

From the Editor's Chair

LOOKING FORWARD TO CLACTON

Preparations are now in their last stages for the 1965 National Conference and Show at Clacton, and all major arrangements have been completed. This should be a conference with a difference, for whilst it remains to be seen how the atmosphere of a Butlin's camp suits our purposes, there will be the attraction of novelty, and also the big advantage of being all together under one roof, 'as it were, for the whole week-end, Judging by the interest shown and the number of enquiries to date, we shall have no difficulty in reaching our target of 500, the figure we have had to guarantee in order to obtain the use of a part of the holiday camp and all its facilities, However active (or inactive!) you are there will be no lack of entertainment! Butlin's are being *most* cooperative and giving the Conference every possible facility; they have even waived their invariable "No children under six" rule: children of any age *can* come, but parents must take responsibility for them, Butlin's will do all they can to help, but cannot offer the full child-minding service that is normally available in season,

DAY TICKETS

The scale of charges is set out in an advertisement on another page, and it will be seen that this is a remarkably cheap week-end. One point needs to be stressed: the day tickets which are available for Saturday are limited in number, and must be bought in advance, There will be no admission by payment at the door. Will readers please make this as widely known as possible: *all* admission will be by pre-purchased ticket or booking only, The last day for booking is 26 February, but everyone is advised to book as early as possible, obtaining an official form for the purpose from their Circle or from Mr. W. Millett, 196 Rainsford Road, Chelmsford, Early bookings will greatly ease his mammoth task,

MORE STEWARDS WANTED

A few more judges' stewards are required, and anyone willing to help should write to Mr. S. W. Andrews, 6 Tamworth Road, Hertford. There is also a great need for many more general stewards to help with the running of the Conference, and offers of assistance should be sent to Mr. L. Gilbertson, 43 Morgan Street, Pontypridd, Glam., the Show manager. General stewards, incidentally, are not barred from exhibiting. Both types of steward will be given a reduction of £1 in their booking fee (£4 instead of £5) and certain other advantages as recognition of their contribution. If they have already paid the full £5, £1 will be refunded at the Conference.

DRAW PRIZES

One more appeal (and we've finished!): Mr. Ivor Morgan, The Cottage, Newbridge, Cadnam, Southampton, is running the large draw which is always a feature of the Conference and wants to make it bigger and better than ever this year. He would be most grateful to hear from Circles and firms who are willing to donate prizes, all of which will be most welcome.

CONFERENCE MEMBERSHIP

The Committee, which last met in London on Sunday, 13 December, is now working on the last details of the programme, and the schedule was due to be completed, ready for printing, by the end of the month, so that it should be available for distribution by about the end of this month. The Committee is also working actively upon arrangements for throwing open membership of the Conference to individuals as agreed at the annual meeting, and it is hoped that membership will be opened in May 1965 (*after* this year's Conference). By then there will be ready a badge for Conference members, the design of which has already been approved by the committee.

IN RHODESIA

I've just been reading a lively little duplicated magazine produced by the very active Salisbury Winemakers' Guild. I hasten to add that this is Salisbury, Rhodesia, which has some very keen and capable winemakers. It carries an editorial, a chairman's letter, "Vinegar Fly's Corner," telling how to make ginger beer, an article on basic brewing; "odds and ends," and news of club activities, and a book review, A really praiseworthy effort that must be entailing a lot of work for somebody. Incidentally, the President of the Salisbury Club is Mrs. S. M. Tritton, formerly of Grey Owl Laboratories, who has personal connections with Southern Africa.

JUDGING 1,000 ENTRIES

I couldn't help doing a quiet chuckle during December when the "Daily Sketch" invited its readers to send in for judging their "best bottle of wine" for judging; the winner to get a case of champagne. It was fairly easy to forecast that there would be a staggering entry, and I'll wager the "Sketch" were more than a little nonplussed when they received, to quote their own report of 3 December, "more than 1,000" entries. Knowing just how much work and detailed planning

is necessary to arrange for the judging of that many wines in the National, one could be forgiven for wondering just how carefully all those entries were assessed, where the judges came from, and how many hours it took ... The final report was a little vague on these points. I was also not quite clear whether it was recipes or bottles which were being judged (how one can judge the former without the latter is a little obscure),

The "Sketch" merely said that "an impartial panel of experts ... tested, tasted and commented on the top ten wines of more than 1,000 recipes sent in" But who chose the top ten? And how? Or shouldn't one ask?

GUILD PLEASED WITH HANDBOOK

The main topic at the annual meeting of the Amateur Winemakers' National Guild of Judges, held in London in November, was naturally the Guild's now-completed " Judging Home Made Wine," which had been published just previously.

The general opinion, to quote the words of the Guild's chairman, Mr. S. W. Andrews, in his report, was that it was a "fine achievement," and everyone present was agreed that its production had been well worth while.

Mr. Andrews, who was supported by Mr. S. Rickman (secretary) and Mr. A. Moore (treasurer) observed that the booklet was very comprehensive, and its production had involved the Committee in something like 20 hours per man in actual committee time. In addition, the work that had to be done out of committee, plus the time spent in travelling to the meetings, accounted for many more hours of their time.

To produce this comprehensive condensed booklet within the year was a very worthy effort, and he thanked every member of the committee for such a fine achievement.

What of the future? With the publication of the handbook, the foundation for the Guild Entrance Examination had been laid. He had in accordance with the Constitution, prepared and submitted to the committee, a list of wine judges from which the first Adjudicating Panel-would be selected. He had also prepared and submitted to those judges a suggested form of examination.

When the applications for examination were received they would be collated, and then arrangements would be made to examine the candidates on a regional basis to avoid unnecessary travelling.

"These arrangements will, I hope, enable the Guild to enlarge its membership during the coming year," said Mr. Andrews, " so that by the next Annual General Meeting there will be a strong body of qualified judges of wine distributed throughout the whole of England, Wales and possibly southern Scotland, who will be ready and able to fulfill judging commitments and to advise Show Secretaries on the correct procedure for wine exhibition. In this way some of the objects of The Guild will be fulfilled. "

Mr. Moore explained that the production of the handbook (which sells at 2/6d., or 2/- to Circles ordering six or more) had cost £56/8/7 and was being met by a loan kindly given by the National Conference.

When the chairman asked for comments there were only two : Cdr. I. M. N. Mudie said that he was sorry to see that sediment was now being allowed in red wine, for any red wine shown in a white bottle as demanded by the rules, must necessarily have been rebottled for the show and was therefore really a decanted wine, and there was no excuse for sediment. And Mr. C. Berry said that, as he had said from the start, he would still like to see a wider range of marks employed to facilitate a more detailed breakdown. But despite these observations both agreed that the booklet was excellent, and the majority of those present seemed to be against any alteration of the booklet whatsoever.

Those elected to the Executive Committee of the Guild were: Messrs. B. Acton, S. W. Andrews, L. Gilbertson, R. C. Lucas, A. Moore, Paxman, C. A. Rickman, E. A. Roycroft, F. Spark, R. W. Woodley and W. Newsome and Miss Clapham and Mrs. Hohnes.