of arranging meetings, and of the long distances involved.

During the election of officers Mr. C. J. J. Berry (Andover) was elected chairman, Mr. R. C. Lucas (Bournemouth) hon. secretary, and Mr. Ivor Morgan (New Forest) hon. treasurer.

Ten names were proposed for the committee, so a ballot to elect six was necessary, and those who were thus chosen were: Mr. C. W. Martin, Farnborough, Mr. S. W. Andrews, Hertford, Mr. L. W. Gilbertson, Cardiff, Mr. E. A. Malin, Bishop's Cleeve, Cheltenham, Dr. R. A. Webb, Bristol, and Mr. B. C. A. Turner, Harrow.

Finance provoked an interesting discussion which produced several useful ideas. The main one was that all Circles in the country should be invited to support the Conference financially, and that it should be pointed out that the intention was that the National Conference should be truly national, and not always be held in the south. In future years a Midlands venue could be considered.

It was emphasised, of course, that any contributions from Circles would be entirely voluntary, and it was appreciated that a small club could not be expected to contribute as much as a large one. With these two points in mind it was decided to invite Circles to send donations to the hon. treasurer, and to suggest to them, as a guide, that they might like to consider doing so on the basis of 1/- per member.

This would provide the Conference with initial "capital," and every effort would be made to see that the event ran at a profit rather than a loss.

Other suggestions: a list of subscribing "patrons," a list of individual Show members who each subscribe annually, and the issuing of shares. All these ideas should be examined in due course by the committee, it was agreed.

When suggestions were invited as to where the next year's Conference could be held, Mr. B. C. A. Turner, President of the Harrow Guild, proposed Harrow.

He described "The Rest" Hotel, at Kenton, Harrow, and pointed out that it had adequate facilities and every comfort, was next door to the Tube station, was within easy distance of London, and was a good centre for a large number of clubs. Whilst the Harrow Guild could not obtain civic facilities or offer hospitality on the lavish scale that Bournemouth had, and would not undertake the complete organisation of the

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Conference and Show, they would be happy to act as the local agents of the committee and do all within their power to help.

The offer was accepted gratefully and Harrow's secretary, Mr. N. G. Timbrell, and treasurer, Mr. C. A. Rickman, were co-opted to the committee. Note was also made of the fact that possible places for future conferences were Brighton and Cheltenham, the local Circle in each town offering to help. It was pointed out, however, that accommodation needed to be booked a year or more ahead.

Mr. Berry was thanked for arranging the meeting, and Wing Cmdr. and Mrs. Woodley for minuting it.