

June 1966

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amateur winemaker

one shilling



From the Editor's Chair . . .



Spanish proverb:

El vino añejó leche es para el viejo
Old wine is milk for an old man

FIRST IN THE NORTH

Now that the dust of the National has settled a little (perhaps it would be more apt to say "Now that the snowflakes have melted") we can perhaps get things into perspective and make a cool appraisal of just how far we succeeded with this, the first National in the North. The finances of the Conference have still not been quite finalised, and they are slightly complicated this year by reason of the fact that some 200 members of the National Association were entitled if they wished to free admission, so that the Conference proper lost this income (although, of course, the Association gained it). Thus a direct comparison with previous years is not easy. It seems probable, we understand, that for the first time in its existence the Conference may show a loss. This, we hasten to add, had been half-expected, since the greater distances obviously increased expenses, but it was thought well worth while to incur the risk, since the National Committee particularly wished to try the experiment of a Conference in the North.

DONE GOOD

Whatever the financial outcome, and it will soon be known now, that experiment was undoubtedly a great success. From the many letters on the subject reaching this office it is patent that taking the National north has done a great deal of good. It has given Northern Circles a chance to see what the biggest wine show in the country looks like, to see how the week-end programme works, to meet the leaders and personalities of our winemaking movement, and to start new friendships and strengthen old ones. This conference, it is obvious from those letters, really did do a grand job in promoting a sense of unity amongst winemakers from all over the country, and we, for our part, were delighted to have the chance of meeting face to face fellow enthusiasts from the far north, including Scotland, with whom we have been in correspondence for years but whom we have never before met.

FRIENDLY

Whether it was the hospitable atmosphere of Harrogate, whether it was the sense that we had all determinedly triumphed over the blizzards to be together, or whether it was a combination of the two we do not know, but certainly there was a very real comradeship about this Conference and it is obvious from correspondence and conversation that Harrogate will be remembered, above all, as a friendly conference. Everyone who went was agreed on that.

LEAD GLAZES

We wrote in March that we were casting about for a simple method (as distinct from the normal elaborate chemical procedure) which would enable winemakers to detect with certainty dangerous lead glazes. Admittedly, it is rare nowadays to come across domestic vessels with a lead glaze, but Middle Eastern and oriental ones are occasionally met with, so the warning about the dangers of using such containers for winemaking needs still to be issued. But we have to report failure. Apparently there is no simple test. The British Ceramic Association, which Mr. Douglas Lancaster consulted, write: "There is no simple test for distinguishing . . . other than by normal chemical procedure. Any method capable of detecting the presence of lead will suffice, but it is very probable that a fragment of the glaze would require fusion in order to apply the test with certainty . . . However, if your receptacles are recent in origin and come from this country, it is almost certain that even if the glaze contained lead it will be in the form of a low-solubility lead glaze which is unlikely to release significant amounts of lead to the solutions you mention."

IN AMERICA

A significant development in the winemaking supplies world . . . several English firms have built up a considerable trade in winemaking supplies with North America, but Grey Owl Laboratories, as far as we know, are the first to send out a full-time representative who will do nothing except promote their interests there. Mr. Hill, who has been with Grey Owl for some time, is going out from England specially to set up the organisation in the United States. He will be based in Boston, where the firm has an office and warehouse, and from there orders will be despatched to American retailers and to individuals. He will also be travelling the eastern seaboard opening up new outlets and covering existing retail stockists in the Ontario area of Canada.

DIARIES

Last year, when we produced the first Winemakers Diary, it proved immediately popular, so much so that we sold right out, and unfortunately had to disappoint hundreds of readers who left it too late to place their orders. We naturally want to avoid this, but we can only do so if orders are placed early, so that we can get some idea of the probable demand. So we would urge club secretaries and individual readers to help both themselves and us by letting us have their requirements immediately. The diary has an improved layout and extra matter this year, and a pencil has been included for the convenience of those who do not always carry a pen. The price is 7/6 (post free) for single copies but clubs can order at the discount price of 6/6, plus postage, if they order six or more. It would be a great help if Circles would let us have the correct name and address of their secretaries, incidentally, or any corrections which need to be made to the matter in this year's diary.

—THE EDITOR.

SNAPSHOTS FROM



Mr. C. W. Martin (Show Supervisor) and Mr. L. P. Stagg (Chief Steward), assisting general stewards to receive entries.



Tombola.—Mr. and Mrs. I. C. Morgan arranging the prizes.



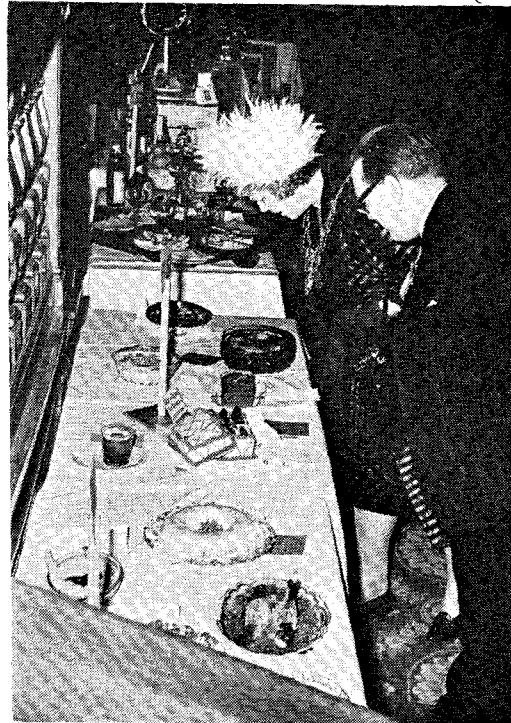
"Is it clear?" Mr. A. D. Francis (York) and Wing Comd. R. W. Woodley (general secretary).

HARROGATE

Photographs
Alan Akroyd, A.I.I.P.



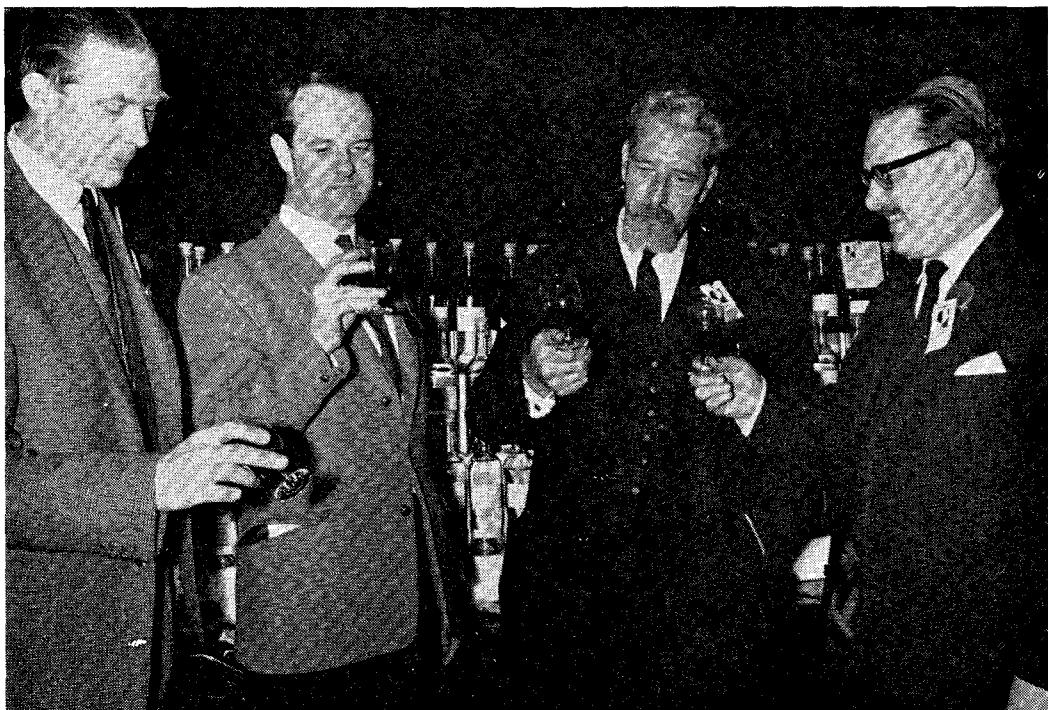
Study in concentration. Mr. A. D. Francis (York) compiling his remarks after judging.



The Mayoress of Harrogate and Mr. Berry admiring Classes 50 and 51.



The public admiring the exhibits.



Mr. A. D. Francis (York), Mr. T. B. Hutchinson (chairman of York Wine Circle), Mr. S. W. Andrews (vice-chairman and convenor of Judges) and Mr. C. J. J. Berry (chairman) enjoying a drink after judging.

Committee Commentary

A Friendly Conference

Once again the National is over and the time has come to analyse the results. There have been many successes and, inevitably, a few failures.

We shall not know the financial position until all the accounts are in and collated but, whatever the final effect on the treasury, the Committee at its post-Conference meeting felt pleased with the pleasant, relaxed and friendly atmosphere which was such a noticeable feature at Harrogate.

Our Convenor of Judges, Mr. S. W. Andrews, reported that there were only just enough available judges to get the show judged efficiently. We could have done with several more than we had and we will certainly need over 50 at Minehead next year if the schedule is like this year's.

Now that the National trophies have changed hands, it is perhaps opportune to remind the holders of their obligation to safeguard them. Our Awards Secretary, Mr. J. C. Luker, is trying to

provide wine transit cases but he would still like to hear from anyone who can help.

The organisation of the National Conference and Show is a continuous process. The arrangements for the 1967 National at Minehead were started months ago and will take up a progressively greater part of committee time as the affairs of the Harrogate Conference are wound up. At the same time, the organisation of the National Association is still being evolved—some alterations are likely—and, we hope, steadily improved. This year we hope that everyone will take far more interest in the documents that will be circulated before the A.G.M. Remember, the committee is bound by the Constitutional changes effected at the A.G.M. and if your opinion is not heard, or your representative is not on the committee, it could even be your fault! The Committee welcomes new blood and new opinions for that is the only way that the Association will remain vital and progressive.