

## FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR



### NEXT YEAR'S NATIONAL

Arrangements are now virtually complete for next year's National Conference and Show at Butlins Holiday Camp at Bognor on 7th, 8th and 9th April, and the committee are hoping for a record attendance of 1,000 or so. The programme is certainly attractive and since winemaking clubs are thick on the ground in London and the south-east, there is no reason to suppose that this expectation is over-optimistic. Schedules were due to go to print in December, and should be available soon after you read this, all being well, and it is hoped that they will be keenly studied and that a good entry and heavy bookings will result. Anyone who is going to the Conference and would like to gain experience of judging at National level is invited to apply to become a judge's steward—many will be wanted—and should write right away to Mr. S. W. Andrews, 6 Tamworth Road, Hertford, Herts. Many show stewards will also be required throughout the conference to help with the setting up of the show, the dismantling of it, the running of the conference, manning doors and the information desk, helping the awards team, and doing a host of other jobs. Anyone who is willing to help in any way should write to Mr. Leslie Stagg, 86 Arden Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham, being particularly careful to state when they will be available so that rotas can be worked out. And one final appeal: the committee is particularly anxious that at the 1967 Conference there should be more trade stands. So the charge for them has been reduced, and efforts are being made to grant them good sales facilities. Firms should contact Mr. Ivor Morgan, the Cottage, Newbridge, Cadnam, Hants, who would also be most grateful for offers of prizes for the large draw.

### IS MY FACE RED!

... but with a pleasant embarrassment. Last month I wrote briefly of how, at the Mid-Southern Festival at Petersfield, I was most struck with two superb wines in the dry white class. I did not know what they were made from, and indeed, for the purposes of my judging, was not concerned, but as an individual I wanted to know because they were both so near an excellent hock that even a true connoisseur would have been hard put to it to tell the difference blindfold. I was so impressed that, when the judging was over, and the results had been announced, I took the trouble to find out the names and addresses of the two exhibitors, who turned out to be Mr. A. Brown, of "Northam," Broad Road, Hambrook, Chichester, Sussex, and Mrs. C. Gunn, of 58 Queen's Road, Petersfield.

### GOOSEBERRY

Mr. Brown replied: I was pleased to have won the dry wine class at Petersfield on 5 November, but very much more pleased to receive your letter on the 9th of November.

I am also pleased to tell you that the recipe is as in your book "First Steps in Winemaking," which is still very much the Bible of Winemaking as far as my wife and myself are concerned. We buy and read all sorts of books on wine, but when we want to be able to rely on a good result we come back to your "First Steps."

So except for the fact that we use granulated sugar, instead of preserving sugar the recipe is as on page 70 ("Green Gooseberry") in the first edition of your book and is roughly 18 months old.

This is our second brew of this Green Gooseberry recipe and each time it has come out well. Last June we put down about eight gallons and we hope that it will turn out as well.

Actually this was my first time of showing outside of our own club shows so I felt quite pleased at winning especially with you as judge.

The recipe, for those who are interested, is: "6lb. green gooseberries, 6 pints water, 2½lb. preserving sugar, yeast. Top, tail and wash the gooseberries, put into large crock, and squeeze by hand until they are pulpy. Then pour on the boiling water and allow to stand for three days, well covered, stirring occasionally. Strain through two thicknesses of muslin, and add the sugar, stirring until it is all dissolved, then add yeast and yeast nutrient. Put into fermenting bottle and fit trap, leaving until bubbles cease to pass; then rack off and leave to mature, siphoning off the lees again after another six months. Leave for a year before drinking."

### NO RECORD

With Mrs. Gunn, incidentally, I was unlucky, for she wrote: "Unfortunately I have no recorded recipe of this wine as it was one of my first ventures three years ago. Since then I have made winemaking one of my hobbies and realise the mistake of not keeping records of recipes." Verb sap!

—THE EDITOR.

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# With G. & S. in the Wine Cellar

by PHILIP DELMON

When I first made a wine as a very young man  
Said I to myself, said I.  
I'll work on a new scientific plan  
Said I to myself, said I.  
I'll never tie corks so the bottles can burst,  
All my yeasts shall be cultures, most carefully  
nursed  
And I'll wash all my bottles with bisulphite first  
Said I to myself, said I

Learned books on the subject I read up in bed  
Read I to myself, read I.  
And I stuck to my guns, and did just what they  
said  
Said I to myself, said I.  
Ev'ry ferment was perfect, my ego soon soared  
Never once did I find that a poor one I'd stored  
But I found when I'd done I was just a bit bored  
Found I to myself, found I.

As the cellar grew full many trophies I won  
Won I for myself, won I.  
I thought making wine was clean simple fun  
Thought I to myself, thought I.  
Ev'ry wine that I made was delicious I'm told  
They were lovely when young and far better when  
old  
But I yearned for the sight of a pin-headed mould  
Yearned I to myself, yearned I.

In all other pastimes in which men engage  
Said I to myself, said I.  
Like butterflies, bell(e)s, sticking stamps on a page  
Said I to myself, said I.  
A nut full of knowledge is all very fine  
But you lose lots of fun when you're right all  
the time  
And I gather the same might apply to our wine  
Said I to myself, said I.

# Committee Commentary

As you will probably know already, the '67 National will take place at Butlin's Bognor camp after all and the dates, 7th, 8th and 9th April, should already be marked in your diaries. The first committee meeting after the A.G.M. is always taken up largely with the appointment of officers and the allocation of tasks. This year I have no major changes to report but there is an important change to be noted in that participants in the '67 National can do a lot to ease the burden Mrs. R. Martin will be carrying by getting their entries in *really early*. This year Mrs. Martin is also acting as schedules secretary so she will be hard at work well before the schedules go out. We welcome Ken Hill to the treadmill and intend to make use of his impressive stature in the capacity of assistant treasurer. The Guild of Judges is now reaching a strength that permits more flexibility in the selection of judges for the National and it will shortly be necessary to introduce some kind of rota system to ensure that services are used fairly.

The London meeting place of the committee, Conway Hall, is becoming much more inconvenient for Sunday afternoon meetings and the committee are looking around for alternative accommodation. Has anyone a suggestion, within our means, for a suitable place capable of accommodating up to 16 people in a reasonably central location? We hear that the Lancashire Community Council has asked for a representative of the association to serve on their Domestic Food Production committee and Mr. S. L. Birchley has been invited to represent us. For your new year's resolutions please refer to the previous edition of "Committee Commentary"!

B.S.B.