

FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR



"Bring in the bottled lightning, a clean tumbler, and corkscrew,"—Charles Dickens, "The Gentleman in the Small Clothes."

TORQUAY EPILOGUE

Now that the dust of Torquay has settled, it can be seen that it was indeed a most successful National Conference, concerning which we have heard little but praise. Local winemakers (who did a great job helping with its erection and dismantling) were obviously pleased with the week-end, and this letter from Mr. D. G. Daniell, of Torquay, epitomises their opinion:

"It was a great occasion having the National in Torquay for our members, most of whom are new to winemaking and had not had the opportunity of experiencing a National Conference before. We hope that with the work that we put in and the way things were laid out it did compare favourably with previous Nationals, and that one day we shall have the pleasure of holding the National once again in Torquay when we hope we shall have the new conference rooms.

"All our members enjoyed the Saturday evening and we hope all the visitors did as well, although space appeared limited at the Spa Ballroom. When at midnight we had to 'call a halt' to the merry-making, festivities continued with Chairman Gerry Whitehouse at the Rock Walk Hotel until 3.40 precisely. Next day the leading question was who was the exuberant winemaker drinking beer out of Freda Stagg's shoe (Birmingham and District). It was later discovered in a distressed condition with a slight beer yeast deposit! (The shoe, not the drinker).

"We would like to thank the National Committee for bringing the National to Torquay, and making it possible for us to meet many old friends, and make many new ones."

SMALL QUANTITIES

Many leaders of thought in modern winemaking have for some time been advocating the use of much smaller quantities of fruit in order to produce light, delicate, wines more to the liking of the modern palate. Mrs. Suzanne Tritton, like ourselves, long ago came to the conclusion that it is possible in many cases to make wine with as little as 2 lbs. of fruit to the gallon, and it was encouraging to hear Dr. F. W. Beech taking the same line at the National Conference. He went so far as to say that in many cases as little as 1 lb. of fruit was enough. And there is no doubt that he is right. We ourselves have been experimenting with the use of small quantities, but before publishing any recipes wish to complete our series of experiments. We have been using roughly 1 lb. to the gallon—of *tinned fruit*—and the wines are turning out most promisingly.

Why make wine from tinned fruit? Or from tinned or bottled juices? If you are a newcomers to winemaking the idea of using anything other than fresh fruit (preferably free!) may at first seem a

little bizarre, but as your enthusiasm for winemaking develops—as it will—you will want to make wine the whole year round, and not just when a particular fruit is in season. Fresh fruit of good quality is of course the ideal winemaking material, but tinned or otherwise preserved fruits also have many advantages, and will certainly make excellent wines.

Winemaking from preserved fruits and juices opens up a whole range of winemaking activity the whole year round, and the beauty of the system is its convenience, simplicity and cheapness; your ingredients are there, ready prepared for you, on the shelves of your supermarket or grocers; they are already cleaned, sliced or chopped, and are invariably of high quality, probably better than you would be able to obtain if growing your own fresh fruit, or buying it from your greengrocer. Quality in tinned fruit, for example is constant, and, better still, there is no waste, no wearisome scrubbing, scraping or peeling; the whole of the fruit you buy can be directly used in your winemaking, and you thus get full value for the small sums of money you expend. Cost is low, rarely more than about 3/- a gallon, or 6d. a bottle (for fruit). To this, of course, must be added the cost of the sugar, but that you would usually have to buy whether your ingredients were fresh or canned.

CONVENIENT

Winemaking from tinned or bottled fruits is certainly convenient; all it usually involves is opening a can of fruit, pulping it, pouring boiling water over it, and over the requisite amount of sugar, adding acid, tannin, yeast and nutrient when it cools, fermenting on the pulp for a short period, and then straining and making the volume up to one gallon. The wine is then fermented out in the usual way, under an air lock. The method is simple, clean, and convenient, involving the minimum amount of preparation and "kitchen work," and one can quickly have a whole range of wine—some from the most exotic materials—fermenting.

Some tropical or Far Eastern fruits are unlikely to be available in this country in their fresh form—guavas, lychees and paw paw, for instance—but they can be bought in tins. Often, too, fruits which are obtainable fresh are comparatively expensive—e.g. peaches and pineapples—yet can be purchased quite cheaply tinned.

"That's all very well," I can hear you saying, "but surely I'll have to use a lot of tins to make one gallon of wine? and that'll be expensive." Not at all. Since the whole contents of the can are used and since the average can contains but very little syrup, you will find that, very generally speaking, 1-2 lbs. of fruit will make one gallon of wine.

HOW MUCH?

Exactly how much fruit has to be used in a particular case, of course, depends upon (a) the strength of flavour of the fruit being used, and (b) the strength of flavour desired in the finished wine. Some fruits, like raspberry, have a very strong flavour, and one can use minimal quantities of them, so that a 15 oz. tin is adequate for 1 gallon; other fruits, like pineapple or gooseberry, have a delicate flavour, and two or even three tins of the same size may be necessary.

Happily, however, the modern trend is away from the more strongly flavoured wines and towards the more delicate ones, and this is in our favour, for one

Continued on page 300

Those who judged at the National

Owing to the rush with which we had to get the National results to press for our last issue we did not have time to include the names of the judges, so we give them now.

Judging the various classes were :

Table wine, red dry : I. Morgan, F. Haswell, Dr. G. Paxman.

Table wine, white or golden, dry : K. Bilham, R. Brooksbank, Dr. R. Webb.

Table wine, white or golden, medium sweet : F. Bastin, W. Grainger, C. Berry.

Table wine, rosé : W. Smith, A. Jones, B. Turner.
Dessert wine, red : F. Leadbeater, T. Brown, C. Rickman.

Dessert wine, white or golden : Mrs. P. Farmer, Mrs. S. Adinell, A. Moore.

Circle championship, table white or golden : Mrs. L. Lucas, D. Lancaster.

Flower, sweet : J. Capon.
Elderflower, sweet : D. Hebbs, T. Adcock, W. Newsom.

Rose petal, sweet : A. Pickering.
Fruit, red, dry : Mrs. D. Robb, B. Hutchinson, P. Baker.

Elderberry, red, dry : E. Roycroft.
Fruit, red, sweet : L. Stagg, O. Smart, Mrs. S. Hill.
Blackberry, red, sweet : M. Chase, S. W. Andrews.

Elderberry, red, sweet : J. Toule, Mrs. E. Wadhams, Mrs. H. Timbrell.

Fruit, white or golden dry : W. Harvey, J. White-
man, J. Toule.

Citrus, white or golden, dry : P. Delmon.
Fruit, white or golden, sweet : A. Moore, C. Rick-
man, W. Harvey.

Apple, white or golden, sweet : F. Spark.
Citrus, white or golden, sweet : Dr. G. Paxman,
Dr. R. A. Webb, Miss V. Clapham.

Grape concentrate, red, dry : Mrs. D. Austin.
Grape concentrate, red, sweet : Mrs. G. Skelton.
Grape concentrate, white, dry : Mrs. G. Skelton.

Grape concentrate, white, medium : Mrs. D. Austin.
Blended, dry : Mr. D. Fairfield.
Blended, sweet : Mr. R. Skelton.

Mead, dry : Mr. L. Hender.

Mead, sweet : Mr. L. Hender.

Aperitif, dry : E. Malin.

Aperitif, sweet : S. Trivett.

Table, red, dry : C. Berry, E. Turner, W. Millett.

Table, red, medium : J. Wadhams.

Table, rosé : A. Rowland.

Table, white or golden, dry : Dr. Dransfield, D. Hebbs, V. Goffen.

Table, white or golden, medium : H. Beall, Mrs. A. Beall, T. Adcock.

Dessert, red : Mrs. H. Saunders.

Dessert, white or golden : Mrs. S. Hill, Mrs. P. Baker, Mrs. D. Robb.

Three bottle, red, and 3 bottle, white : C. Austin,
W. Vincent, S. W. Andrews.

Fruit, red, dry : Mrs. G. Golding.

Elderberry, red, dry : B. Brown.

Fruit, red, sweet : R. Woodley.

Elderberry, red, sweet : B. Lucas.

Fruit, white or golden, dry : Mrs. M. Jackson.

Fruit, white or golden, sweet : Mrs. H. Timbrell,
Miss V. Clapham, B. Hutchinson.

Flower, white or golden, sweet : Mrs. O. Trivett.

Table, red, dry : E. Hickson.

Table, white or golden, dry : W. Millett.

Dessert, red : H. Ritchie.

Dessert, white or golden : Mrs. J. Nichols.

Sparkling, white : B. Lucas.

Sherry, dry : D. Lancaster.

Sherry, sweet : W. Newsom.

Port type : B. Brown.

Beer : G. Newton.

Stout : W. Newsome.

Savoury dish : Mrs. L. Lucas.

Sweet or dessert : Mrs. L. Lucas.

Display 2ft. square : Mrs. J. Adcock.

Artistic exhibition : Mrs. J. Adcock.

Interesting exhibition : Mr. K. Hill, Mr. P. Awbery.

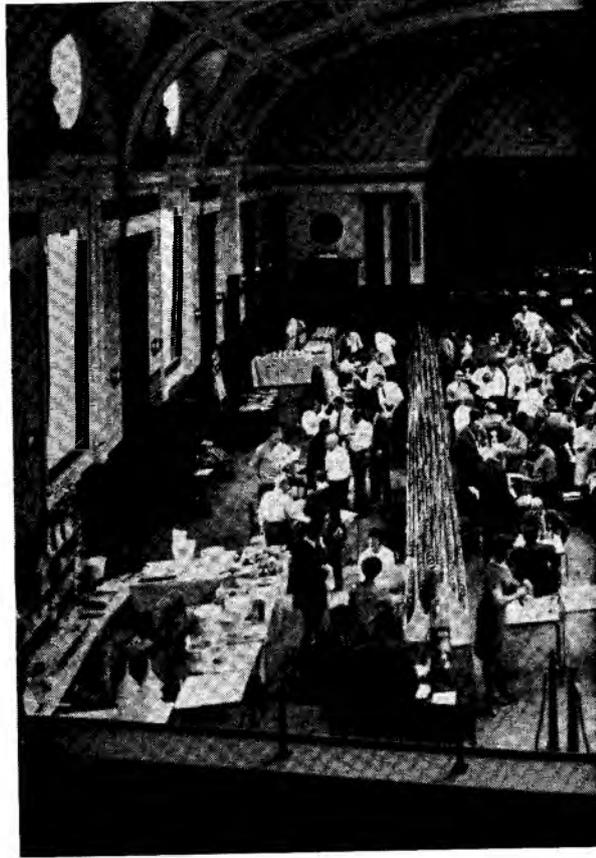
Presentation bottle : Mrs. J. Adcock.

Label : Mrs. J. Adcock, F. Bastin.

Do them a favour !

Why not introduce
your friends to

**“THE AMATEUR
WINEMAKER” ?**





TORQUAY SNAPSHOTS

taken at the National Conference

Left :
Studies of Judges: top, Mr. Brown and Mrs. J. Nichols; centre, Mr. Fairfield and Mrs. Capper; bottom, Mr. Bastin and Mr. Richardson.

Right:
Studies of competitors: top, "I'll make a note of that;" centre, "So that's what a winner looks like!"; bottom, "I thought that one'd do it!"

Centre, top: Judging in progress.

Bottom, centre: Torquay's floral welcome.





Photographs by

J. L. KNOWLES

Torquay

Top: Dr. Beech's audience for his talk on basic winemaking.

Right: Dr. Beech at the microphone in the Electric Hall.

Left: The chairman, Mr. S. W. Andrews (standing) and committeeman Bill Millett discuss a knotty point.

Dr. Beech's talk at Torquay

Winemaking was rather like gardening, like growing a lawn, said Dr. F. W. Beech, of Long Ashton, in his talk at the National Conference at Torquay in April. One could either fuss over it and produce results which were highly satisfactory, aesthetically speaking, or one could be content with a rough job—and a rough result! But in either case basic principles had to be observed.

Firstly he touched on the importance of enzymes, which he described as accelerators of chemical change. They could also break down pectins and were therefore of great value in juice extraction from fruit and in the obtaining of clear wines.

Sulphur dioxide (SO₂) in its various forms—it was often obtained by the use of Campden tablets—was invaluable in two roles, as an anti-oxidant and in an anti-microbial capacity. One had three quantities to consider—the free, the combined, and the total amount of SO₂. The total amount was the amount one put into a must or wine, the combined SO₂ was that which was absorbed and the "free" SO₂ was that which remained free to affect micro-organisms, and it was only the free SO₂ which affected the micro-organisms. Thus, if one used 150 ppm SO₂ (or 3 Campden tablets) probably only 50 ppm (or one tablet) would be free to deal with micro-organisms.

Sulphur dioxide was important in relation to acidity and SO₂. Low-acid juices had a high pH, and vice-versa. One tended to add a certain amount of acid to low-acid wines, and, in the past, to use with this 50 ppm SO₂ (or one Campden tablet). But they at Long Ashton were getting improved results by adding up to 100 ppm. The amount that was effective, they had found, varied with the acidity, but the SO₂'s effectiveness disappeared astonishingly quickly. They had found, for instance, that if they sulphited at that level a must which consisted 10% of rotten fruit only 30 ppm of effective SO₂ remained by next morning, 12 hours later. With acid fruits it was advisable to use two tablets per gallon and with low acid fruits three per gallon.

If one had that level of free sulphite after sulphiting one would destroy non-spore-forming yeasts such as *Kloeckera*, and all acetic and lactic acid bacteria, but one would leave the desired *saccharomyces cerevisiae ellipsoideus* unharmed and free to do its work.

FLAVOURS

Flavours in wine were not dependent just upon the ingredients, sugar, acid, tannin and astringency which all winemakers could recognise. They also depended upon volatile components produced by the yeast, what were known as "higher alcohols"—methyl alcohol, ethylalcohol, propyl alcohol and amyl alcohol. Propylalcohol smelt like ethyl alcohol "but more so," and emyl alcohol was "a lower note," the pear drop smell occasionally encountered.

Dr. Beech went on to say that at Long Ashton they had come to the conclusion that generally in winemaking too large quantities of fruit were being used.

They had found that excellent wine—not necessarily tasting of the original fruit—could be made with as little as 1lb. of fruit per gallon of water, plus 2lbs. of sugar, and yeast, nutrient, etc. If one crushed apples in the presence of 150 ppm SO₂ and extracted the juice one got a perfectly white wine with an intensely vinous smell.

And they had also discovered that if one took bitter sweet cider apples, chilled the fruit to 0 degs. C, smashed it up, and pressed out the juice, one obtained a bright red wine with a completely vinous bouquet.

Juice extraction from apple pulp, by the way, was greatly speeded by the use of a new enzyme called Rohament P, which worked like currently available pectin destroying enzymes but which was fully effective within half an hour or so.

There were many nutrients on the market but if one had to simplify one would be quite safe in using just ammonium sulphate and thiamine; these would normally satisfy every fermentative requirement of the yeast. Temperature was not so critical in fermentation as had once been thought, and in fact one got the same analysis at 25 C as at 15C, but there were other causes for sticking fermentations beside lack of nutrient and the wrong temperature. Agitation or aeration of a stuck wine would often help.

Dr. Beech advised his audience always to taste the finished wine and never to overlook the possibility that by a little judicious blending it might be greatly improved. Try blending to obtain a smooth flavour, he said, and try blending dry wines together, or sweet wines together, but do not mix the two. One should sulphite delicate white dry wines, or use ascorbic acid, to achieve stability; they needed SO₂ at the end of the fermentation.

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