

Photo by courtesy "London & Scotland Today"

Mr. Geoffrey Hasler is a founder member of the Guild of Sommeliers—he was one of the first chairmen, and has for many years been a Council member. He is acknowledged as one of the pillars of the Guild, unremitting in his work for it, and in his enthusiasm. He has had thorough training both abroad and in this country, in every aspect of hotel and restaurant work, but his special interest has always been wine. He is a member of the Panel of Consultants of The Academy of Wine.

It is from his practical work as head sommelier in a premier hotel that he can write in so informed and detailed a way about the wine-butler's role, and from his experience also as assistant restaurant manager that he understands the vital importance in a restaurant of a good wine service.

As far as can be ascertained no specialized manual for the instruction of sommeliers exists. We do not doubt that every serious student and trainee in the restaurant and hotel world will find Mr. Hasler's book an inimitable reference volume. In particular, it will prove invaluable to every wine-butler.



Wine Service in the Restaurant



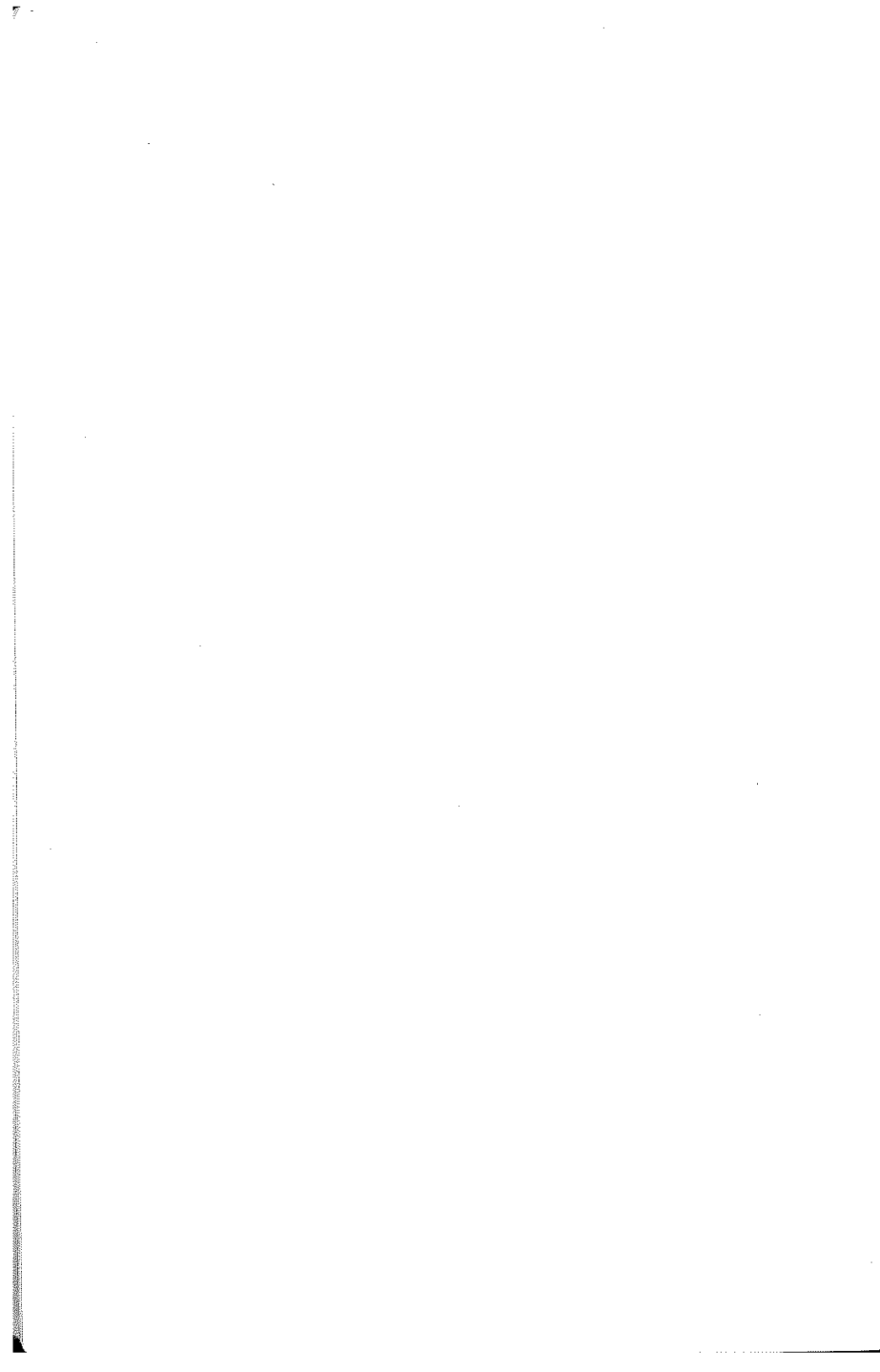
Professional Guide for the Sommelier

by G. F. Hasler

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This book is dedicated to my wife,
Annie, whose encouragement and
forbearance made it possible for me
to write it.



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Cover photograph:

The author supervises the sommelier pouring wine for his guests in the finely-panelled restaurant of the Piccadilly Hotel, London. (*Photo by Tomas Jaski*)



Mis-en-place

MIS-EN-PLACE literally translated from the French means—put in place; in practice it means to be prepared.

The term is used by all departments of the catering trade to denote the necessary preparation to be made before and for a particular service.

The importance of a good *mis-en-place* cannot be over-emphasised, for on its thoroughness depends the smooth running of the service.

The sommelier's *mis-en-place* is as important as any, not only for its practical benefits, but because it is visible to the customer and has direct contact with him.

The most essential part of the sommelier's *mis-en-place* concerns glasses. They should be scrupulously clean, free from dust and highly polished. To achieve this they should be washed in hot water (with a very little detergent in it), then rinsed with equal thoroughness in clean, warm water. Then, after standing for a short time, they should be dried while still damp, with a clean linen glass cloth. The reason for drying while still damp is that a glass left to dry completely will have water marks on its bowl.

Needless to say no greasy substance, such as milk, must be allowed to get into the water in which glasses are

washed, for a thin film of grease on a glass, although difficult to see, will tell its tale when sparkling wine is poured into it. The foam will subside almost immediately, making the wine look flat, this in spite of the bubbles still rising to the surface. The faintest touch of detergent not rinsed away will, in the same way, spoil the liveliness of a sparkling wine by immediately turning it flat. (On beer it makes the white foam look like dirty scum.)

When laying up tables, glasses should be placed upside down, to avoid any dust settling in them. Final polishing and turning right side up is done shortly before the establishment opens. At this moment they should be finally examined to detect any slight crack or chip.

The wine glass should be placed to the right of the customer's place-setting, about one inch above the meat knife, or where the meat knife would ordinarily be.

In general, a 6½ oz. wine glass is used, and over the years has proved itself most adaptable for restaurant and bar service alike.

Where a differentiation is made between burgundy and claret glasses, that for burgundy should always be longer and rounder than that for a Bordeaux

wine. In Burgundy itself it is not unusual for 10 oz. glasses with 'balloon' bowl to be used for the red wines.

Of course, some establishments make a special point of the variety and fineness of their glasses and tableware, and this is most commendable, but alas, not always possible or practicable.

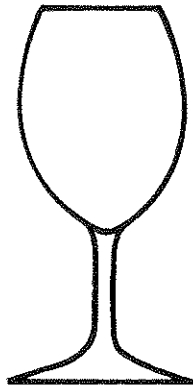
The main point is that the wine glass should be spotlessly clean, large enough to hold sufficient wine when only half full, and thin enough for the customer to enjoy to the full the beauty of the wine, with his lips, nose and eye.

Glasses form part of the table decoration, and for this reason should be placed symmetrically. If more than one glass is needed, then the second should be above the first and slightly to the left of it, the third, again, above the second and in line with the first, and so

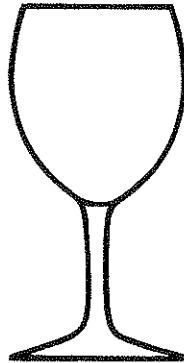
on, and in sequence of service, for example: hock; burgundy; champagne; liqueur or port. When there is insufficient room for the glasses to be in line, then they can be arranged to form a square or triangle as the case may warrant. It is rather unusual to have more than four glasses per cover, unless sherry, as well as port or brandy, is to be served at the table. (Here it can be said that a tumbler does not come into the sphere of table decoration.) See figures 1 to 3 on pages 6 and 7.

Extra glasses, including those for champagne, claret, mosel, brandy, liqueur and port, must also be ready to hand for the sommelier, should the need for their use arise.

Ashtrays are also part of the sommelier's responsibilities. They should be clean and with about twenty matches



Sherry



Port

in each holder, conveniently placed, and in numbers should accord with the size of the table.

As far as the sommelier is concerned, the room is now laid up. He must then pay attention to the equipment which he may or may not need, but must have ready. Foremost are the wine-lists. These must be clean and up-to-date. There should be one for each sommelier, lounge waiter, dispense barman and manager's desk.

The distribution of spare wine-lists in convenient places or on tables round the room, although advocated, must be left to the discretion of individual managements. What is essential is that a wine-list is accessible at all times.

Ice-bucket stands constitute another part of a sommelier's equipment. If there is sufficient room for them to be placed unobtrusively in the restaurant, all

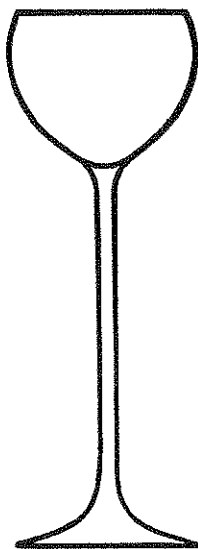
to the good ; as in all things concerning service, the handier the better. But if there is not room in the restaurant, then they should be placed as near to hand and as conveniently as possible.

With the placing ready of service trays, drinking straws, swizzlesticks (mosers), book matches, ice-water and spare ice, the sommelier's preparations are finished in the restaurant.

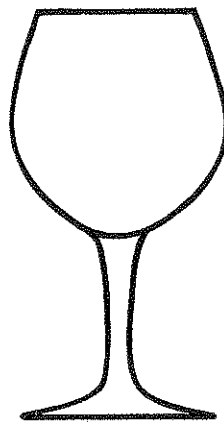
(Further details concerning such equipment as drinking straws, swizzlesticks and wine baskets will be given later on.)

There remains still his duty to make sure that in the dispense bar the wine decanters, decanter funnel and wine baskets are clean and ready.

After checking corkscrews, cigar cutter, box of matches, cheque pad, pencil and clean napkin, the sommelier's *mis-en-place* is complete, with



German or Alsace wine



Burgundy

the exception of the liqueur and cigar trolley or trolleys, which is the subject of the next chapter.

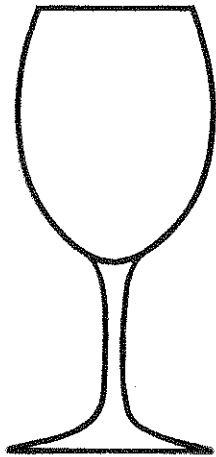
The illustrations show a range of eight glasses which would cover most of the needs of an average good-class restaurant. The styles are in keeping with what fashion has ordained over the years for restaurant glassware. The design varies from one glass-maker to another, but fundamentally the shapes are the same.

The omission of the saucer-like champagne glass and replacement by its long, tulip-shaped successor is a sign of the evolution of time and the desire of the modern age to be practical. The new design, slightly curved inwards at the tip, enables the connoisseur to enjoy the bouquet of the wine, and the wine to retain its sparkle. The old

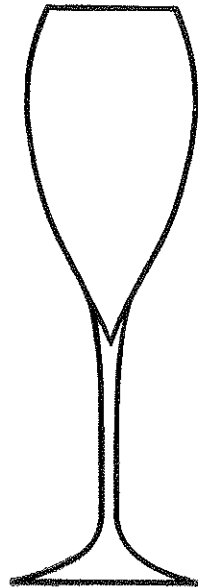
saucer glass was one of the most impractical and ill-designed glasses ever to come on to the market. It was so shallow that it held very little wine; it dispersed the bouquet before it could be enjoyed, and, worst of all perhaps, it caused the evaporation of the precious bubbles in double-quick time. But its shape became synonymous with champagne and a "champagne" way of life.

Glass No. 4 for burgundy and No. 5 for bordeaux are what I like to call "maids of all work." They can be interchanged if necessary; to save space, one can be omitted. If I had to choose between the two, No. 4 would be my choice. Both can be used for white wine.

The sherry and port glasses are self-explanatory. The sherry glass is con-



Bordeaux



Champagne

ventionally the smaller of the two, perhaps because in most cases sherry is served by the glass and not by the bottle in the restaurant, but it is still large enough to hold a decent measure without being filled to the brim.

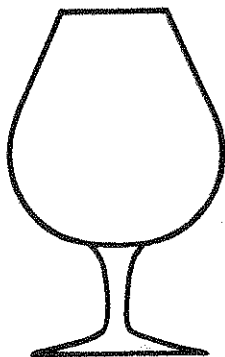
The port glass is larger, partly so that the fragrance of the wine (vital in the enjoyment of port), can be fully appreciated.

The liqueur glass is also a medium-sized glass to hold at least a large measure without the contents coming more than half way up. This has the dual benefit to the consumer that he is able to enjoy the aroma of the liqueur, and there is little danger of spilling a brimming glass.

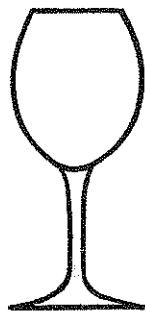
The No. 3 glass is also a multi-purpose glass, being suitable for Mosel, Hock or white Alsace wines.

Colour of any kind in glassware is frowned upon by the connoisseur and clear glass is recommended. On the other hand, I see no reason for alarm if the stem is pale green or brown. So long as the bowl is of clear glass to allow the consumer to see that the wine is perfectly clear and bright, and to enjoy its colour, justice is done.

This brings me to No. 7, the much abused balloon glass. Until a better brandy glass is designed, the balloon will do its duty. It allows a brandy to be swirled around the bowl and warmed by the palm of the hand so as to release its ethers, which in an old brandy are as enjoyable on the nose as the brandy is on the palate. So long as the balloon is not as large as a fish bowl, and the measure is not as small as a thimble, the glass will stand on its merits.



Brandy



Liqueur

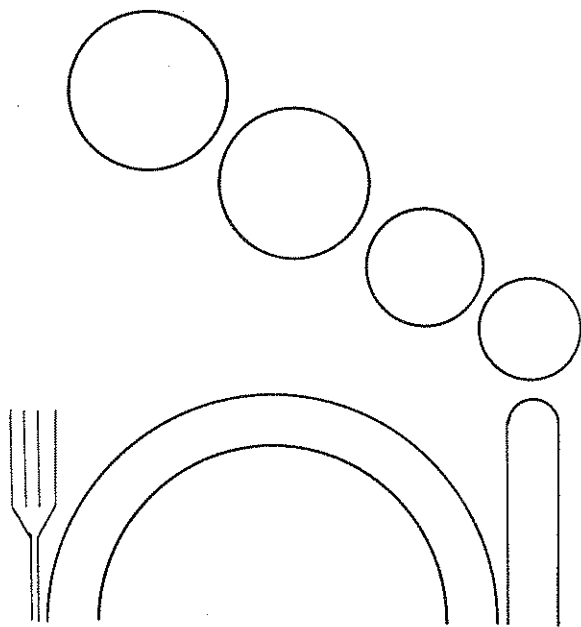


Figure 1

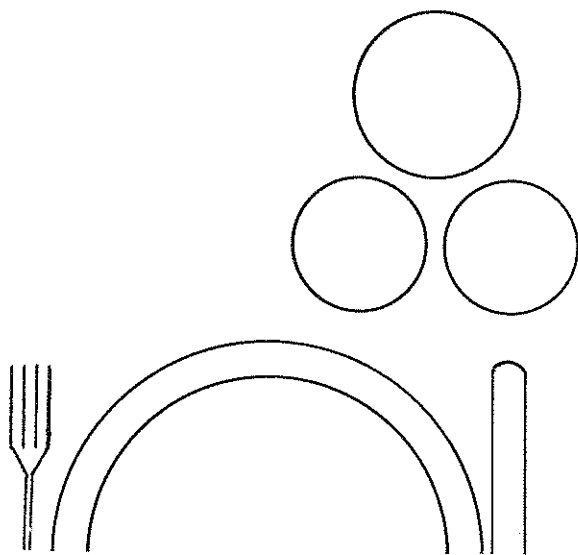


Figure 2

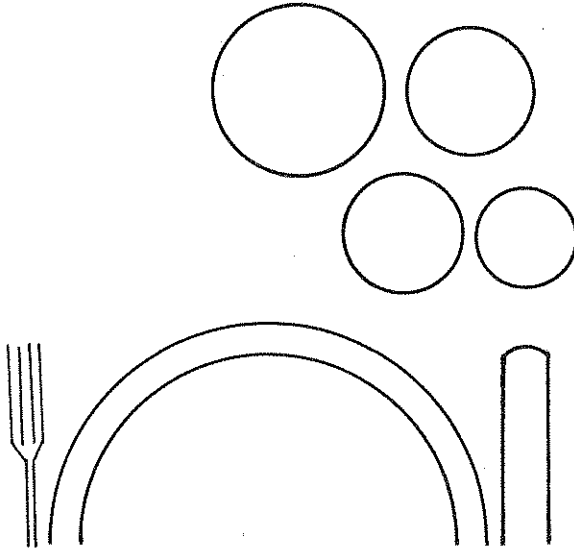


Figure 3

Three diagrams illustrating place settings with positions of three or four wine glasses grouped at each place. See also text page 2.

The Liqueur Trolley and the Service of Liqueurs, Port and Brandies

THE liqueur trolley, which is now in use in most up-to-date restaurants, is one more of the sommelier's responsibilities.

Some establishments even have two trolleys, one for liqueurs and the other for cigars and cigarettes. In most cases, however, one trolley serves both purposes. It should be a light and easily manoeuvrable vehicle, but built on solid lines to withstand the weight of the considerable number of bottles it is required to carry.

Although the trolley does not come into operation until late in the service, it must be ready for use before the restaurant opens.

A sommelier should take special pride in the liqueur trolley, for not only does he wheel it in front of the customers, but he is also its salesman, dispenser and server. It must be spotlessly clean, and complete with all the bottles the management wishes to display, plus a suitable array of glasses. Obviously the trolley cannot carry all the variety of liqueurs and brandies asked for at various times by clients (it is doubtful whether a 6-ton lorry could do that), but it should have a selection of brandies and liqueurs of world and national renown, plus one or two unusual items and a decanter of vintage port.

Sherry, gin, whisky, vodka and similar spirits have no place on a liqueur trolley, as they do not fall into the same category.

Calvados (applejack or apple brandy) from Normandy, in France, and Sliwowico, Slivovitz or Szilvo (plum brandy, spelt according to country of origin), have gained a certain amount of popularity since and perhaps partly because of the last war. But it depends on the clientèle of the establishment and their demands whether these two warrant a place on the trolley. Both are spirits and both can be quite pleasant and interesting, if of sufficient age. On the other hand, an old Bual, or vintage Malmsey, Madeira, can be included, for like old port, they provide an excellent after-dinner stimulant, and they can also be recommended with dessert or cheese.

When serving from the trolley, the sommelier must constantly check that the bottles are clean, and also the lip under the cork stopper, where a drop of sweet liqueur will dry hard and white if left there. In time this small deposit will crumble, and the bits that fall in will produce a filmy deposit.

Where a measure is used, a small bowl of water should be kept handy, so that it can be washed after each use. Some

establishments favour glasses with a marked line to denote the size of the measure. Quite a few sommeliers are so expert at pouring out an exact amount of liqueur or brandy that they do not need a measure, but to acquire this proficiency requires a considerable amount of practice. This method is more recommended for high class establishments and bars, where the client does not concern himself with the exactitude of the measure nor the price of his drink.

Full use of the liqueur trolley must be made by the sommelier at all times, to encourage the client to have a liqueur, brandy or port at the end of his meal. For it is a proven fact that a customer will more readily order a liqueur, brandy or port when it is wheeled along and displayed in front of him than if just asked verbally. It gives a guest the opportunity to order a liqueur which he did not readily call to mind, or to choose an unusual one which perhaps he did not know before.

* * * * *

When a client is being asked what liqueur or brandy he would like, a special mention should be made of port. Among the great array of brightly dressed liqueur bottles, a decanter of port gets lost, but many a diner who refuses a liqueur would have a glass of port if it was offered to him.

As the sommelier's duty is to please as well as sell, this is one of those occasions where he can do just that, as well as prove himself a good sommelier.

Since the life of a decanted bottle of vintage port is shorter than an opened bottle of liqueur or brandy, it is also good business to sell the port as soon as possible.

Should a client not like the port which is in the decanter for sale by the glass, the sommelier should offer to

decanter and keep for him any port he cares to select from the wine list. This is not only good service, but also good salesmanship. For a bottle of port has been sold instead of a glass, and the client has been satisfied, and will come back again, if for no other reason than to drink his port.

A similar offer should be made when the sommelier knows that either the host of a party or some of his guests are fond of vintage port. In this case the approach must be made earlier, to allow time for the wines to be brought up from the cellar and decanted in readiness for when it is to be served.

Naval and military messes are sticklers for the traditional way port is served, and the same can be said of the old constitutional and colonial clubs and their members.

In military messes, after the table has been cleared, a decanter of port is placed in front of the President of the mess : he helps himself first and then sends it to his left, and so it is passed to each officer round the table, irrespective of rank. Never in any circumstances must the port be passed anti-clockwise. After it has gone round once, it is followed by a toast to the Monarch. In military messes after the port has gone round for the second time, junior officers may leave the table. In naval messes, the procedure is similar, with the exception that the President of the mess must replace the stopper in the decanter before the junior officers may leave.

(In the good old days the glasses then were smashed on the edge of the table. In the present impoverished days and because of the cost of replacements, this tradition, habit or feeling of exuberance has been curtailed.)

The Navy, when afloat, also has the privilege from days of old, to drink a toast to their Sovereign, sitting down.

This privilege was granted to them because of the low ceiling in the old wooden ships. Whether our modern Navy still takes advantage of this privilege, I do not know, but I am certain that it still exists.

This procedure of service can be followed in a restaurant, especially where it is for a strictly "stag" or gentlemen only party.

Where there is a mixed party, the sommelier starts with the lady to the right of the host, misses out the host, continues round the table serving each in turn irrespective of whether lady or gentleman, and then finishes with the host. The decanter is then placed in front of the host.

I regret that I cannot explain this ritualistic way for serving port any more than others who attempted to do so before me.

It is important for a sommelier to remember this procedure when serving port, for port drinkers are sticklers for tradition and the way port is served. The same can be said of the racing fraternity, who believe that if a wine (any wine) is served to them anti-clockwise, it will bring bad luck.

Of course, the ideal when port is to be served, as with all wines, is to get the order before the dinner is served. But if port is ordered during or at the end of the meal, then the sommelier, after presenting the wine and decanting it in sight of the host, does not necessarily ask the host to taste it. The sommelier does this on his behalf and if the latter is worth his badge, then the host will be well served, but the sommelier must present the host with the branded cork.

Should the host wish to sample the decanted port at the table, and before it is served to his guests, the sommelier should pour a little of the port into the host's glass to enable him to try it on the nose and palate. After the host has

approved the port, the sommelier must walk round the table in a clockwise direction, and start by serving the lady on the host's right. Then he should miss the host and proceed round the table, serving, as said before, all in turn, irrespective of whether lady or gentleman.

It is not very common practice for port to be served at mixed parties, but in these modern times, when more and more women are entering men's realms, it does happen. And as it is a man's realm the ladies must forego their prerogative of being served first, as they are with table wines. However, should the host specify that the ladies should be served first, then the sommelier must start with the lady on the host's right, as before, then serve each lady in turn, from right to left, until they have all been served, and then begin with the first gentleman, and so proceed to serve each gentleman round the table, ending with the host.

* * * * *

The service and care of liqueurs is a simple matter. Liqueurs are made by experts with years of experience, who have tested them under most conditions.

Having no deposit, liqueurs will withstand even a vigorous shake up and not be any the worse for it. They should be kept away from excessive heat, for this tends to cause the alcohol to evaporate, with the result that the contents are altered and taste differently from what the makers intended. They also show a lower gravity when tested than that stated on the label.

Some liqueurs are recommended by their makers to be served chilled or cold; crème de menthe, kummel and kirsch are three of them.

As to the effect on a liqueur of chilling, for the purpose of this book a test was made with bottles of crème de menthe

and apricot brandy. They were placed for twenty-four hours in a refrigerator, to see the effect of extreme cold on them. When the temperature reached freezing point, the water in the liqueur began to freeze and the contents to cloud. After half an hour in normal temperature, the liqueurs became clear once more and none the worse for the experience.

Liqueurs when served at approximately 45 to 50 deg. F. taste much fresher and cleaner than when at room temperature of 65 or 70 deg.

The client who wishes to inhale the aromatic flavours will find no difficulty in doing so by holding the glass in the palm of his hand, to warm the contents and so release the ethers. For this reason the larger glass for liqueurs was recommended in the last chapter.

Crème de menthe is also served frappé, i.e. a measure of crème de

menthe is poured over shaved or finely crushed ice, which three-quarter-fills a large liqueur or claret glass. It is drunk through two straws of the same length (i.e. half the usual length approx. $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 ins.) which are placed in the centre. Some establishments prefer these short straws to be offered separately; sometimes the two halves are held together by the wrapper and then placed either in the centre or across the top of the glass.

On average there is little mixing done on the liqueur trolley, but the sommelier must be prepared for the exception.

The most simple, sometimes known as Blood-on-sand is: a little cherry brandy poured over a teaspoon into a glass of advocaat.

Tia Maria (coffee liqueur) is sometimes, and crème de cacao mostly, served



(Photo by Tomas Jaski)

with fresh cream poured over a spoon so that it floats on the liqueur. Grand Marnier, Van der Hum and Benedictine are three liqueurs which are sometimes mixed half and half with brandy.

In the case of Benedictine, this is known as B. & B. and it has become so popular that the makers now market it as such. In both cases the object is to make the liqueurs drier.

The same thing is done, but not so often, with kummel, but gin or vodka is the spirit used, and the result is known as Wummel.

The acme of skill in liqueur balancing comes when putting together a *Pousse-café*, also known as Rainbow or Stars-and-Stripes. The secret of success in setting up this masterpiece is to have a steady hand, patience and to use the correct sequence of liqueurs in weight and gravity, so that they do not mix.

Equal amounts of the undermentioned liqueurs in sequence as stated, should be slowly and carefully poured over a teaspoon touching the edge of the glass.

(1) Crème de Cacao ; (2) Crème de Violette ; (3) Yellow Chartreuse ; (4) Maraschino ; (5) Benedictine ; (6) Green Chartreuse ; (7) Brandy. A small liqueur or sherry glass is suitable.

* * * * *

Lastly, we come to the service of brandies. Since the war we have seen the gradual disappearance of vintage brandies and their replacement by blended brandies. Instead of a particular vintage, the age of the brandy is indicated on the label, in such terms as V.S.O.P. (very special old pale), or coloured seals on the bottles denote that it contains a certain amount of old brandy. How *much* is the secret of the blender, and it is this that makes one of the differences between one brand and another.

This change has become necessary, in the first place because the French

Government will not guarantee the age of any brandy over five years old ; secondly, because of the shortage of good old brandy ; and lastly, because it has been proved that the blend of brandies of different vintages will produce a better-balanced product.

As said before, a reasonably large wine glass, or small balloon-shaped glass is very suitable for the service of fine brandy.

The trend in recent years for the sommelier to warm the glass over a methylated spirit lamp is to be frowned upon. Although the procedure gives the sommelier a certain opportunity for showmanship and *chi-chi*, it is not to be recommended, for one good reason, that the vapour of the methylated spirit sometimes lingers on and affects the taste of the brandy. Also a careless sommelier could easily overheat the glass, thus cooking the brandy when it is poured into it. If a client insists on the glass being warmed, then it should be done either by the glass being submerged into or rinsed out with hot water, and quickly dried with a clean napkin, before the brandy is poured into it. But there is no better way than for the client to warm the contents of the glass than by holding it in the palm of the hand.

* * * * *

There are two ways of controlling the sales of a liqueur trolley. The first way is that it is checked and refilled after each meal by the dispense bar, and what it carries counts as part and parcel of their stock. In this case the sommelier must make sure that when he takes over the trolley all the bottles are full, to avoid any misunderstanding later.

The second way is that it is part of the head sommelier's stock, for which he is solely responsible. It will then be

controlled by an independent stock-taker, and checked either weekly or monthly, whatever the custom of the establishment may be.

A good way of controlling sales during a service is to have a list of all

correctly checked. (The reason for using a pencil is that the ticks can be erased after the sales have been checked, making the list ready for the next session.)

The illustration shows how the control

PRICE	LIQUEURS	SOMMELIER No. I	SOMMELIER No. II	CONTROL
				£ s. d.
6/-	Fine Champagne	II	—	12 0
5/6	Cognac 30 yr. old ..	—	3	16 6
5/-	Liqueur Brandy V.S.O.P. . .	II	—	10 0
4/6	Armagnac	—	I	4 6
4/-	Cherry Brandy	2	—	8 0
4/-	Apricot Brandy	I	—	4 0
4/-	Kummel	—	4	16 0
4/-	Kirsch	I	I	8 0
4/-	Crème de Menthe	II	3I	I 4 0
4/-	Crème de Cacao	—	I	4 0
4/-	Orange Curacao	2	—	8 0
4/-	Anisette	—	—	—
3/6	Advocaat	—	—	—
6/-	1955 Vintage Port ..	2II	—	I 4 0
				<hr/> £6 19 0 <hr/>

the liqueurs on the trolley and their prices, glued to a piece of cardboard or something similar. The list then can be divided in sections one for each sommelier. The sommelier after serving a particular liqueur makes a tick with a pencil in his section and opposite the liqueur sold. In this way it is possible to see at a glance who sold what and if

list works. It does not matter whether cash, checks or both are in use, for the total of both together must come to the total of sales made.

The prices and liqueurs named have no bearing on any establishment's wine list, but are solely used to illustrate a point and for the same reason all proprietary names have been omitted.

Decanting

THE decanting of wine is done mainly for two reasons: (1) to draw off the clear wine from the sediment; (2) to speed up the oxidation of the wine. There is also the fact that many people like to enjoy the colour of the wine through the clear glass and prefer the appearance of a handsome decanter to the sometimes unappetising look of a dusty bottle.

Decanting is an operation which every sommelier must master. It really is quite a simple operation which only needs a steady hand, common sense and the appropriate implements for decanting.

With regard to the oxidation of the wine during decanting, there is a speeding up of the natural processes of the maturing of the wine, the decanting acting as a short cut to bringing the wine up to its best just prior to drinking.

There has been a great deal said and written, and many interesting experiments made on this subject. Experts have differed, after sampling various bottles of wine from the same vineyard and vintage decanted at various times before consumption, as to the ideal length of time for breathing which should have been given. Differences of opinion have also been manifested as to

whether to decant, or only uncork the wine and so allow it an estimated time to breathe while still on its lees. One thing that all agree upon is that all red wines improve after they have been allowed to come into contact with air, i.e. oxygen, for a given time, this time varying according to age and maturity. One theory is that wine is a living thing, and as such needs to breathe in order to live and reach maturity.

Wine can only take oxygen slowly and in small quantities, for instance through a porous cork. The variation of the texture between one cork and another makes the difference between the amount of oxygen entering the bottle and the resulting effect it will have on the wine (hence in some cases the difference of opinion among the experts).

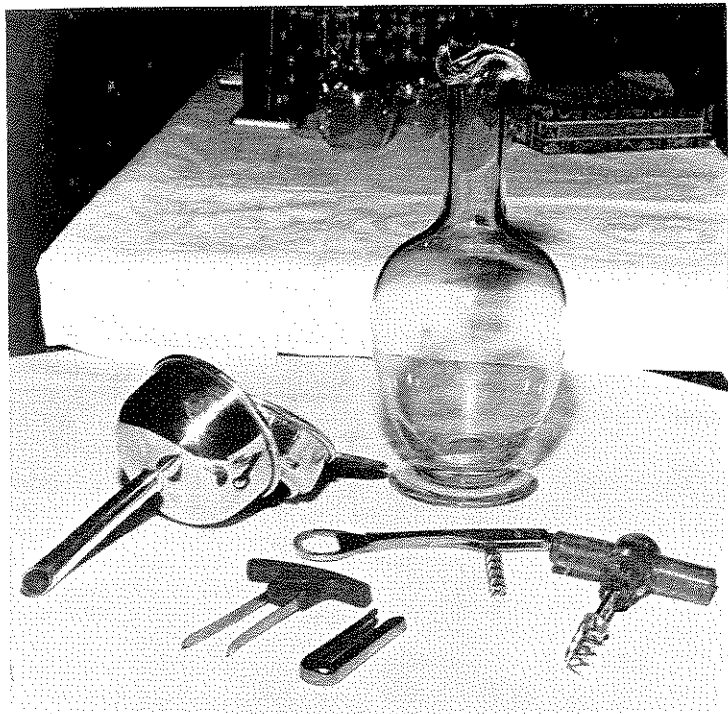
Under normal conditions, the wine will mature in due time and live its span of life. Should too much oxygen enter a bottle, for instance through a faulty cork, the wine will suffer and eventually turn to vinegar.

It is as if red wine has been allocated just so much oxygen. The older it is, the more it has consumed and the less it is able to take more. It must also be remembered that a certain amount

of the wine's bouquet has been lost through the cork pores. Therefore, an old wine, if exposed for too long, would lose more bouquet than it could afford.

On the other hand, a young and robust wine not only can take more, but needs aeration or airing. It is difficult, almost impossible to assess for

a red wine of up to eight years of age, three-and-a-half hours to breathe, and a twenty-five-year old one, none, and between those years a proportionate time, he will not go far wrong. It is also well to remember that it is better to under-expose than over-expose a wine to air.



(Photo by Tomas Jaski)

certain the exact amount of breathing time any particular wine needs. For one must take into consideration not only the age and maturity of the wine, but also the district and class.

Opinions vary so very much that a sommelier can be grateful that he is not often called upon to decide the exact amount of time a particular wine should be given to breathe.

As a guide, if a sommelier will give

I do not expect every expert to agree with the above statement, but I hope it will enlighten a little the inexperienced.

In the case of an old port, opinions vary between half-an-hour and twenty-four hours for "breathing time." The majority vote, and this includes my own, favours between half-an-hour and one hour's breathing time. But this does not affect the sommelier very much, as he is mostly concerned with decanting

and serving port at short notice, or decanting it for sale by the glass from the liqueur trolley. In the latter case, the sooner the stopper is replaced, the better, for most likely the wine will get ample time to breathe before it is sold.

* * * * *

Rarely do white wines need decanting, for seldom have they any sediment that warrants it, and oxidation is not one of their requirements. Then, too, white wines tend to be drunk young and fresh, and do not normally have to cope with this problem of age.

As for décor, a well-dressed bottle, with its informative label, standing in a wine cooler by a table, is quite a pleasant sight to see.

One exception is an old, heavy, white wine which has thrown a thin layer of sediment (also known as "cat's tail") on the side of the bottle. This sediment is very fine, like a dust, and great care must be taken not to disturb it when decanting.

Also it is not advisable to make too much of a display with such a wine in the first place, in case the sediment is disturbed and, in the second (since white wines so seldom have a sediment), in case the client might think there is something wrong with it, or that it has passed its peak.

By all means decant it in the restaurant, in view of the client, but not at the table. The client can be told that as it has a little sediment, that it will be decanted, but that is all the explanation necessary.

Should the sediment be disturbed, it is better for the bottle to be exchanged for another to avoid any unpleasantness between client and management later. For the sediment in such a wine will take up to a week or more to settle again.

As the sediment is on the side of the bottle, it is best to present it to the

client in a horizontal position. Here is where the wine basket comes in handy, not for presentation, but for holding the wine horizontally while the cork is being drawn. Unlike the filmy sediment of a crusted port (which will slide to the bottom of the bottle when stood up) the sediment in a white wine would mix with the wine and make it cloudy. Thus the case for keeping it horizontal.

After the wine has been decanted it can be placed for further cooling if necessary in the ice bucket.

* * * * *

Before any wine is decanted it should be presented to the client for approval. A wine should also be decanted in view of the client in case it does not come up to his expectations after it has been decanted, for at least he will then know it is the same wine he ordered and which was presented.

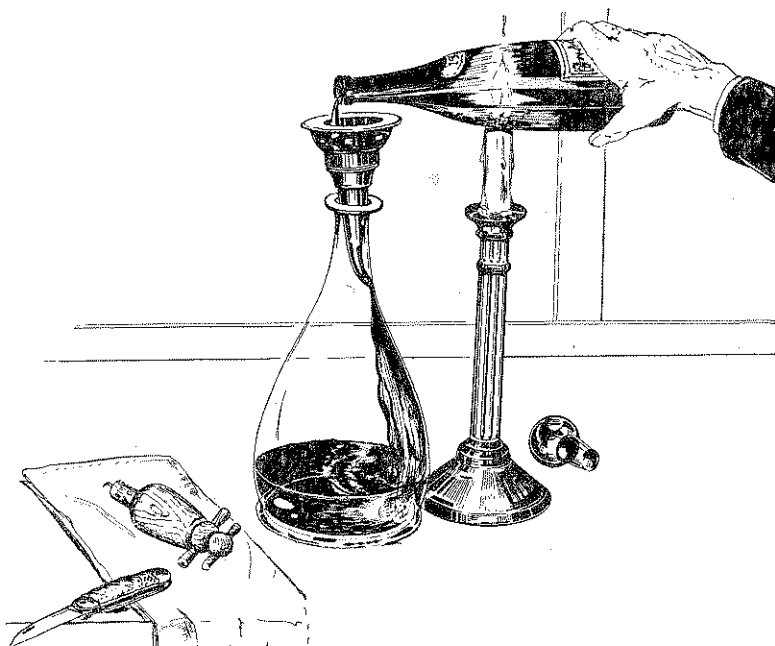
The implements necessary for the operation are quite simple; a perfectly clean decanter, a silver decanter funnel, a lever corkscrew with a wide screw, and knife or cork tweezers (whichever is preferred), plus a candle or torch, decanting basket and service cloth.

In a restaurant, it is not always possible to have a candle handy for decanting. But with a good light, if a white serviette is placed behind the table-wine bottle, it is possible to see quite well the progress of the sediment.

After the wine has been presented (presuming that it is a red table wine already in the decanting basket) the sommelier cuts away the capsule round the lip of the bottle. After carefully wiping the surface, if need be cutting away any chalky or wax substance, the cork is drawn by piercing and screwing in the corkscrew, in the centre of and nearly through the cork, and then slowly levering it up, and finally edging the cork out. The final edging is done to prevent the air from gushing in and

to ease the vacuum which has formed by the cork being drawn more quickly than the outside air can get in. If it is done too quickly, the drawn cork will make a noise like a shot from a pop gun, a certain amount of wine will spurt out and with the intruding air, there is every possibility of the sediment being disturbed.

If a young wine or a wine that has no sediment is being decanted, for the sole reason of giving it air, and so bringing out its bouquet, there is no reason why it should not be sampled before decanting. But the same procedure and care must be taken when drawing the cork. When a wine is being sampled either before or after being decanted, it



The lip of the bottle once more has to be wiped before the wine is poured through the funnel into the decanter, slowly and steadily, with the aid of a light from behind the bottle.

Then, and not before, the wine can be tasted either by the sommelier or the host. Tasting is not done before decanting of a table wine, as by tilting the bottle up and down, the sediment might be disturbed (a result to be avoided at all times) and the taste subsequently be affected.

is done by a little being poured into a large glass, swirled round, then viewed for colour and clarity, and then smelled and tasted to decide whether it is corky or has any other defects. Under no circumstances should a sommelier put the opened bottle to his nose. This is altogether an unhygienic and unethical practice, and that is saying the least of it.

* * * *

Apart from red table wines, the most important wines to require decanting

are vintage or crusted ports and madeiras. The procedure in each case is the same. A sommelier is not called upon so often to decant a very old madeira as he is to decant port. The sediment in an old madeira is much lighter than that of an old port, and for this reason great care must be taken when handling such an old wine.

The sediment in an old port is not only the heaviest produced by any wine but also the kindest and most amenable to the services of the one decanting.

Over the years during which the wine has been maturing in the bottle, the sediment has slowly formed into a filmy crust. This crust, when the bottle is stood up, may break and slide to the bottom, but it will not usually disintegrate into small particles and mix with the wine. It is a fact that an old bottle of port will stand up to quite a bit of handling, but not shaking, before the sediment will disintegrate.

In the case of an old vintage wine with a heavy crust, it is ideal, of course, to stand it upright for twenty-four or forty-eight hours for the sediment to settle. But restaurant service usually cannot provide such notice. If such a wine has to be decanted with only an hour's, even half-an-hour's, notice (as sometimes happens, alas), then the bottle should be lifted gently from bin to decanting basket, keeping the bottle as near the horizontal position as possible, and then the cork drawn. By tilting the bottle, still in the basket, gently the wine can usually be poured bright off the lees.

The whole art of decanting port does not consist only in pouring the wine from the bottle into the decanter, making sure that none of the sediment slips by with the flow of the wine, nor of ensuring that with proper care, not too much wine is lost with the residue in the bottle. The art and know-how

includes how to get to the port without disturbing the sediment.

This perhaps explains why there is all the fuss and difficulties made about the drawing of a cork. It must be remembered that a vintage or crusted port will lie on its crust for up to twenty-five years or more before the cork is drawn. In that time the cork is expected to prevent an excessive amount of oxygen entering, or the bouquet and alcoholic strength leaving the bottle. For these reasons, only the best corks of extra length are used.

The long cork often runs the whole length of the neck of the bottle and slightly fans out at the shoulders, forming an upside-down mushroom-shaped cork. And just as a champagne cork cannot spring back to its original shape and size after it has been drawn, so a port cork, after being twenty-five years or so in a bottle, may present difficulties when being drawn, and may break in the process.

It has been said that the life of a bottle of port is only as long as the cork will last. As the life of a cork is shorter than that of the port, ports destined for posterity are re-corked every fifteen years or so. In these cases, the corks are marked with the vintage year and the year of re-corking.

There is very little difficulty in the drawing of a cork from a bottle of a fifteen-year-old or younger port. It is the older and more brittle corks that need a different approach.

After all the wax (on which usually the shipper's name and vintage are impressed), has been cut away, and the lip wiped clean, an effort should be made to draw the cork straight-forwardly with a lever corkscrew. I mention this way first, for if the cork is still firm, it will come out in one piece, and for the sommelier this will be the easiest and quickest way of all. The



(Photo by Tomas Jaski)

pull must be very steady and deliberate. Should there be any sign that the cork is about to crumble, the corkscrew should be withdrawn. If the sommelier has a tweezer-style cork extractor, then that can be tried. As this type of cork extractor is not well known (see page 15) I should explain how it works. The prongs are driven between the inside of the bottle and the outside of the cork, and then with a screwing motion the cork is carefully drawn.

While on the subject of extractors, it is well to remember that the latest of

all, the gas pressure cork extractor, is not suitable for extracting port wine corks, as the needle does not completely penetrate the long cork, and in these circumstances, can be dangerous.

Lastly, we come to the most satisfactory, and yet, when it misfires, the most disastrous, way of all—the knocking off of the head of the bottle. There are three versions of this procedure.

(1) The sharp edge of a strong table knife is run a few times under and round the collar of the bottle as if to

cut it off. This will slightly weaken the bottle in that place. Then, holding the bottle firmly in the left hand, the sommelier should strike with the back of the knife in an upward movement along the neck of the bottle ending in the weakest spot (*see page 19*). The bottle should snap clean just below the collar, enabling the sommelier to grip the upper part and pull the cork out.

The disastrous part comes if, in the manufacture of the bottle, the edge of the collar has been rounded off, thus preventing the knife, as it slips over it, giving the neck a sufficient shock to make it snap in the desired place. To avoid this, there is no reason why a sommelier should not use a glass cutter with which to make the necessary groove, and then with the back of the knife, give the neck of the bottle the required jolt to make it snap in the desired place. From this example comes the old adage that it is better to be sure than sorry.

(2) Hot tongs are employed in some cases. This method, still occasionally used in stately homes, although very effective, is done more for amusement than need. The tongs, which are

specially designed for the purpose, are first heated and then clamped round the middle of the neck of the bottle. Immediately they have been removed, a cold, wet cloth is held round the neck of the bottle and thus, by alternating heat and cold, the glass will be made to snap in the affected part. The sommelier will hardly be called upon to use this method in a restaurant, but it is useful to know.

(3) A simple adaptation of the second method is occasionally used in a restaurant when the tongs are replaced by a piece of string which has been strung round the middle of the neck of the bottle. While one person holds the bottle steady in the wine basket, the other pulls the string from side to side causing friction and heat in the desired circle, then, as before, application of the cold, wet cloth will cause the bottle to snap. This is an old-fashioned way of cutting the glass but it is very effective.

After the cork has been removed, the lip of the bottle should be wiped and the port poured in a slow steady flow. In the case where there is not a decanting funnel, a piece of clean muslin over an ordinary funnel will suffice.

Cigars and Cigarettes

IN most establishments of a reasonable size, the sommelier is responsible for the care and sale of cigars and cigarettes. To carry out his duties and to be able to advise and converse with conviction on this subject, he must in the first place be fully acquainted with it. For this reason, I am including here a brief account of the care, storage, service and 'control' of cigars and cigarettes.

The cigar and cigarette smokers' tastes and habits have greatly changed since the war and continue to do so. Many of the popular brands have completely disappeared and their place has been taken by a host of new brands as well as by more filter-tipped cigarettes and miniature cigars.

Basically the types are the same. We still have the ever-popular British blended-virginia cigarettes. Then, either imported or manufactured here, are cigarettes made of tobaccos from Egypt, Turkey, Russia, Macedonia, the Balkans or the Commonwealth (the latter being mainly Rhodesian).

There are also quite a few varieties of the so-called American cigarettes, which are either imported direct from the U.S.A. or manufactured here.

Some of the best known French brands also find a ready market here,

but their demand is more specialised than national.

Although no establishment can be expected to carry more than a reasonable selection to satisfy its clientele, a sommelier should have as wide a knowledge of brands and types as possible, so that he can recommend a similar brand or blend to the customer when unable to supply the one asked for.

Cigars and cigarettes should be offered immediately the coffee has been served, at the same time as liqueurs, brandies and port.

When a packet has been chosen from the tray proffered, the sommelier should open the packet for the client and then ease up a cigarette so that it can readily be lifted out. The sommelier should offer a light, either from a match or gas lighter. If a match is used it should be well alight to save the client inhaling the sulphur fumes. This is particularly important when lighting cigars. It is best to avoid the use of petrol lighters for the same reason.

A packet of the establishment's book-matches should be placed at hand for the client, and a quick check made to ensure that a clean ashtray is at hand.

If at any time a specific brand of cigarettes is asked for, they should be brought to the table, either on a salver

or a small side plate, complete with a packet of bookmatches, and the same service given as mentioned above.

As to the storing and the control of cigarette sales, the procedure is similar to that for cigars, and will be dealt with simultaneously with the latter, later on.

When it comes to the care and service of cigars, a more exacting and specialised knowledge is demanded than for cigarettes.

Tobacco grown in some locations is more suitable for the manufacture of cigarettes than cigars and *vice versa*. The best leaf for cigars comes from Cuba (Havana), Jamaica, Brazil, north and south America, Sumatra, Borneo, Java and West Africa. These are the recognised regions, but many European countries grow some tobacco for their own home markets.

For the wrapper, which requires the finest, smoothest and the most difficult leaf to grow, that from Cuba, Sumatra and the U.S.A. is the most suitable.

Like all plants, tobacco is subject to all the hazards of the elements and to attack from insects. For this reason, great care has to be taken to protect the plant.

As an example, I mention one little hazard which the sommelier might encounter. This is a little insect which is harmless in itself and which lives on the tobacco plant, (or its egg does) and may survive through all the processes of the manufacture of the cigar. It will then eat its way out and so ruin the cigar. It is extremely rare that this little weevil survives, but this does happen. What is worse, it has no sense of direction and may take the long way out, boring a hole right through a row or bundle of cigars. The cause of the damage is easy to diagnose as a cigar looks as if a small knitting needle had been pushed right through it.

Let me hasten to say that a spot of discoloration on a cigar is of no signifi-

cance as it is not caused by any insect or disease but by a drop of rain or dew, and the sun's action.

As the regions mentioned above are so far apart, it is obvious that the tobaccos they produce will differ, for instance some are more aromatic than others. It is up to the manufacturers to select and buy the kind of tobacco which will perfect his brand to suit a particular market.

A cigar, whether hand or machine made, is composed of three sections : a filler, a binder and a wrapper.

A filler is the centre of the cigar and is made of compressed leaves in a 'cigar shape.' This is then bound around with a binder : from now on it is called a bunch. Finally, it is wrapped spirally by the wrapper and stuck on the top with a little tragacanth gum.

All very simple, or so it seems, so let us have a brief look at the work that goes into a cigar. We will then be able to explain the cost of a good cigar to a customer. Let us start with the hand-made cigars from Havana (Cuba) and Jamaica.

Havana cigars are all of Cuban tobacco, and, for the British market, exclusively hand-made. By allowing in only hand-made Cuban cigars, Britain not only protects her Commonwealth suppliers, but is guaranteed the finest cigars in the world ; it explains why a Havana cigar costs so much in Britain. For a skilled man will make between 100 and 150 cigars a day, according to size. A machine makes ten to fifteen, according to size, in a minute.

Cuba not only has the soil and climate most suitable for the growing of tobacco, but it also has the know-how, for producing the finest and most-prized leaf for wrappers. This leaf, which accounts for 60 per cent. of the cost of a cigar is all important. Jamaica which grows its own tobacco and makes



(Photo by Tomas Jaski)

a very fine hand-made cigar, depends exclusively today on Sumatra and Connecticut for its wrappers.

U.S.A. and Sumatra also produce very fine wrapper leaf. That from Sumatra is very much lighter than the Havana and the one from the U.S.A. has a greenish appearance. This is because of the extreme heat to which it is exposed during curing. This leaf will retain its green colour, but it is not a green cigar. If one looks at the open end one can see that it is only the wrapper that has that colour; the filler is brown.

The wrappers from the above three countries are also very much in demand and use in non-tobacco-producing countries such as Britain, for the production of their cigars.

A sommelier may note that the wrapper leaf on some cigars runs from

left to right while on others it turns the other way. This is because, after the stem has been removed, there is a left and a right half of the leaf. Usually the spiral of all cigars in one box turns the same way.

In nearly all hand-made cigars, a long leaf is used as a filler, whereas in many machine-made cigars a short filler is used. This does not mean an inferior blend is being used, as it may be first-class broken leaf.

In many British-made cigars, the so-called homogenised leaf is used as a binder. This is a tobacco sheet made by pulverised, and then reconstituted, tobacco leaves. But at present these are not used for the finest wrappers.

Hand-made and machine-made cigars are carefully graded in colour before being packed. Although there are about a hundred shades in hand-made

cigars they are marked for the British market as : Claro (C.C.C.), or Colorado Claro (C.C.), or Colorado (C). The C's are just an abbreviation, or cipher, for the full name and not an indication of quality. Claro is the lightest in colour and Colorado, or C., is the darkest. To get the light Claro wrappers, the plants are grown under muslin cheesecloth, for protection against the sun. There is no difference in the strength of these cigars, just in the colour. The 'best' colour is whichever happens to be fashionable and in demand by the cigar smoking public at that moment.

Havana, Jamaica and most of the other world market cigars are packed in cedarwood boxes. They come either in twenty-fives—twelve at the bottom and thirteen on the top layer—or in bundles of fifty or two bundles of fifty to a box, or in cedarwood cabinets of 1,000, or more. Cedarwood is always used, for that has been proven the most neutral and suitable for the packing and storing of cigars. Even single aluminium tubes and glass jars for fifty green cigars, are lined with cedarwood.

On leaving the factories in Cuba, Jamaica, Sumatra, U.S.A., Manila or the Philippines, cigars are not quite dried out and still contain moisture ; for this reason, they are usually kept in bonded warehouses for twelve to eighteen months after arriving in this country, and before being put up for sale. This ties up a considerable amount of the importer's money, which also may be affected by changes in the tobacco duty. At the present it stands at 86s. 10½d. per lb. weight of tobacco (to this for 1964-65 can be added 15 per cent. emergency import duty), which also helps to explain the high cost of a cigar.

As the importer always tries to keep some stocks in reserve and fully matured, hotel and restaurant companies usually order, and in most cases

pay in advance for, their yearly supply, which is kept for them by the importer.

The shape of cigars has remained fairly static over the years. The torpedo shape has rather receded in popularity as against the straighter, slimmer cigar, but can still be had.

The five standard corona sizes are : Corona Grandes (also known as Churchills or Lonsdales) 6 in. ; Corona 5½ in. ; Petit Corona 5 in. ; Tres Petit Corona 4½ in. ; Half Corona 3½ in.

There is also a shape known as Ideales, which is a long thin cigar of 6½ in.

When it comes to selecting a cigar, let me point out straight away that the bigger the cigar, the better the smoke since length brings coolness to the smoker. There is also no difference between the top and bottom layer of cigars in a box of twenty-five. The same goes for the outside and the inside in a bundle of fifty cigars. The old belief that the best are always on the outside is just nonsense as they are all from the same table when packed. There is also nothing in such legends as that the end one, or the second from the end of the top layer is best. But if the client shows a preference for one or another, the sommelier should let the client have the cigar he wants. After all, they are all for sale!

Now we come to one of the most common fallacies held by restaurant clients—that of choosing a cigar 'by sound.' This should be discouraged wherever possible as it is meaningless. Also the rolling of the cigar between thumb and forefinger will tell the expert very little and an amateur nothing at all. By this action, too, damage can be done to the cigar. For after all, it is only that very little drop of gum at the top that holds it all firmly together.

Now when selecting or recommending a cigar, what should the sommelier look for ?

First, a smooth surface, with a fine sheen, slightly oily in appearance, and with no puncture.

Second, the filler evenly packed, with few or no stems in it.

Third, a cigar that is firm to the touch, but not hard or spongy.

When recommending the cigar, the sommelier should try and assess the preferences of the client. He should ask the client what kind of a cigar he would like. If a light cigar has been indicated, then a Jamaican cigar is the answer. If, on the other hand, the client is one who appreciates the finer (and more expensive) things of life, then a Havana cigar is called for.

After a cigar has been selected, the sommelier should offer to take the ring off, and also to cut it for the client.

The best way to take the ring off is deliberately to squeeze the cigar at the point where the band is, between the thumb and the forefinger. This will slightly raise the ring away from the cigar and it can be torn from top to bottom by the forefinger and thumb of the right hand.

How should a cigar be pierced? It can be pierced with a piercer or pointed match, guillotined, cut twice in the shape of a cross with a cutter or penknife; a V-shape cut can be made, or a groove cut round the head, and the head then can be squeezed between the forefinger and thumb until it cracks, or the head can be bitten off.

There have been many fine explanations by clients to prove their method is the best. But, in fact, the V-shape cut is the most satisfactory, in order to obtain an evenly burning cigar.

The squeezing and biting methods are mostly American habits and more suitable for green cigars, than a fully matured hand-made cigar.

The sommelier should hold the cigar vertically and place the point between

the cutting edges of the opened cutter which should be held firmly flat on some rigid surface such as the top of the cigar box. This ensures a clean cut and no damage to the cigar.

Cigars should not be pierced, as it damages the structure of the cigar, and ends up by producing a "hot smoke." The rest of the recommendations are just clients' own fads and are not worth bothering about.

But a sommelier must always remember that a client is the one who is paying and who is going to smoke the cigar; it is his privilege to cut it as he wishes. The sommelier is there just to advise and give the correct service, which in this case is to cut a V-shaped groove if it is left to him, and not to argue on methods if the client asks for another procedure.

After the cigar has been cut, the end should be tapped over the thumb so as to knock away any little particles of loose tobacco. Some smokers also like to blow down the cigar from the open end, to make sure that no dust is left in the V-cut. This also makes sure of an even smoke, as it gives the filler some air.

The client should hold the cigar between thumb and forefinger in his mouth, so that he is able to rotate it while it is being lit. The sommelier should proffer a well lit wooden match, cedar spill or gas lighter. Petrol lighters, as mentioned before, are not suitable, as they give off fumes.

The cigar should be slowly lit, as if being singed, before being fully lit. If one match will not suffice, then two must be used.

It is also good advice for the client then slowly to blow onto the glowing end of the cigar.

Now the cigar has been lit, and, presuming that it is in good condition,

it should burn evenly. If it starts to burn to one side, this side should be slightly moistened with the tongue, and the cigar placed in the ashtray. It will burn itself straight again, but a little care must be taken not to let it go out.

If the cigar does go out, then the dead ash should be removed with a match and the cigar relit as soon as possible.

If the client tastes a certain amount of bitterness from the relit cigar, this is from the unburned tobacco oil and nicotine.

Varying colours of ash do not indicate good or bad cigars but tobacco from different locations or regions. Havana cigar ash is grey, and that from Sumatra whitish.

An even and firm ash indicates that the cigar has been made with a long filler and is evenly packed and is in good condition. The ash of a cigar made with a short filler will crumble more easily.

Great care must be taken when storing cigars and cigarettes, but the return for the trouble is very rewarding. For it is not uncommon for Havana cigars to last and be in perfect smoking condition after twenty years or more. The length of life of a Jamaica cigar is not known. Certainly up to twelve years they have been found to be still improving.

Tobacco in any form is affected by atmospheric conditions surrounding it. It will not only absorb nasty and pleasant smells from its near environment, but also salt from the sea air. It is also affected by heat, moisture and draughts. On the other hand, cold does not affect cigars. This does not mean that they should be kept in the 'fridge. Continual changing of temperature, however, will not do them any good.

The perfect temperature of a store room for cigars and cigarettes is between 58 and 65 degs. F., and 50-60



(Photo by Tomas Jaski)

humidity. Hard gloss paint, metal, glass and concrete surfaces should be avoided as they are prone to condensation.

When a new consignment of Havana and Jamaica cigars arrive, the grease-proof paper should be taken off so that the air can circulate round them, and so that they can breathe through the cedarwood. Dutch and Swiss cigars are fully matured and ready for smoking so, as for cigarettes, the wrapping paper should be left on, until needed.

On the coast or afloat it is best, for their own protection, to keep cigars only in aluminium containers. If boxes of cigars are kept by the establishment, then the open boxes should be kept in non-porous polythene bags.

I quite realise that in most cases the sommelier has only a cupboard to keep his stock in. Even this should be kept out of draughty corridors and away from all smells, odours and excess heat or moisture.

The best way to protect his stock is for the sommelier to keep it at a minimum and so get fresh supplies as often as he needs. And the most effective way to do this is to offer and sell as much as he can.

This does not mean that he should keep a box of cigars until he has sold the last one before replenishing his stock. For there is nothing so effective in putting a client off having a cigar as a well-worn box containing two cigars or even one solitary one.

When the sommelier gets down to the last six in a box, he should open a new box, and either take the first cigar out and lay it on top of the others, or leave it on the side and replace it after the sale has been made. (In this way there is less danger of having a cigar damaged by the client struggling to withdraw a cigar from the full box.)

The same method can be employed for using up the last few cigars of the previous box.

When re-stocking, care should be taken that new stock is not sold before the old one has been used up.

If on opening a new box, the cigars seem to have a fine dust or what looks like mould on them, this can be very easily brushed off with a fine brush (a shaving brush, for instance), or a couple of feathers. This is not mould, but bloom caused by the final fermentation, while maturing in the box.

The control of cigars and cigarettes is quite a simple thing, and, with the aid of a ready reckoner, child's play. It greatly assists if cigarettes are stocked in units of ten, and the odd number in front. Thus the stock-taker can see at a glance how many packets of each brand there are. It also helps speed if the stock is placed in the same rotation as that in which it is listed in the stock book.

The same procedure can be adopted for cigars. All individual brands and sizes should be kept together where possible, the bottom box or boxes being full, the top one having the odd number.

A numbered page duplicate book should be used for all orders to the store. Duplicate and original should be compared by control office each week after stock has been taken. The duplicate should be signed by the stock-taker.

All cheques and records of all monies paid in should be kept in a book for comparison with figures of sales made.

By comparing the total of what the sales come to with the amount paid in, it can be seen whether stock is correct. The amounts should be equal, as proof that stock and amount paid in are correct.

In the following table, brand names have been omitted purposely, but they should be entered in the first column. Prices are purely fictitious.

The shortage has been purposely made for the purpose of illustration. If

it had been an excess then evidently a client had been overcharged. The excess amount would have to be paid in, to show that much over, after the following stock-taking.

		OPENING STOCK	ADDITIONS	TOTAL	CLOSING STOCK	SOLD	CASH
Cigars	s. d.						£ s. d.
Havana Grandes	12 6	15	—	15	15	—	—
„ Corona	10 0	18	—	18	6	12	6 0 0
„ Petit Corona	8 6	6	25	31	8	23	9 15 6
„ Tres Petit Corona ..	7 6	9	25	34	20	14	5 5 0
„ Half Corona	6 6	12	25	37	25	12	3 18 0
Jamaica Churchill	10 6	25	—	25	24	1	10 6
„ Corona	8 6	20	—	20	—	20	8 10 0
„ Petit Corona	7 6	17	25	42	20	22	8 5 0
„ Tres Petit Corona ..	5 6	—	25	25	15	10	2 15 0
„ Half Corona	4 6	10	25	35	19	16	3 12 0
„ Ideales	10 0	15	—	15	12	3	1 10 0
„ Bundles	8 6	34	—	34	25	9	3 16 6
Cigarettes							
Virginia in 20	4 11	80	50	130	60	70	17 4 2
„ „ 10	2 6	50	50	100	43	57	7 2 6
Virginia Filter 20	4 6	53	50	103	58	45	10 2 6
„ „ 10	2 3	20	50	70	55	15	1 13 9
Turkish in 25	8 6	10	—	10	10	—	4 5 0
Balkan in 25	9 0	8	—	8	8	—	—
American in 20	5 6	19	—	19	15	4	1 2 0

Sales of Cigars	53 17 0
Sales of Cigarettes	41 9 11
	Total
Cheques paid in—Amount	94 10 10
	Stock short by
	16 1

Cocktail Lounge Service

A COCKTAIL lounge waiter is as important a person in the hierarchy of a catering establishment as one can find. Because he is often the first member of the waiting staff that the client meets, the impression he conveys by his general appearance, efficiency and attitude of welcome (or the reverse), has great bearing on the customer's assessment of the establishment as a whole.

In the first place the lounge waiter should give the impression that he is pleased to see the client, and should welcome him.

If possible he should show the client to a table, and then ease either the chair or the table. This does not mean that the furniture need be reorganized. A small table can be pulled forward an inch or two, and almost simultaneously pushed back to the same position as before, as soon as the client has sat down.

Through this method of approach the client will gain confidence in the wine-butler and feel assured that he is dealing with an efficient and qualified person, who will execute his order courteously and promptly. The client will then rely upon him as one whose recommendation can be trusted.

Nature has not bestowed her graces equally on all humans, and so one can-

not expect every waiter to be an Adonis. But it should not be too much to expect (and this goes for all waiting staff) well-groomed hair, clean apparel, polished shoes, and, above all, clean hands.

* * * * *

Irrespective of what some people may think of cocktails and the various concoctions put together by barmen all the world over, they are here to stay, and they play an important part in the catering trade of today.

The mixing of potions for medicinal purposes and general well-being is nothing new, and was practised in ancient times, but it was not until the Americans started mixing alcoholic beverages, that the cocktail was really born. Hence the terms 'American' bar, lounge, barman, and so on.

Originally, cocktails were created with the object of stimulating the 'party spirit,' relaxing tensions and creating an appetite. Many were concocted in honour of a person, whose name was then given to the new creation. New cocktails have also been created to celebrate the launching of ships, aircraft, commercial products, film stars, and so on, the world over. In principle, a cocktail is a mixture of two or more beverages, one or more being alcoholic. Of

course, non-alcoholic concoctions have also been created, but this was not the original thought when the mixing of drinks in bars was first conceived.

From this humble beginning we get the cocktail of today with the inclusion in the mixture of fruit and vegetable juices, macerated fruits and herbs; whole or part of eggs, milk, cream; still, sparkling, fortified or herbal (vermouth) wines; spirits, liqueurs, bitters; and still or carbonated mineral waters. Now, a cocktail is a beverage in its own right, to be consumed in one form or another at almost any time of the day or night.

Because of the wide varieties of the ingredients, cocktails have been classified under various headings such as: Apéritifs, Cobblers, Collins, Cups, Crusts, Egg-Noggs, Fixes, Fizzes, Flips, Highballs, Juleps, Punches, Slings, Sours, etc. To these, one can add toddies and mulled wine, which, like cups, are more a matter for the sommelier than for a cocktail lounge waiter.

The sommelier, or cocktail lounge waiter, need not pay much attention to the above classification, for all it means is that cocktails are grouped according to whether they are *short or long drinks*, served with or without ice, and according to the décor of the finished product. This does not mean that the classification is of no importance—it is. For by consulting such an index, a barman can find out the correct ingredients of any drink he is asked for, according to the description given to him of the finished product.

What is more important, indeed imperative, is that the cocktail lounge waiter, like the sommelier, should know the names and ingredients of the most popular and most-often-called-for drinks. It is impossible for the cocktail lounge waiter to know the names of all the concoctions that may be demanded,

but he should be properly conversant with all those on his own establishment list, and he should know their correct prices. Also he should know all the brands and prices of all the gins, whiskies, brandies, liqueurs, sheries, ports, appetizers, etc., that the house carries, as well as the British and Continental beers, minerals, fruit juices and ciders.

In this way he will not only be able to make out a correctly priced bill, but (and this is very important) also assess the cost of a mixed drink that is not quoted on the cocktail list.

As I said earlier, it is through the lounge waiter's efficiency that the client gains confidence in him. This is very important, for not every client enters a lounge bar for a drink for drinking's sake, but for help. It is not unusual for a client to ask for a brandy and soda for medicinal purposes. The same can be said when someone asks perhaps for a palliative for an upset digestion. In this case a Fernet Branca bitter with soda-water, or red vermouth (Italian) can be suggested. Peppermint with hot or cold water, kummel, or crème-de-menthe are also often asked for in the case of indigestion. Hot toddy, or mulled wine, with a couple of aspirins, before going to bed, may also be ordered as a remedy for a cold.

This does not mean that a lounge waiter is as good as your doctor, for as far as I know, no cocktail lounge waiter has ever tried to compete with the medical profession, but many have been able to give comfort or good advice, especially on 'the morning after the night before.'

At all times the cocktail lounge waiter should work in harmony with the lounge cocktail barman, or dispense barman, so that if need arises, he can deputize for him, in order to maintain

the efficiency and continuity of the department. By so doing he will get practical as well as theoretical knowledge and much experience in the mixing of drinks. This invaluable experience will stand him in good stead when called upon to mix drinks at private receptions and functions, or to gain promotion and become a sommelier.

The cocktails, mixed drinks and aperitifs that I feel every cocktail lounge waiter and sommelier should know are as follows (this does not include any speciality that an establishment or bar might pride itself on):

Martini— $\frac{2}{3}$ dry gin, $\frac{1}{3}$ dry vermouth (French). Dash of orange bitters, twist of lemon peel. (Some people prefer a small French olive in place of lemon peel.)

Martini sweet—As above, but sweet, red vermouth (Italian), garnished with a maraschino cherry.

Martini medium—As above, but with dry and sweet vermouths. No trimmings. Americans like their dry martini extra dry, nearly all gin.

Vodka martini—As above, but vodka in place of gin.

Manhattan— $\frac{2}{3}$ rye whisky, $\frac{1}{3}$ sweet, red vermouth, dash of Angostura bitters, maraschino cherry on stick.

Manhattan dry—As above, but with dry vermouth. No cherry.

Manhattan medium—With mixed vermouths. Some people like their Manhattan made with bourbon whisky, but this has to be specified.

Rob Roy—As for Manhattan, but with Scotch whisky. Add cherry.

The above cocktails are always mixed in a mixing glass over ice and strained.

Bronx— $\frac{3}{6}$ dry gin, $\frac{1}{6}$ sweet red, $\frac{1}{6}$ dry vermouths, $\frac{1}{6}$ orange juice. Shake and strain.

Orange Blossom— $\frac{1}{2}$ gin, $\frac{1}{2}$ orange juice. Shake and strain.

Daiquiri— $\frac{3}{4}$ light rum, $\frac{1}{4}$ fresh lime or lemon juice, teaspoonful of syrup of Gomme. Shake and strain.

Bacardi— $\frac{3}{4}$ Bacardi rum, $\frac{1}{4}$ fresh lime or lemon juice, 1 teaspoonful grenadine. Shake and strain.

Negroni— $\frac{1}{3}$ dry gin, $\frac{1}{3}$ sweet, red vermouth, $\frac{1}{3}$ Campari bitters, décor of twist of lemon. Stir and strain.

White Lady— $\frac{1}{2}$ dry gin, $\frac{1}{4}$ lemon juice, $\frac{1}{4}$ Cointreau. Shake and strain. No décor.

Side Car—As White Lady, but with brandy in place of gin.

Alexander— $\frac{1}{3}$ brandy, $\frac{1}{3}$ crème-de-cacao, $\frac{1}{3}$ fresh cream. Shake and strain.

Flips (Brandy, Sherry, Port, Rum or Whisky)—1 whole egg, 1 double measure of one of the above ingredients, 1 teaspoonful of castor sugar; shake well and strain, decorate with grated nutmeg on top. Serve in wine glass.

Old Fashioned—Soak 1 lump of sugar in Angostura bitters, place in small tumbler (or wine glass), add a little water to dissolve the sugar, 1 double measure of bourbon or rye whisky, one or more large pieces of ice. Decorate with $\frac{1}{2}$ slice of orange, and cherry on stick, for stirring.

John or Tom Collins (*these are the same thing.—John was the Christian name of the inventor, Tom was the name of the gin used.*) If it is required made with whisky, brandy or rum, it must be stipulated. Ingredients are:

1 double gin, juice of $1/2$ lemon, 1 teaspoonful castor sugar, dash of Angostura bitters, large dash of soda-water. Served in tumbler filled with ice, stirred before serving, decorated with $1/2$ slice of lemon.

Gimlet— $2/3$ dry gin, $1/3$ lime juice cordial, served in tumbler, with some ice and dash of soda-water.

Gin Fizz—1 double gin, juice of 1 lemon, 1 teaspoonful of castor sugar. Shake and strain into a wine glass or highball (small); add ice and dash of soda-water. Same formula can be used for brandy, whisky or rum fizzes. A Golden Fizz is a Gin Fizz with the addition of a yolk of an egg.

Whisky Sour—1 double whisky (usually bourbon or rye, but sours can also be made with Scotch or Irish whisky, brandy, gin or rum); it is best to ask for spirit required. Juice of $1/2$ lemon, $1/2$ teaspoonful of sugar, shake well, serve in wine glass. Add slice of lemon and dash of soda-water.

Highballs—Bourbon, Irish, rye or Scotch whiskies, brandy, gin or rum. 1 double measure of one of the above spirits, according as desired, poured over one or more large lumps of ice in small tumbler, filled up with ginger ale, or soda-water if asked. Decorate with a squeezed piece of lemon peel.

Horse's Neck—The rind of 1 lemon, peeled spirally in one piece, is placed in a small tumbler, with one end overlapping the edge, with a few large pieces of ice placed inside the spiral. A double brandy is poured into the glass, with a couple of dashes of Angostura bitters, and it is then filled with ginger ale.

Planter's Punch (Cold)—Place two or three pieces of ice in a tumbler, add

juice of $1/2$ lemon, or lime, a double measure of rum, 1 teaspoonful of grenadine, 1 dash of Angostura bitters, stir, and top up with soda-water. Decorate with $1/2$ slice orange and lemon.

Swedish Punch (Hot)—Use warm tumbler, or place a teaspoon in it, to prevent it cracking, pour in a double Caloric Punch, add hot water, and slices of lemon.

Champagne Cocktails—Place 1 lump of sugar saturated with Angostura bitters in a small wine glass, fill with champagne; add 1 slice of orange, and a dash of brandy.

Pimm's Cups—These are prepared drinks numbered from 1 to 6 each. Each number has a different basic spirit. The best known is No. 1, which has a gin base, No. 2 whisky, No. 3 brandy, No. 4 rum, No. 5 rye whisky, and No. 6 vodka base. They are served as Slings and made up as follows: a good double measure of Pimm's is poured into either a half-pint tankard, tumbler or large wine glass. Add 1 good sized piece of ice (one cube) and fill up with lemonade. Decorate with a sprig of borage or, sprig of mint can be used when borage is unobtainable.

Black Velvet—Champagne and guinness stout, half-and-half served in tankards.

Black and Tan—Guinness stout and pale ale, in equal proportions, served in tankards.

Bloody Mary— $2/3$ tomato juice, $1/3$ vodka, 2 dashes of Angostura bitters, juice of half a lemon. Stir.

Pussyfoot.—A non-alcoholic mixture, suitable for children or teetotallers. $1/3$ fresh orange, $1/3$ lemon, $1/3$ lime

juice, dash of grenadine, and yolk of 1 egg. Shake well and serve in small wine glass. (Egg can, if desired, be omitted.)

Apéritifs—Ready made and marketed as such, or as bitters, or under their own branded and proprietary names. Frequently served without addition of any other ingredients. In all cases should be served cold, mostly with the addition of a cube of ice and slice of lemon or soda-water, if desired. They include Sweet or dry Vermouth, Amer Picon, Byrrh, Dubonnet, Lillet, St. Raphael, Campari Bitters.

Pernod—Is a French drink, flavoured with aniseed in place of absinthe, and served with a cube of ice and water.

* * * * *

The service of drinks in a cocktail lounge is really quite a simple operation, and greatly depends on the correct taking, and promptness in execution of each order. For no client wants to be kept waiting, whether he is in a hurry or not.

As nobody in this trade can foretell the volume of any day's business with accuracy, or what drinks will be called for, it is best to be prepared for any eventuality.

As with all other departments, a great deal of the smoothness of the service depends on the *mis-en place* of the barman as well as the waiter.

Tables and ashtrays must be kept clean at all times. Potato chips, almonds, cashew nuts, French olives, salted

biscuits, etc., should be kept on hand, and always one or more of these served with a drink.

It is good practice to cover the salver with a well-pressed napkin, so that it can absorb any liquid that might be spilt. It is also very important to make sure that the bottom of the glass is dry, to avoid any drops spilling on to the client's clothes.

If a syphon of soda is being used at the table, the nozzle should be pointed to the side of the glass, and only very light pressure used. The mishandling of the syphon will lead to the whole contents in the glass being splashed out. Besides embarrassment, there is also quite a mess left, plus the expense of a fresh drink.

When clearing glasses, they should be held by the stem or base, but never in any circumstances whatsoever by placing the fingers inside the bowl of the glass.

The cocktail lounge waiters and barmen must be well acquainted with the licensing law and opening times, to avoid falling foul of the law or risking misunderstanding with a client.

And, much as some clients like to converse with the lounge waiter or barman, he must not allow this to be prolonged to the detriment of the service of other customers.

A final golden rule for all cocktail lounge waiters is: remember to get bills settled as soon as possible, as customers become very forgetful after a drink or two!

Wine Orders in the Restaurant

TAKING a customer's order for wine and then serving it, in the restaurant, is not as simple a task as one might think; there are psychological as well as physical factors involved.

In the first place, of course, it is essential that the sommelier knows his work, and his wine list, and has an interest and professional pride in the carrying out of his duties.

The psychological aspect is operative immediately the client enters the restaurant. For it must be remembered that not all the customers have been brought up as regular 'diners-out,' and that they may even feel strange the first time they enter an unfamiliar restaurant. One must also remember that, by the time the client has reached the table, he has run the gauntlet of being greeted by the linkman or commissionaire, the cloakroom attendant, cocktail lounge waiter, restaurant manager, and, most likely, the reception head-waiter.

By now he may begin to wonder whether it was not a mistake to come at all, and whether he can afford this luxury.

Of course, on the other hand, he may have gained an adverse impression, in which case he will also be in the wrong frame of mind to order and enjoy a good meal and a glass of wine.

Diners do not all come into a restaurant for the sole purpose of having a meal. For some it is a special occasion, such as celebrating a birthday or anniversary, or it may be a matter of business entertainment, and so on. But all these occasions are most important to the host. And this is where the psychological assessment of the client and the particular occasion by the sommelier is vital.

Being one of the first of the restaurant waiting staff to come into direct contact with the client, his approach must be one of friendly welcome, professional helpfulness, and diplomatic correctness. A polite greeting will go a long way towards putting the client in a reassuring mood, and will usually disarm the grumpy and put at ease the timid.

Presuming that the client has come direct into the restaurant, and has not yet ordered his meal, the sommelier should ask the client whether he or she would care for an *apéritif* or glass of sherry. This enquiry should be preceded by a greeting. By this greeting the sommelier will focus the attention of the guest on himself, and prepare him to listen to what he is about to say.

Of course, this is the moment when the sommelier's knowledge of *apéritifs*, cocktails, sheries and brands of spirits



may be tested by the client's questions and seeking of advice. And it is on the kind of answers that he receives, that the client will begin to assess the sommelier's professional acumen.

When an order has been received, it must be fulfilled as promptly as possible, so as not to delay the service of the meal. This specially applies when serving American customers, as they insist on finishing their *apéritifs* before starting a meal and, quite often, before giving their order for the food.

The serving of an *apéritif* at the table gives the client a little more time to browse through the menu, and then to be consuming something while what he has ordered is being prepared.

Of course sometimes, when a client is asked whether he would like a cocktail, or sherry, he may say: "I would like a lager beer." Now I am not against serving the client with what he wants, even should it be water, but as lager is a beverage more suitable to be served with the main course than as an *apéritif* (of course, occasions may differ), it is best for the sommelier not to accept this as the full order for the drink which is to accompany the meal, but to say that he will return for further instructions after the food has been ordered. This will give the sommelier another opportunity of receiving a better order, and the client time for a reflection on the suitability and wisdom of his early

choice. This delay will also give the sommelier more time to fulfil more urgent orders.

Naturally, should a client, specially one dining alone, say: "*With my main dish I want a beer, whisky-and-soda, etc.*" this order should be accepted, for it is direct, specific, and there is a time factor involved. Strictly speaking, such a client is not dining out, but having a casual meal, and has ordered a drink to suit the occasion.

It is also good business to cultivate such clients, as in time they will become the establishment's regular customers, will bring and introduce their friends, and, when entertaining, will choose the same restaurant.

Of course, these remarks fit and are meant for British and many Continental diners, but the sommelier must also take into account Scandinavian clientèle. Their habits and tastes vary slightly, in as much as they prefer to begin a meal, or precede it, with a spirit (schnapps) such as aquavit, well chilled, to be followed by a cold lager beer. These beverages in this case are mostly served with the first course of hors-d'oeuvre, just as vodka is with caviare.

In Scandinavian restaurants aquavit is usually prepared, kept and served as follows. A bottle of the aquavit is placed in a wine-cooler which is two-thirds full of water, and then the cooler is placed in the deep-freeze. When the water has frozen solid the whole is brought out and kept in a cold place to prevent it de-freezing.

When serving the aquavit, the wine-cooler or ice bucket is brought to the table (as the bottle is frozen solid in the ice) and it has to be tipped when pouring.

When possible the wine order should of course be taken as early as possible, so that the first wine, if it is a white wine, is ready, on ice, by the table when required. This is important at all

times, but more so when a large party is being given, or more than one wine is to be served.

Incidentally, the sommelier stands at the right-hand of the client when offering the wine list, and when pouring the wine and then leaves the wine, in either the wine-cooler or the basket, to the right of the host.

The sommelier, when he approaches the table to take an order, must have the wine list with him. It is sheer waste of time, and signifies a could-not-care-less attitude, for a sommelier to ask a client for his order without having a wine list with him. This list should, of course, be clean and up to date. Some alterations are unavoidable, such as those caused by a sudden change of duty clapped on by the Government, or the replacement of run-down stocks of older vintages by more recent ones. However, too many changes and amendments do not reflect favourably on the establishment. Any alterations that must be made should be done as clearly and neatly as possible. If a certain wine or vintage is only temporarily out of stock, the alteration should be done with a pencil, so that it can easily be erased when fresh supplies arrive.

The economic structure of a licensed establishment depends for its success largely on the sale of wines and kindred beverages. Large stocks and wide choice of wines and vintages can only be maintained if the turnover warrants it, otherwise a large sum of invested capital is lying dormant.

As every sommelier worth his badge is, or should be, proud of the wide selection of wines that his establishment has to offer, so must he also realise that this can only be sustained through his efforts and the efforts of all those responsible for the sales of wines and kindred beverages. It is up to them to maintain or increase their sales.



This does not mean that it should be his constant effort and zeal to sell only expensive château-bottled wines or rare vintages; for it is an error to oversell just as it is to undersell. In the first place there are not sufficient top-grade wines in the world to go round, nor can everybody afford or appreciate them. The sommelier who, by high-pressure salesmanship and strong recommendation, makes the client have a wine he cannot or does not want to afford, is doing the establishment a disservice, for the client will avoid that restaurant, rather than be embarrassed there a second time. In this way the sommelier will be helping to kill the goose that lays the golden egg.

As said before, this is where the

psychological assessment of the client and the occasion is most important.

Fortunately there are ample wines to choose from, suitable to accompany any culinary dish, and to suit any occasion, palate and pocket. For the indiscriminating diner, it is better to recommend a bottle with more thought for his pocket than for the vintage and high quality of the wine. Once he has developed a taste for wines, he will become more venturesome on his own and want to explore the realms of vintages and premiers crus.

When recommending a wine, a sommelier should not only consider its suitability in relation to the dish it is to accompany, but also have a thought for the unusual, to add interest and a touch

of adventure to the repast. By this I mean sometimes recommending the wines which may be overlooked, and are even omitted from wine lists, i.e., the wines of Alsace, the Loire Valley, Rhine and Moselle wines with unusual or extra long names, Portuguese wines, the Côte du Rhône wines, and those from the plains of Languedoc.

I purposely have not mentioned Commonwealth wines, but every consideration should be given them, and perhaps specially when making fruit cups or mulled wine.

The harmonizing of food and wine is a very fine art, which needs just a few simple rules to follow, to bring out the best from the marriage. The under-mentioned is just such a guide, which has been well tested in gastronomic circles over the decades. It leaves ample scope for a wine from any region of the world to find its rightful place.

But first let me, without reservation, state that there are people who order just those wines that they like, and as they like them, irrespective of suitability, they should have them served without further ado. Thus we get orders for red wines to be served with fish, or clarets to be chilled, even port to be served with curry. To this there is only one answer—the man who pays the piper must be allowed to call the tune.

For a more conventional combination, however, here is a traditional list. With oysters, serve champagne, sparkling or still white wines. With patés or foie gras: sherry, marsala, madeira, full red wines or sauternes. When serving hors d'oeuvre, salads, etc., with dressings which contain vinegar or citrus fruit juice, it is best not to serve wine, but to serve a mineral water, as wine and vinegar do not mix well. With clear soups, serve sherry, marsala, madeira. With fish and shell fish, pour dry champagne, sparkling or still white wines. With white fish or salmon taken

with cream sauces, serve a dry or medium-sweet white wine, i.e. sauternes. Some people like a rosé with salmon. With entrecôtes—clarets, rosé or light wines such as hocks. With white roast meat and poultry—clarets, light red wines, hocks. With red roast meats, game, venison—full, strong, aromatic, top-grade vintage red wines. With desserts and sweet dishes—dry or sweet champagne, sparkling wines, full sweet white wines, sherry, marsala, madeira. With fruit and nuts—dry or sweet champagne or sparkling wines, great sweet wines, cream sherry, marsala, madeira, port. With savouries—a generous red wine. With coffee and cigars—brandy, liqueurs, port, madeira, marsala.

Besides the above guide, the following rules and notes must also be borne in mind. Dry champagne and sparkling wine, a moselle or a crisp, fresh riesling typified in an Alsace wine can be served in place of apéritifs, but must be well chilled.

Light and young wines always precede heavy or vintage wines. Dry champagne, sparkling wines and medium hocks are suitable to be served right through a meal. Red sparkling wines are more of a personal preference than a connoisseur's choice. With oysters—when they constitute just a one-dish repast—black velvet (half stout, half champagne) can also be recommended.

When serving white wines, they should be served cold, approximately between 42 degrees and 53 degrees F. if very sweet, or, if served as an apéritif, then cooled down to 40 degrees F. The sommelier, however, need not worry unduly about this to a degree or so, as nobody goes about with a thermometer in his pocket, testing the temperature of his wine.

But it is best to bring the wine and serve it at the table three-quarters



submerged in ice or ice cold water. This is not only to chill it, or keep it cold, but to enable the client to say whether it is or is not chilled sufficiently when a little wine is poured into his glass for his approval. This should even be done when the wine has been kept at the correct temperature. For human beings are what they are, and all believe the above to be the correct way in which to have wine served and to keep it cool.

This rule is specially applicable when serving wines in long bottles, such as hocks, moselles and Alsace wines. When placed in an ordinary wine-cooler, one-third of the bottle is protruding from it. If the wine has not been sufficiently chilled in advance, it is best to submerge it completely for a short period in ice.

If, after the wine has been opened, the client says it should be colder, it can be explained that it will be so after a little from the top has been served. The bottle should then be twirled round, so that the wine mixes within the bottle; also, the outside of the neck of the bottle can be cooled down, by placing ice on it.

Before drawing the cork, the wine should be presented to the client, to get it confirmed that the wine is as ordered.

Then, while the bottle is still in the wine-cooler, the capsule should be cut, right round on the lip of the bottle. On no occasion should the capsule be torn off, either partially or wholly. A capsule is not only a protection for the cork,

but with the label adds to the splendour and beauty of the bottle's presentation.

After the top of the capsule has been cut off, the top of the bottle and the cork should be wiped with a clean napkin. Then the corkscrew should be screwed through the centre of the cork, nearly through its entire length but not quite, and it should then be gently levered out.

The top of the bottle is once more wiped, to make sure that no particle of dirt is left between the cork and the inside of the bottle.

If by chance a fragment of the cork should have broken off and be floating on top of the bottle of wine, the easiest way to get it out is to flick the top of the wine out into the napkin. The particle of the cork will most likely shoot out with the drop of wine.

* * * * *

Some sommeliers and wine drinkers are of the opinion that, by smelling the cork, they know if the wine is all right. Now this is sheer nonsense. For when one puts one's nose to a cork, all one can expect in greater or lesser degree is the smell of cork, nothing more or less. And it is impossible to judge by smelling the cork alone the state of the wine. A very strong-smelling cork can alert the sommelier that the wine might be affected, but there is no certainty about it. He should not voice an opinion before either he or the client has first smelt and sampled the wine.

Having drawn the cork and wiped the top, the sommelier then can proceed by taking the bottle out of the wine-cooler, and pouring a small quantity into the host's glass for approval. If approved, the guest's glass is filled just over half way, and then the same amount poured for the host.

Wine should be poured to the far side of the glass, and after stopping the flow, the bottle should be slightly turned round. In this way, either the

last drop of the wine will drop into the glass or run down the side of the bottle. In either case it will have the desired effect of avoiding drops falling on the table cloth.

If there are more than two people, then the sommelier serves the wine from right to left, ladies first, round the table, ending with the host.

If more than one bottle of the same wine is being served, then the sommelier samples the remaining bottles. Sometimes the host likes to do this. If a fine wine is being served and a second bottle is started during the meal, it is as well to be punctilious and offer fresh glasses for the second bottle.

If red wines are being served, then the same procedure is followed as with the white, as far as the presentation, cutting of the capsule, wiping the top of the bottle and the cork, and the pouring is concerned. The difference is that it is brought to the table in a wine cradle, with or without a decanter.

The wine is presented and opened while still in the wine-basket, then if need be it can be decanted at or near the client's table. If the wine does not need decanting, there is no reason why it should not be left in the basket. It will not get any more churned up than if the bottle was just stood up on the table. I feel that in the basket it is more secure on the table, and some people consider it looks better that way. If the bottle has some settled dust on it, it should be left, as it is proof that the wine has been well rested.

Red wines should be served *chambré*, i.e. at room temperature, Bordeaux wines at 64 degrees F., slightly warmer than Burgundy at 60 degrees F.

Every effort should be made to serve the wines at room temperature, but this point has as much to do with the administration of the establishment, as it has with the sommelier.

If a wine has to be *chambré* at short notice, then the best way I can suggest is to warm the decanter before decanting the wine into it. There may be other ways of doing this, but they can be possibly more harmful to the wine.

In order to allow them to breathe, red wines should be opened as soon as possible, but they should always be presented first, in case there should be any error.

After the cork has been drawn, it should be placed in the basket by the side of the bottle. This is a precaution in case the wine has to be sent back, when the original cork can be returned with it.

It is well to remember as a general observation that Bordeaux wines are usually more delicate than burgundies, and will not stand up to too much rough treatment.

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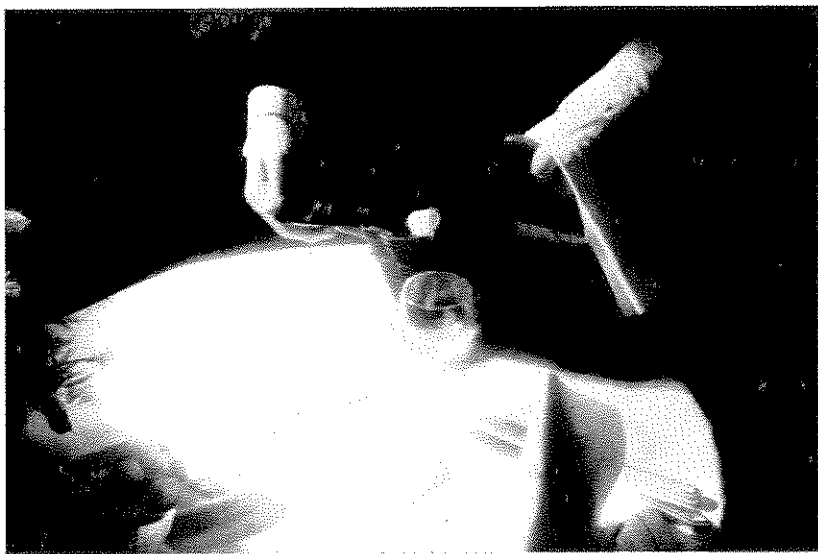
With regard to the service of champagne and sparkling wines, these are in a class of their own. They can be

served without reservation right through a meal, as *apéritifs*, or as an after-dinner "refresher." They also have their uses as morale boosters between meals.

But these wines are mainly for celebrations and special occasions. And, therefore, it is up to the sommelier to see to it that the occasion is not marred by any indifferent service.

Champagne and sparkling wines should be served chilled. Care should be taken not to shake them, as this tends to raise the pressure of the carbonic gas inside the bottle, which is approximately about 64 lb. to the square inch, and might cause the bottle to burst or split. This is one of the reasons that when a bottle is being opened, it should be held in a napkin.

This is specially applicable to sparkling red wines, which have a tendency to gush out when the cork has been drawn, if they have been shaken up and not sufficiently chilled. This could have serious as well as embarrassing consequences for the establishment as well as



the sommelier, if the wine cascades over a nearby client, and by ruining a suit or dress, spoils the party.

When opening a bottle of champagne or sparkling wine, the sommelier should stand a foot or so away from the table as a precaution against such an accident. It is always better to play safe than be sorry afterwards, and the sommelier should take as few chances as possible.

When opening the bottle, it should be held near the collar, at an angle of 35 degrees, wrapped in a napkin, in the left hand with the thumb firmly on the cork.

The bottle is held at this angle to minimize the pressure on the cork of the imprisoned gases, as they will first hit the side of the bottle, before being ricocheted in an upward direction.

Having taken these simple precautions, the wire holding the cork down can be unwound. This is done in an anti-clockwise direction. Then, by holding the cork firm and twisting the bottle, the cork should come out without any trouble. The bottle should then be held straight, allowing a little of the foam to rise to the surface, bringing with it any fraction of the foil that might have dropped in, and can thus be wiped away.

The same procedure as that followed when serving still wines applies to the service of champagne.

* * * * *

If the cork should break while being extracted, the bottle should be taken away from the dinner table, while its cork is being drawn with the aid of a corkscrew. Before the corkscrew is used, the cork should be cut straight, to simplify the operation. (Care must be taken when screwing in the corkscrew, as the cork has been greatly compressed and is very hard. It is not difficult to break or damage a corkscrew in the process.)

In fairness to all, it is no fault of the

sommelier or the supplier when this happens. It is just one of those things. No great display should be made in front of the customer, as he might, as sometimes happens, get the wrong impression that the wine is faulty.

Because of the high cost involved in the production of sparkling wines, only the best cork is used. So if a faulty one is found, it is in most cases just a fluke.

Unlike an ordinary wine cork, the champagne cork does tell a story. In the first place, just by looking at it, one can see branded on the stem the word champagne, a guarantee of origin. If it is a vintage wine, the year will also be branded on it, with the words sec, demi-sec, etc.; the name of the champagne firm that it came from will be on the bottom of the cork.

Then on closer examination one can note whether it comes from one piece of cork, or whether it has been made of layers of cork, with the best facing the wine.

While still on the subject of the manufacture and marking of corks, under the metal capsule, on the head of the cork, there is a marking to be found, so that the suppliers of that cork can be traced.

The other story that the cork tells is whether the wine has been a long time in this country or is of recent shipment.

A champagne receives its second and final cork when it is disgorged, shortly before being sent to its destination. Because of this it is possible to get two bottles of champagne, of the same year, with two different corks. One could be fresh and the stem open up (broaden) when extracted, thus denoting a bottle of recent shipment; the other could have a hard and not so elastic a 'leg,' showing that it had been in the country of destination a considerable time. From this one can deduce that it is almost impossible to get a flat bottle of



champagne from a recently shipped wine.

The life of champagne is longer than the average shipper wishes to say, but with a wine more than fifteen years old one can expect a slight loss of life and vigour, although it should be still perfect to drink and enjoy.

There is hardly a person alive who has drunk a glass of wine and not heard

of a bottle being corked. It is a pity this, as imagination sometimes strays, and a perfectly good wine has been known to be condemned and sent back.

I agree that sometimes it is better to sacrifice a bottle of wine rather than lose a valued client, but the client should not be allowed to make this a habit.

By smelling the champagne cork, as

with all wines, one cannot tell much, for the wine can be perfect, even if the cork does smell like a cork. The wine itself has to be smelled and tasted to be adjudged perfect or otherwise.

On the other hand if a wine is found to be faulty it should be returned without any fuss being made and replaced by another bottle. It is no slur on the establishment to serve a faulty or corky wine. It would be if the sommelier or responsible person should argue with the client trying to convince him that there was nothing wrong when there was.

For let me explain that the wine shipper replaces all corked or faulty wines and gladly does so in preference to having a faulty wine served and thus spoiling the good name of his firm and himself.

When drawing the cork it should be done silently, and not with a loud pop and not letting the cork 'fly.' Although some young people, especially at parties, like it, it can be dangerous and cause damage. To sum up, it is professional etiquette to perform this task silently and efficiently.

Should the wire snap when opening the bottle, then there is nothing for it, but the sommelier, with his ever faithful tool the corkscrew, to pry the wire back.

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Champagne bottles are of the following names and contents: quarter bottle— $6\frac{1}{2}$ fluid oz.; half-bottle—13 fluid oz.; Imperial pint— $19\frac{1}{2}$ fluid oz.; bottle—26 fluid oz.; magnum—2 bottles; jeroboam—4 bottles; rehoboam—6 bottles; methuselah—8 bottles; salmanazar—12 bottles; balthazar—16 bottles; nebuchadnezzar—20 bottles; but only the first six are in use and available at the moment.

* * * * *

It is not unusual for customers to ask if they can take either the champagne

cork or bottle away with them. If it is the cork, there is no harm in suggesting that it should be split down the leg part, and a silver coin inserted for luck. This is to confirm the belief that the owner of such a cork will never be broke.

If the bottle is to be taken away, the sommelier should offer to have it dried, by placing it in the hot plate. On return he may suggest that the owner of it should write on the label the name of the restaurant, the occasion on which it was drunk, and date, and then ask his guests to sign it as a memento.

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Champagne is labelled and marked in the following way regarding sweetness. Brut or nature—very dry; extra dry, extra sec or très sec—dry; dry or sec—medium dry; demi sec—medium sweet; rich, semi-doux—sweet.

As a word of warning to the unwary sommelier, when recommending a champagne or sparkling wine, never use the word champagne, unless speaking of the wine that comes from Champagne, France. Many sparkling wines are excellent and are made by the *méthode champenoise*, but the places of origin must not be allowed to get mixed.

In the first chapter, *mis-en-place*, I mentioned swizzlesticks. Now these are left over from between the wars, when it was fashionable to use them, to swizzle and twiddle them in the champagne until the very life of it had been knocked out. They could be bought made of gold or silver, and often were supplied by the establishment. I am pleased to say that their use is dying out even faster than the use of saucer-shaped glasses.

If the management provides them, then they should be kept on the sommelier's sideboard. But in no circumstances should they be offered



spontaneously or placed on the table when champagne is served.

If they are asked for and the establishment has none, the client can be told of this without any embarrassment for they are completely out of date. If the client still wishes to ruin the wine, then either a dessert fork or teaspoon can be offered. After all, the sommelier is not responsible for the client's taste or habits, and as long as the customer is paying for it, he must have his way.

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I have stressed the point that it is important to get the wine to the table

as soon as possible. It is also advisable to have the still wines opened so that in the absence of the sommelier the headwaiter can pour the wine; also in the case of the red wines they have a chance to 'breathe.' However, wines should not be served immediately the client sits down, unless requested. Wine is an accompaniment to food, and not another dish, like soup.

It is also a good practice to keep the empty bottle on the table, as long as possible, to give the guest an opportunity to see what he has had and for incoming customers to note that it is

fashionable to order wine in this establishment. It is sometimes considered rather vulgar and in bad taste to turn a bottle upside down in the wine cooler and leave it like that on the table.

When serving a wine such as Italian chianti that stands in its own basket work, it gives a good impression to place the cork in a loop made from the loose twine.

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A glass should never be more than just over half filled, and kept about the same level until the bottle is empty.

When more than one wine is to be served at a dinner, the first glass must be removed as soon as possible after the second wine has been served.

When two or more wines are being served, more care has to be taken when replenishing glasses. No glass must be allowed to go empty before the next wine is served and yet very little of it should be left in each glass when taken away.

Glasses should be taken away on a tray and handled by the stem. They should not be handled by the bowl when placing them on the table and on no occasion should fingers be placed inside them whether clean or dirty, whatever rush there may be on. This would be poor craftsmanship indeed.

Before liqueur brandy, port, etc., are served, the table should be cleared and clean ashtrays provided.

Restaurant Parties

RECEPTIONS, dinner-dances, balls, etc., all have become more popular and more numerous in recent years. As a matter of fact, they have become 'big business.'

Since the days of fabulous Roman banquets, which were more in the nature of orgies, great advances have been made gastronomically and the entertainment has become more civilized. Even with modern functions however, the fundamental purpose remains the same—viz. to feast and entertain one's guests.

In these modern times, with shortage of both servants and space, nearly all large-scale entertaining is done in hotels, restaurants and suitable halls.

This side of the catering business has grown to such an extent that hotels and catering establishments have separated their banqueting service from restaurants by creating 'banqueting departments.'

Large catering establishments with ample floor space and banqueting facilities have gone even further by creating sales departments. It is the responsibility of the sales manager to bring to the notice of a prospective host, exhibitor or other possible client the facilities his company has to offer.

This new approach by the caterer in bringing the buyer and seller of floor space and accommodation together has done a great deal to develop banqueting and to keeping such establishments working to full capacity for most of the year.

These services also have done a great deal to develop and change the nature of banqueting which, at one time, consisted almost entirely of receptions, weddings, balls and so on. Now it includes exhibitions, trade fairs, conferences and a host of other functions. This new trend has proved satisfactory to both caterers and clients and justifies the existence of the new sales departments.

The trend has demanded a new kind of banqueting manager and staff. Such a manager is one who can not only organize a dinner-dance, but who can by precise timing and meticulous organization let the suites he has at his disposal for several functions in a single day. He should let the space at his command with forethought and he should be able to re-organize and service suites at short notice.

All this seems very intricate and formidable, but it is a challenge that every banqueting manager accepts. The

success of the venture depends on the staff, the facilities, equipment and flexibility of the establishment.

In the meantime, the restaurant can still deal with the gracious, personal and 'old-world' parties.

For the big dinner, receptions etc., the wines are invariably ordered in advance. Although decorations for the table or for the room may be arranged to conform to an individually chosen design or colour, and a dish or cocktail may be specially created by the chef or barman in honour of the principal guest, tradition will require the wines to be served in their correct gastronomic order; that is white before red, light before heavy, young before old.

It is important that the sommelier gets his wines ready well in advance, so that they can be served to accompany the various dishes at the right moment and at the right temperature. This is where a good understanding and co-operation between the head waiter and sommelier is invaluable.

Every host fusses about the arrangements he has made for his party, seeing that all goes according to his instructions and that there is no last-minute hitch. But once his guests are seated, he should have very little to worry about and he should be able to devote all his attention to them.

Unless otherwise instructed, the sommelier should let the host taste the wine first, but after that, the sommelier can take the responsibility off the host's shoulders for that particular wine. The same procedure must be observed before serving each of the wines which follow. This procedure, of course, is for small parties.

At large parties, all the arrangements have been made well in advance and it is left to the sommelier to sample

the wines to see that they aren't corky, or faulty in some other way.

When opening bottles for a large party, it is prudent of the sommelier not to open more than ten out of every dozen bottles. In this way, those not consumed can either be returned or exchanged for the wine that is to follow.

It is wise of the sommelier or sommeliers whose duty it is to open and examine a number of bottles of wine to taste the wine of one bottle only out of each separate order, and sample the rest not on the palate but on the nose, by pouring a little wine from each bottle in turn into a glass, smelling it and then pouring it away before similarly sampling the next bottle. A faulty wine will thus be detected and the sommelier unaffected by too much tasting on the palate.

Once the service has started, an overall control and supervision must be maintained so that glasses of slow drinkers are not being topped up, only to be left unconsumed, and others left empty because the wine is being wasted in the glasses of slow drinkers. Few hosts order more wine for the first course if they see some full glasses still on the table. They may even get an unfavourable opinion of the guest who drinks his wine relatively too quickly or of the sommelier who lacks judgment and serves it thus to the slow drinkers.

Should the wine be running low, the host should be informed and permission sought before serving wine in excess of that which has been ordered.

Unlike the procedure when serving food, the second wine is always served before the glasses from the first wine are removed.

A tray must be used when clearing glasses, and they should be handled by the stem just as they should when they are being placed on a table.

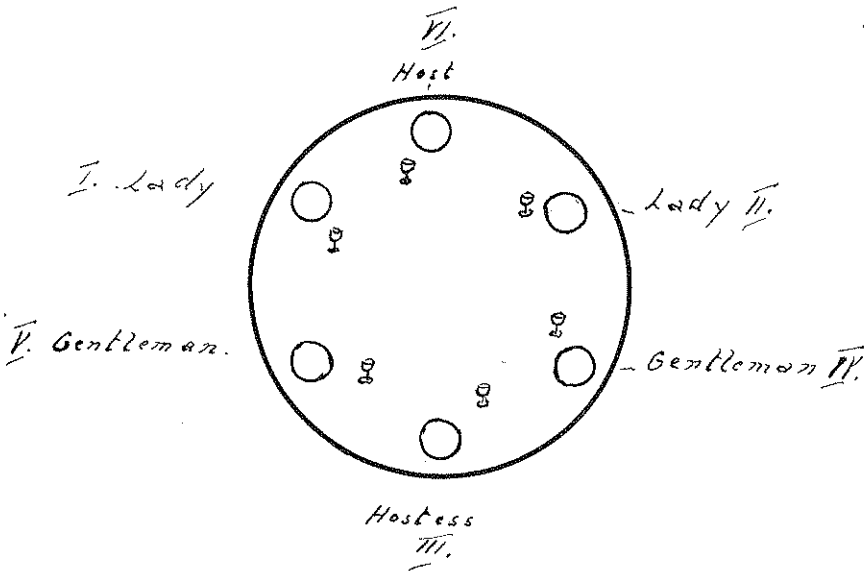
The above procedure is adhered to right through the meal. With small parties the head waiter and sommelier take their cue from the host; with large parties and banquets, from the top table.

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The time factor does not often interfere with small parties, unless there is a cabaret, when all service stops, or

important for the sommelier. It is up to him to see to it that every client is provided with refreshments before the lights are dimmed.

It is at moments like this that the sommelier has to do the impossible and provide refreshment for the late arrival. Champagne and sparkling wines are the answer to this problem and fill the gap most admirably.



someone has to catch a train, as often happens at weddings.

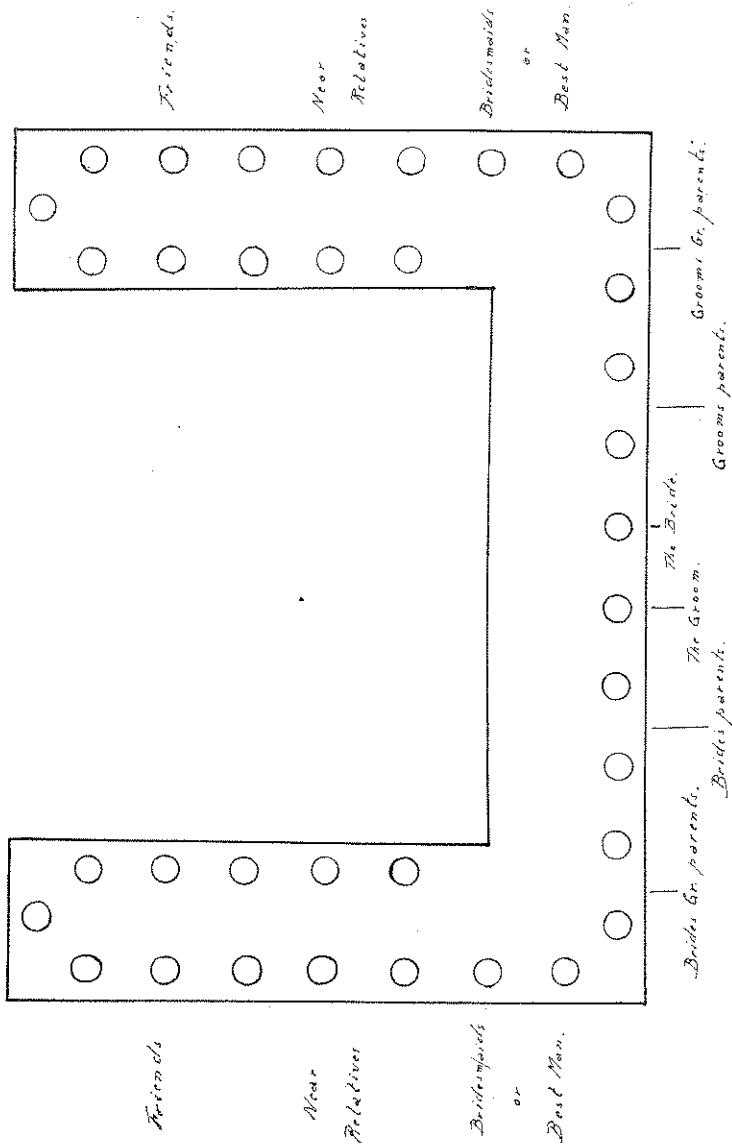
From the culinary point of view timing is of prime importance otherwise food gets spoilt.

At big banquets timing is of paramount importance. Service must start and finish on time, as there are other factors to be considered—cabaret, dancing, presentation, broadcasting, etc.

Of course, in restaurants where there is a nightly cabaret, time is very

There are times such as gala nights when small individual parties must be co-ordinated to conform to the whole plan for the enjoyment of all those present. Although galas are held for various reasons, I think the best example is that of a New Year's Eve celebration when time and events wait for no man.

Of course, the perfect culmination of all efforts and the result hoped for is for the dinner to be over, coffee cups cleared, clean ashtrays provided and



glasses filled with the kind of nectar with which the guests will wish to celebrate the occasion.

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The sommelier's work is all from the right hand side. He takes orders, serves, places the wines, clears and replaces glasses, all from the right hand side of the guest. One of the very few things he does from the left hand side is to offer cigars and cigarettes. As most people are right-handed, the reason for this is obvious.

The order of service is again quite clear. For example, at a party consisting of three ladies and three gentlemen, the host would be asked to sample the wine, then the order of service would be the lady on the host's right, then on his left, then the hostess. Then the sommelier should walk round the table, serve the gentleman on the right of the hostess, then on her left and, lastly, the host.

Now I realise that this means walking twice round the table, but the effect is very correct, gracious and still appreciated in the best circles. For the sommelier to serve here and there right up the line is sheer ignorance or lack of effort on his part.

But for such a small party as six, protocol need not be quite so exacting, unless there is a special reason for it; I see no reason why, after the hostess has been served, the gentleman on her left cannot be served next. Then the sommelier can continue in the same direction, right to left, to serve the gentleman on her right, before walking round to serve the host. The distance is the same, but the gentleman on the left of the hostess will not feel slighted by being served last before the host.

At all parties, protocol has it that the host seats his guest of honour on his right, and the next most important person on his left. When there is a

chairman, he is served first, then the person on his right, then left, after that, right down the line, irrespective of sex.

On such occasions, it is best for two sommeliers to work together, or where only one sommelier is in attendance, he may have the head waiter help him, at least at the top table. Thus the top table is being served from centre outwards, making it necessary for one sommelier to serve from right to left, and the other from left to right. This may seem regrettable but there is no other way. Here, I hasten to point out that this procedure cannot be adopted when serving port. Port must go round the table from right to left, irrespective of the seating arrangements.

The one thing that must never occur is for the sommelier, after serving one person correctly from the right, to turn his hand over and, while still in the same position, to pour wine from the left into the glass of the person on his right; he must not do this even when prompted to do so by a proffered glass of that person. It is not only the acme of poor service and shows ignorance, but, in some countries including Germany, it is recognized as an insult and personal affront.

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Weddings, anniversaries, birthdays, etc., are special occasions on which special care must be taken not to mar the day—for no other day can replace it. Of course, on an average, all large weddings are held in private rooms, but there are quite a few held in restaurants. In these cases it is best for the guests to assemble in a corner of the restaurant or in a private lounge until the bride and groom arrive from the photographer. While drinks are being served, it is a golden opportunity for the sommelier to have a last check-up before the party enters the restaurant.

Although there never is any shortage of advice and supervision on these occasions from both sides of the family (the best man is with the best of intentions, in a quandary), it is the father of the bride one must look to for definite instructions, as he is the host.

As all arrangements have been made in advance, unless it is a small party of ten or less, it is not necessary to bother the host to sample the wines. The bride is of course, served first, then the groom, then his parents, then her parents, and then right down the line, irrespective of sex.

Weddings, of course, are very much family affairs. The diagram shows the traditional seating arrangement but in practice it does not always work out that way. There are times when parents are missing and another member of the family deputises for them. When grand-parents are attending, they are seated next to the parents. It does not matter whether the bridesmaids or best man are on the left or right of the newly-weds as long as they are close to the top table.

The sommelier also has at these functions one thankless task, and that is to see that nobody celebrates too well and so spoils the day for the happy couple. On the whole, the sommelier is pretty well helpless in this task but it is worth trying.

If champagne or sparkling wine is not being served during the course of the dinner, it should be pointed out that it is almost a 'must' when the cake is being cut and the toasts drunk.

Co-operation and timing between the head waiter and the sommelier when the cake is being cut is essential at this time.

I have always maintained that champagne corks should not be let

fly and I still do so. Also one should not permit the popping of corks. On the other hand, this is perhaps an occasion when a little pop here and there will help to add exhilaration to the moment.

As the evening wears on, it is not unusual for fruit cups to be called for. Besides orange and lemon squashes, a pleasant non-alcoholic cup is a mixture of lemon and orange juice with the addition of pineapple juice, ice, filled up with water and decorated with slices of lemon, orange and a few maraschino cherries.

When making wine-cups it must be remembered not to add too much water, as the ice melts and will dilute it anyway.

Much has been written on champagne cups, but, personally, I do not think they are any better or refreshing than a glass of chilled champagne (these remarks apply also to sparkling wines). They are nothing more than champagne cocktails made in a larger quantity, but I must add that they constitute a good and profitable business.

Good wine cups cannot be cheap, as wine and soda-water do not make a wine cup. (In Germany this mixture is known as a 'gespritz' and our Victorian forebears knew and liked it in the form of 'Hock and Seltzer'—now being revived.)

There are many concoctions of wines and liqueurs that come into the classification of wine cups, and recipes are countless.

As the simplest and easiest way is usually the most successful, why not offer one of the six Pimm's Cups, and save a lot of time and trouble?

Banqueting

I HAVE said before, banqueting is big business and has to be tackled as such. Its success depends on organization from the first moment when the initial letter of enquiry is received by the banqueting manager, until the last piece of equipment has been put away, clean, after the banquet, in readiness for the next function.

Nothing must be left to chance. The unexpected usually happens anyway, such as last-minute breakdown in deliveries, transport, weather conditions, cancellations or increase in the number of covers, or, to my regret, staff failing to turn up for work. All these imponderables have to be taken into consideration.

Between the time of that first letter received by the banqueting manager and the moment when the guests sit down to dinner, or the function takes place, a considerable amount of correspondence passes and quite a few meetings occur. But once the date and function have been arranged, the arrangement is binding on both sides.

Here let me explain that today, to that section of the hotel's organization headed 'banqueting department,' fall such a variety of functions that the banqueting manager must be a specialist in all fields of catering, a good business man and a good mixer socially. He

must be a man who is able to assess the cost of a function, the clients he is dealing with, and the guests who will participate. For not only is he responsible to the client for the carrying out of the contract, but also to the company who employs him for accepting the function.

Receptions, cocktail parties, business or working luncheons, dinners, Masonic ladies' nights (when members of a Masonic Lodge invite ladies and guests to dinner, and the function often includes dancing), conferences with meals to follow, company meetings, weddings, trade fairs, outdoor catering—all these need a different approach. Even straightforward formal dinners fall into two categories:

- (1) where drinks are paid for by the host;
- (2) where guests pay for their own drinks.

Every function has its own character, for, although the menu and wines may be the same, the guests are different. This must be taken into consideration when the booking is made, as people from different places and different walks of life vary in their tastes.

It is also very important for the banqueting manager to know if the

guests will be all male, a mixed company, or ladies only. It can be taken for granted that men will drink more than ladies. This must be taken into account when booking a fixed-price reception, or arranging for a quantity of wines to go with the dinner. Should a price allowance per head be quoted, for a reception to run a stated time, the price quoted for an all-male function must always be higher than for a mixed gathering.

Before going on to the practical side of banqueting, let me first explain to the reader why I have mentioned all this. It is to enable all who participate in the execution of a banquet or similar function, to have an overall picture of the organization that goes into it.

Before operations begin, a banqueting head-waiter should call all his staff together to explain in detail what every member of it has to do and what is expected of him. Also any final questions can be answered.

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The banqueting manager, on receiving an enquiry, will open a file for all the relevant correspondence, and pencil a tentative booking in the banqueting function diary. (Should the booking not take place the entry can be rubbed out). In this way, at a glance, the manager will always be able to see which suites are booked and which are vacant.

The diary is quite a book; usually it can be measured in feet rather than inches, according to the size of the establishment and the banqueting halls and suites it has to offer. Its principal purpose is to give an immediate picture of what is booked. Main items written in are: the type of function; for how many; what time guests will arrive, dinner start, dancing commence, cabaret take place, bars close, buffet be served and function end.

It is from the completed page that the

final breakdown for each day is made, at least two weeks in advance, for all those concerned, i.e., the chef's office, cellarman, banqueting head-waiter, florist, plate man and so on.

Let me hasten to point out that where special décor, music, cabaret, or extension of licence are needed, these must be settled and arrangements made well ahead.

The banqueting department must also make out, at least on a fortnightly basis, an information list, stating what parties, etc., have been booked, which suite of rooms, for how many and for what purpose. Notices of this must be distributed to general and restaurant managers; chef's office, reception, cashier, housekeeper, cellarman, hall porter and security officer. From the list the restaurant manager may get his first indication that there will take place, let us say, a reception for 100 in a private suite, at 6 p.m., and a dinner for ten of the same party at 7 p.m. in the restaurant. This is just to show the importance of close liaison between departments.

The above, of course, relates to an establishment where there is a separate banqueting department. But even in smaller establishments where a separate banqueting department is not warranted, for all practical purposes the work is the same.

The general manager does all the booking and correspondence, and the restaurant manager takes under his wing the carrying out of the work concerned.

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What I have said concerning guests at reception, must also be taken into account when wine orders are being taken. With a mixed party one bottle for each three guests can be estimated, one bottle for four guests when they are all ladies, and one bottle for every two guests at an all-male gathering. In each case, one should 'give or take a little,' as it depends on the length of the dinner,

and the wines ordered to accompany one or more courses. Should more wine be needed, the host should be consulted before more is ordered up, unless a *carte-blanche* instruction had originally been given.

When a reception is being given with a fixed-price allowance, the sommelier or person in charge must have a stock sheet of all drinks drawn for the gathering. As these are always in excess of what is needed, he must be able to assess very quickly when the agreed limit has been reached.

When that time has arrived, he should inform the host, and get further instructions from him, whether to keep the reception going, or close the bar. If the bar is being kept going, the excess drinks have to be charged. Of course, the instructions could be for one more round. Then, as previously, the time has to be estimated, and then the bar closed, no further instructions being sought.

Here let me point out to those serving behind the bar not to open or prepare drinks that will not be consumed. Every client does not need a full bottle of mineral to each drink, etc. On the other hand, should he serve extremely small measures, the host will get to know about it, be embarrassed, and, in consequence, may not book again, and the establishment will eventually get a bad name.

The making out of the bill is quite a simple matter. Knowing the value of the stock, deduct stock returned, and the balance will be for refreshments consumed, including any extra round.

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Since for most receptions the bar is a temporary structure, let me give a fair warning. It should be constructed as well as possible, for there is always a bit of a rush for the bar. The weight of the people pressing forward will push it

backwards and this could result in a considerable amount of damage, plus the breakdown of the whole service.

Quite a solid bar can be constructed by placing the tops of trestle tables on top of the tables used. This will add height and weight to the average 3-foot table. There must also be a table placed transversely at each end of the bar, so that people do not try to come behind, either to assist the barman or help themselves.

These end tables can also be used exclusively for serving waiters. All empties can be placed in receptacles placed under the tables, to keep the bar clear for service.

Stock should always be kept at the back of the bar, and out of reach of guests.

While on the subject of the construction of the bar, let me point out that if it is a cash bar, it should be as long as possible, so that a number of clients can be served at once. In this case the stock must also be distributed accordingly.

Besides the serving staff on both sides of the bar, it is advisable to have what is known as a runner. This is a person who fetches anything that is needed from the dispense bar, and maintains the flow of clean glasses.

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A reception falls into one of three categories:

(1) when there is an assembly before a dinner, with a fixed drink allowance per head, with the bar kept open for a pre-arranged time, and usually two drinks per head allowed for.

(2) when guests buy their own drinks.

(As both the above are pre-dinner receptions, no food or snacks need be offered, with the exception of a few dishes of potato crisps, salted almonds or cashew nuts, olives, etc. What is imperative, is a good distribution of ashtrays.)

(3) When it is a reception pure and simple, with no dinner to follow; this can be quite a lavish affair on a par with an embassy reception.

In principle, the purpose is the same—to enable the host to meet and come into direct contact with as many of his guests as possible. Here again, the bar may or may not be controlled or limited. It is not uncommon for the bar to be kept open until the reception is over, or the last guests have left.

Whether it is champagne or a mixed drinks reception, the final stocktaking is simple arithmetic. Deduct returnable stock from original; the balance is goods consumed.

In the case of wine, only full bottles can be returned.

For the last mentioned kind of reception, appetising hot and cold snacks are usually offered. These include small hot *bouchées*, with various fillings, hot *chipolata* sausages, sausage rolls, delicacies on toast, finger sandwiches, etc.

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Now from what I have said above, I am sure the reader will realize that banqueting depends on organization, timing, co-operation, understanding and the fulfilling of their duties by all concerned to the best of their ability.

For large parties, it is a matter of organization with almost military precision. For example, it is no use cluttering up the room with flowers, glasses, etc., before tables, chairs, linen, etc., have been arranged.

To facilitate the *mis-en-place* for a dinner, nearly all establishments have ready-printed plans for a variety of table formations for each of their banqueting suites. Such a plan is placed on a table in the middle of the room. From this vantage point the person responsible for the laying up of the room can give his orders, and any other person wishing to get a clear picture of what is needed can consult the plan.

The order of setting up of the room is: placing of the tables, chairs, tablecloths, plates, cutlery, cruets, glasses, napkins, table numbers or letters and, lastly, flowers.

In well organized establishments glasses are always stored clean in trays of thirty-six or sixty. In this way it is easy to bring into the room the exact number required.

Today most of the busy banqueting establishments have washing machines for their glasses. In this case they use plastic-covered wire containers. In these containers the glasses can be stacked clean, brought in and taken out again from the room after use, and put through the machine for washing. When properly used, the machine is very effective, speedy and labour-saving.

When tables are arranged, it is usually done in such a way that either the sprigs have ten covers each or every separate table has ten covers. In this way the chef arranges ten portions to each dish, the food waiter serves ten people, and the sommelier has either twenty or more covers to attend to.

If the wines are included, two bottles per table are served; as there are five glasses of wine to a bottle, this is just sufficient.

* * * * *

All service takes its cue from the top table. The chairman is always served first, then the lady on his right, then the lady or person on his left, and then right down the line irrespective of sex. So that the people on the chairman's right are not left high and dry, two sommeliers work together, one going from the chairman to the left, the other to his right.

When wines are included at big dinners, the chairman is not asked to taste the wine; that has all been done beforehand by the sommelier. It will be noted that one sommelier serves from left to right contrary to custom.

At big dinner parties this cannot be helped, otherwise the main guests would be served last. This, of course, does happen when port is placed in front of the chairman, or even being served. It must go round from right to left. Much as it is to be regretted, the principal guest who sits on the right-hand side of the chairman gets the port last. That is unavoidable but he usually understands and knows the custom.

As I have said in a previous article, the second wine is always served before the first glass is taken away. In this way no guest is ever left entirely without a drink.

When a chairman is addressed, he is always addressed as 'Mr.' irrespective of whether he is a gentleman or lady, unless of course, he is a titled person. The same etiquette must be observed when the host is a lady. There is no reason why she should not be asked to sample the wine; after all, she has ordered it and will be drinking it.

This is, of course, one of those moments when ladies show their feminine charm. She will usually ask one of her male guests whether he would care to sample the wine, and whether he likes it.

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Time-and-motion study is not exactly a highly developed science in the catering industry, but at banquets it has been practised almost since big hotels and restaurants started. Every dish in each course is pre-arranged in sequence and given a number, and staff are briefed accordingly; the same plan is used for the equipment, cutlery, etc., which will be used. By the correct use of such a plan, when the dinner has been served, there should be no cutlery left on the table or sideboard. After the cups and saucers have been cleared, the food-serving waiter's work is done.

In some cases, after the dinner and before the dancing commences, while

the tables are re-arranged, the guests retire to another room, where there is usually a bar, the same, but re-stocked, as was in use when the guests first arrived.

I would like to emphasize how important timing is. At a dinner dance, for instance, if the chairman gives too long a speech, every stage of the ensuing function could be delayed.

The sequence is then: guests assemble; the guests are served drinks; after a pre-determined time, dinner is served; sommeliers follow to serve wines to accompany the dinner; one sommelier remains behind to check up and re-stock the bar; after the dinner the guests leave the hall for the bar, two or more sommeliers if need be assisting the barman; the rest re-arrange the room, place wine and mineral cups on the tables (if ordered); food-serving staff depart, and guests return for dancing and cabaret.

Sommeliers remain in attendance until the function is over.

There is one item which purposely I have omitted until now, and that is the placing of the seating plan in the foyer. More important from the sommelier's point of view is the necessity for someone who is conversant with the wine list to have a table nearby to take wine orders in advance. Of course, this can be done only when guests are paying for their own drinks.

By taking advantage of this service, guests not only ensure that their orders will be carried out well in advance of the dinner, but this foresight will facilitate the proper service of wine throughout the meal.

Here is a thought to end with. It is that everyone wants their own function to be outstanding and different from any other. And although in a way, all functions are similar, no two are exactly alike.

Dispense Bar

IT is regrettable that the dispense bar is all too often placed in charge of an unskilled member of the staff by those who think that the job is a simple one with 'nothing in it'—everybody surely can pour out a sherry, gin, whisky and should be able to pass a bottle of wine to the sommelier.

In itself the dispense bar is simple to operate, but unless the work is carried out correctly, with expertise and speed, it can become the weak point in the sommelier's armour, and slow down his service considerably.

The dispense barman is a 'mid man'—a cross between a cocktail barman and a cellarman; the dispense bar is a distribution centre for the cellar, and a service bar for the restaurant, lounge, floors, private suites, etc.

It is easy to see that the dispense barman must have a good all-round knowledge of his work. He should be a man with experience in cellar and bar work, as well as having an all-round knowledge of other departments. Above all, he must be a trustworthy, reliable and sober person.

The dispense bar is not a place for a beginner. Whoever runs it should have had previous experience in the cellar, and as it is nearly always a single-handed position, it is one of trust.

As no job is easy until it has been mastered, let us see what is expected of a master dispense barman. As all establishments vary, these remarks are of purely general reference.

In most cases, the purpose of the dispense bar is to make it possible for the sommelier to get all his orders from one source, and so speed up the service.

For this reason the dispense bar must carry not only sufficient stock to cover most of the orders that might be required at the service during any one meal-time, but also a quantity of all the stock that the establishment has to offer, irrespective of how seldom it might be called for.

Having said that, I must point out that it is not necessary to carry an equal amount of all the stock. Some items will always be in greater demand than others, and this applies to spirits, sheries, ports, liqueurs, as it does to wines.

In the case of spirits, sheries, ports, liqueurs, it is good policy to keep them in circulation, so that they have no time to deteriorate or lose strength. By this I do not mean that the client should be given what the barman wants to dispose of; on the contrary, he must always be served with what he has asked for. That is why the management has a large

and selective stock from which he can choose, and even if the dispense bar is out of sight, he still must get what has been ordered. But when the client does not stipulate a definite brand, then the barman should use his discretion, so as to keep his stock 'ticking over.' This policy will be very much appreciated by the cellar, as their stock will also be kept on the move.

Beers, minerals and fruit juices must also be kept on the move. Although these beverages remain in good condition for a considerable time either in refrigerators or other cool places, their labels will not. And it is no recommendation for the establishment to serve beverages with spoiled or grubby labels and stoppers.

In the case of wines, which should be binned lying down, with the labels upwards, they too should be served in rotation.

Spirits and liqueurs should be stacked standing upright, whether the bottles have been opened or not. By placing them in line behind each other, with the open one in front, the barman will not only have the required bottle at hand, but also at a glance be able to see what stock of each brand he has.

While on the subject of stacking, may I point out that, as most apéritifs have a wine base, they also should be stacked horizontally. The reason for this is that wine, by being in contact with the cork, keeps the latter moist and the bottle airtight. Wine ages in bottle as it is possible for it to 'breathe' through the cork.

In contrast, spirits do not need to breathe through the cork, they do not age in bottle, and the alcohol in the spirit would have a damaging effect on the cork if left in contact with it. Spirits age only in the wood; once bottled they remain static.

Today, most bottled spirits, beers and

minerals have patent stoppers, with a thin tin or plastic disc, to prevent the beverage from coming into direct contact with the cork. This not only protects the cork, but makes it almost impossible for the contents to become 'corky.'

When binning wine, the barman should make sure that the tops of the bottles face him, so that he can notice at once if any cork is faulty, and wine oozing out.

Of course, to a great extent the efficiency of the dispense bar depends on how it was constructed and can be serviced, as well as its nearness to the service.

With the present-day high cost and shortage of skilled labour, it must not be wasted by absurd distances between service bar and client, or equipment that is either faulty or in short supply.

Many modern establishments favour refrigerators to cool their white wines before serving. This in itself is very satisfactory providing that the wines are served when once chilled. To keep the wine indefinitely at low temperature might prolong its life, but not enhance its quality.

For this reason it is better if the dispense is in three parts. There should be a small section for the white and sparkling wines, where the temperature is constant, between 50 deg. F. and 53 deg. F. (Ideal cellar temperature is 55 deg. F.) As dry white wines should be served at approximately 53 deg. F. and sweet white wines as low as 42 deg. F., it will be noted that they are thus held more or less ready to be consumed.

As all white wines are brought to the table in a wine cooler, it is not difficult to bring the temperature down, when desired, by packing ice round the bottle, or ice and water to keep it as it is, approximately at 53 deg. F.

Before passing on to the second part of the dispense bar, where all the red wines, ports, sherries, etc., are kept, I wish to point out that it is possible to build large cold storage rooms, or refrigerators, with the temperature fixed at a desired degree.

What I am against is the keeping of white wines in a deep freeze, where the temperature is very much lower than is good for them.

The red wines should be kept at a steady 60 deg. F. in the dispense bar. This would be about perfect for burgundies. As bordeaux wines are at their peak at about 64 deg. F., they can be kept on the top shelves of this compartment. As the warm air rises upwards, they will get the benefit from it. They will also reach the desired temperature if opened and placed in the restaurant for half-an-hour or more before serving.

In the case of an old bordeaux wine, I must point out that it must not be opened any length of time before serving, as ten minutes or less for such a wine is sufficient breathing time. By bringing it into the room an hour or more in advance, such a wine will be as near to perfection, as far as temperature is concerned as it can be.

In this second part of the dispense, apéritifs, spirits and liqueurs can also be kept, or the main stock of these.

The third part should be the largest. This is the service part, where the barman serves the sommelier over the counter. It is where the main stock of minerals, beers and fruit juices are kept. Here are kept also the refrigerators used to chill a quantity of these in readiness for service.

An ice machine or a good supply of ice with drainage for the melted ice to run away can also be kept there.

If blocks of ice are used, only the

amount needed should be chopped up, as the smaller it is cut the quicker it will melt.

When storing blocks of ice, they should be as close to each other as possible, and protected from warm air as much as possible.

When there is no special closet for the ice, the blocks, and even the chopped-up ice, should be covered with thick, wet sacking, to prevent warm air getting to it.

It is in this section that the benefits of a well constructed and equipped dispense as well as the barman's *mis-en-place* and his professional ability are most needed.

Besides the above-mentioned installations there also must be a sink with running water, shelves for glasses, wine baskets and coolers, with sufficient service space.

Where possible, the sink should be fitted into the counter, so that it can serve as a draining board, and the tap should be usable from both sides. Steel shutters are also recommended, as they allow the free circulation of the air.

However it is constructed, the dispense bar must be of practical design, and as near to the place it has to serve as possible.

The dispense barman's *mis-en-place* can best be summed up by the slogan: Clean up, stock up and prepare.

The first two tasks are self-explanatory and should be performed in the morning while the shutters are still down; the third has to be repeated before each service.

All these tasks are of equal importance. The first gives freedom of movement, the second fulfilment of order and the third completion of details.

As a dispense barman is often called upon to mix cocktails, his *mis-en-place*

must be on similar lines to more of a cocktail bar.

As most establishments or barmen have special ideas of their own, it is good practice to write the recipes for these with any others individual clients may ask for (but which are not in the cocktail book) in a notebook for future reference.

It is also very important that the concoctions mixed in the dispense bar are in every detail and price similar to those served in any other bar of the particular establishment.

Beers, minerals and fruit juices can be kept in refrigerators at approximately 50 deg. F. as the demand calls for them to be iced. By beers I mean bottled lager and not British beers or stout. The reason for this is that some British bottled ales turn cloudy under such conditions and, when poured out, seem rather flat. At the same time all bottled British ales taste much better when served cold, and well below tepid room temperature.

As lager is a Continental beer, it should be treated and served in the same way as on the Continent, i.e. that the glass should be rinsed in clean, cold water before being used. This has a threefold purpose, namely, to make sure that the glass is clean, dust-proof and cool, before the lager is poured into it. The result is that the white foam head will be smooth and creamy, but not bubbly.

British bottled beer also benefits by this treatment of the clean, cool, wet glass.

I realize that in most cases on the Continent the lager is on draught, but the effect on bottled beers is the same. By adopting this method, beer glasses need not be dried and polished, but just washed and rinsed and then left to dry. In principle, it is the same method of washing glasses as by machine.

The control of the dispense bar is on the same basis as that of other bars or cigar stock.

All orders to the cellar must be made in a duplicate and numbered order book. No page should be destroyed but, when necessary, should be cancelled. Originals and duplicates should be compared after each stocktaking. No order should be changed; a new one should be made. A line should be made after the last order, and signed immediately below. It is essential that all orders are written clearly. The stocktaker must sign and date the back of the duplicate page of the last order, after taking stock.

He must also write the number of the last page used into his stocktaking book. By doing so he can check up on all orders made out in each period of stocktaking.

The same order book must be used when returning to the cellar any unwanted, damaged or faulty bottles or cork, causing ullage of wine, or corked wine.

The return voucher is made out in the same way as an order, with the exception that RETURNED TO CELLAR is written in capital letters at the top, before the item itself, and the word CREDIT is written, also in large letters, at the bottom of the form.

When a faulty item is being returned, a label should be stuck on the bottle, giving its bin number and price, reason for returning, date and signature. These bottles have to be shown to the stocktaker, as proof that they were returned.

The stocktaker, when sending his report on the standing of the stock to the management, makes a statement concerning damaged goods. These, in turn, are written off the stock. Those damaged through fault of the establishment or its staff are costed against the

percentage made by the department (cellar).

Corked or faulty wines and spirits are returned to the shipper who either gives credit or replaces the faulty goods. It is worth mentioning here that when returns to the cellar are in excess to what can be expected, the management makes enquiries why this is so, and, if too many are returned to the shipper, he wants to know likewise.

Should it be proved that a consignment was faulty, it would be returned or credit claimed from the vigneron or distiller. This is extremely rare, as all consignments are tested and sampled before duty is paid, and they are taken out of bond.

By showing what happens to damaged or faulty bottles, wines or spirits, I trust I have made it clear that no shame or blame can be cast on any establishment, supplier or shipper for a genuine complaint. It is all part of the risk that all concerned in the trade try to avoid, but accept as one of the hazards.

There is also no reason for a sommelier, or dispense barman, to make difficulties about correcting a genuine complaint.

It is also futile and damaging to all concerned for a sommelier to try to convince a client that there is nothing wrong, when the item is faulty.

On the other hand, should a client imagine a fault where there is none, and both the client and the sommelier, after re-sampling the wine, be still of

contrary opinion, the restaurant manager should be called; he is in a better position to settle the matter.

It is always desirable that co-operation, assistance and mutual understanding should prevail between all departments for the good of the establishment and all concerned. That between dispense barman and sommelier should be exemplary, for on their close co-operation and understanding depends greatly the success of the drink sales in the restaurant.

It is up to the barman to fulfil all orders as speedily as he is able, and to assist the sommelier at all times, especially when he is trying to please and satisfy a fastidious client.

On the other hand, it is the duty of the sommelier to co-operate and sell by recommending any wines or brands of apéritifs that have been discontinued.

This is very important, especially when new wine lists have been introduced, from which some wines have been deleted and vintages changed. For it is much better all round to sell the remnants than send them back to the supplier. Although the odd bottles, if not withdrawn, would count as stock, it would mean that capital is tied up in idle stock.

It does happen that a regular client may wish to reserve some of these remnants for his personal use; this is all to the good as it guarantees the sale and the return of the client.

Miscellaneous Matters

IN previous chapters I have explained the know-how and some of the rules of etiquette to which the sommelier must conform. In this article I wish to introduce the sommelier to some of the laws governing his work; as he must abide by the laws, he must know them. They are:

(1) Licensing Act 1961.

(2) Weights and Measures Regulations 1965—No. 1815. That is the Measuring Instruments (Intoxicating Liquor) Regulations 1965.

I should point out that Acts of Parliament to do with licensing have been in force in one form or another for the past 150 years or more. From time to time various amendments have been added to the original Acts or new Acts passed to meet the needs of the day.

The latest Act became law on 3rd August 1961 and consists of some eighty-five pages. It was designed to meet present-day needs.

Parts of the Measuring Instruments (Intoxicating Liquor) Regulations 1965 do not come into force until 1967. These are in three parts: Regulation 1 (1) came into operation on 31st July 1966, and Regulation 1 (2) on 31st July 1967; the remainder came into force on 28th October 1965.

From all this it is obvious that an adequate summary, even in non-legal language, cannot be written in such a short space as this. All that I claim in what follows is to make an honest endeavour to make the sommelier conscious of his responsibilities arising out of these Acts of Parliament.

As in previous articles I have dealt with only the service of drinks in restaurants, so these notes will also refer only to restaurants, hotels, licensed lounges, but not to public houses or off-licences unless stated otherwise.

Young Persons.—Young persons under 18 may not knowingly be sold or allowed to consume intoxicating liquor in either licensed premises or in off-licences. A person over 16 may be served with beer, cider, porter or perry to accompany a meal provided the meal is served in some part of the licensed premises which is not a bar. No one may buy such liquor for a young person for consumption in a bar.

Liqueur chocolates.—Very few establishments sell chocolates except as gifts during the festive season. In the past only off- and on-licensed establishments were permitted to sell liqueur chocolates.

The law governing this has now been

amended as follows: Any person, whether licensed or not, may sell ordinary type liqueur chocolates, but not to purchasers under 16 years of age.

* * * * *

The permitted hours for consumption of intoxicating liquor on licensed premises are as follows:

(a) *Normal Public House or Restaurant Hours.*—Weekdays, except Christmas Day and Good Friday:

LONDON

11 a.m.—3 p.m.
5.30 p.m.—11 p.m.

ELSEWHERE

11 a.m.—3 p.m.
5.30 p.m.—10.30 p.m.

Sundays, Christmas Day and Good Friday:

LONDON

12 noon—2 p.m.
7 p.m.—10.30 p.m.

ELSEWHERE

12 noon—2 p.m.
7 p.m.—10.30 p.m.

In on-licensed premises (cocktail lounges and American bars), ten minutes after the terminal hour will be allowed for drinking up or taking away liquor purchased during permitted hours.

In public houses, restaurants, etc., which serve meals, thirty minutes after permitted hours is still allowed for drinking up of liquor purchased during permitted hours by persons taking a meal and consumed as an ancillary to their meal.

At the annual sessions (but not at transfer sessions), Licensing Justices will have the power, on application, to vary permitted hours on week-days in their particular districts. They may make the terminal hour 11 p.m. (as in London), but the total number of permitted hours must not exceed nine-and-a-half, must not begin earlier than 10 a.m. or end

later than 11 p.m., and there must be a break of at least two hours during the afternoon. They may make different provision for different periods; for example, they may make the terminal hour 11 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays during the summer months, or they may permit opening at 10 a.m. on market days. They have no power to vary permitted hours on Sundays, Christmas Day or Good Friday.

The above scarcely affects London sommeliers but it might apply to those in the provinces.

(b) *Extension of one hour for restaurants, etc.*—With the authority of the Licensing Justices, licensed premises and registered clubs which are structurally adapted for, and/or intended to be used for the supply of substantial refreshment including intoxicating liquors as an ancillary thereto, may add one hour to the evening permitted hours, for example, extend them to 11.30 p.m. or midnight; thirty minutes afterwards for drinking up liquors purchased during the permitted hours, as extended, is also allowed. As from 1st November 1961 this included Sundays as well as weekdays.

(c) *Extended hours for certain restaurants, providing entertainment.*—With the authority of and subject to conditions laid down by the Licensing Justices, licensed premises (or even parts of them) which provide live entertainment, and which are structurally adapted for and used or intended to be used for the supply of meals (including intoxicating liquor as an ancillary of the meal) may serve such liquor up to 1 a.m., including Saturdays but excluding Good Fridays and not beyond midnight on Maundy Thursday or Easter Eve. Thirty minutes for drinking up liquor purchased up to 1 a.m. is allowed.

(d) *Extended Hours for Music and Dancing.*—The current legal provisions

whereby intoxicating liquor can be supplied up to 2 a.m. and consumed up to 2.30 a.m. in premises holding a special hours certificate for music and dancing are now extended to all areas in England and Wales and apply to Saturdays as well as other weekdays. Good Friday is excluded and permitted hours must not extend beyond midnight on Maundy Thursday or Easter Eve. In London (excluding the City of London), the normal hours will be extended to 3 a.m. with consumption up to 3.30 a.m. This applied as from 1st November 1961.

(e) *Registered Club*.—The total number of permitted hours for clubs must not exceed nine or nine-and-a-half per day, according to the maximum allowed in each particular district, and must not begin earlier or end later than the general licensing hours unless extension under (b), (c) or (d) are granted. There are various other provisions relating to permitted hours for clubs but these are outside the scope of this article.

* * * * *

The 1961 Act and its Amendments has enlightened and simplified some and strengthened other aspects of the old licensing laws, of which the following changes are of great importance to the licensed hotel or restaurant, to the wine-butler and to the general public.

(i) Residents in hotels (who are entitled to order alcoholic refreshment at any time) may now invite their guests in the hotel to participate, irrespective of permitted hours.

(ii) The publican or hotel proprietor can give free drinks to the staff after hours provided that the liquor is supplied at the expense of the employer or of the person in charge of the business on the premises.

(iii) Seasonal licences are permitted.

That is, the Justices may, at the request of the applicant, insert a provision in the licence that there shall be no permitted hours during certain periods. This is mainly for the benefit of holiday hotels in remote districts which have little or no custom during the winter. Apart from this, there is a general power for any licensed premises to close at any time they wish during permitted hours and no permission of the Justices is required for this.

(iv) The terminal hour of 10 p.m. for occasional licences is abolished and Justices may fix such closing times as they wish, and may also grant occasional licences for Sundays in England and those parts of Wales and Monmouthshire which vote for Sunday opening. Grants of occasional licences will no longer be confined to a public dinner or ball, or to occasions for the convenience and accommodation of the public.

(v) Alterations to on-licence premises do not require the consent of the Justices unless alteration gives increased facilities for drinking or conceals from observation a part used for drinking, or affects the communication between the part where intoxicating liquor is sold and the remainder of the premises is not required.

(vi) Existing on-licences may be extended by the Justices on application, so as to add to the description of the intoxicating liquor authorized to be sold in the licensed premises, provided that the consent of the registered owner of the premises is obtained.

(vii) Billiards, bagatelle or similar games are allowed on licensed premises on Sundays as well as weekdays. A music and dancing licence is not required where the music consists solely of the reproduction of recorded sound, for example, radio, television, record-player, or does not involve more than two live performers.

(viii) A protection order granted by the Justices remains in force until the conclusion of the second licensing session begins after the date of the order.

(ix) Justices may grant an ordinary removal order to any premises in their licensing district from any premises (and not only from premises in their licensing district or country).

(x) Fees chargeable by Justices' Clerks on licensing matters are in accordance with a scale to be laid down by the Home Secretary which apply nationally. Variation of fees in different districts accordingly have disappeared.

(xi) Provisional grants of new off-licences may be made by the Justices on deposit of a site plan in the same as already mentioned for new on-licences.

(xii) Six-day or early closing licensing conditions may be revoked by the Justices on renewal, transfer or removal if so requested.

(xiii) General and special orders of exemption are somewhat liberalized and extended. General orders do not now lapse when the licence changes hands, but ensue for the benefit of the new licensee. Applications for a special order of exemption or for an occasional licence may now be made in writing, without personal attendance before the Justices. *They are available only to on-licences.*

* * * * *

The Measuring Instruments (Intoxicating Liquors) Regulations 1965. These are quite simple and are meant to strengthen the old Act, protect the public, make it obligatory for stamped measuring (utensils) instruments of stated capacity to be used when making retail sales, and an offence to give shorter measure than stated.

The Regulations came into effect in three parts: Regulation 1 (1) as from 31st July 1966. This part deals with intoxicating liquors sold over $\frac{1}{4}$ pint

quantities, and up to 1 gallon. This, as far as the sommelier is concerned, deals mainly with the sale of beer, cider and porter, etc.

Part 1 (2) coming into operation on 31st July 1967, affects the sommelier much more, as it deals with measuring instruments for intoxicating liquor sold by retail in under $\frac{1}{4}$ of a pint.

Together they both mean that all measuring instruments up to 1 gallon (including pint, $\frac{1}{2}$ -pint and $\frac{1}{4}$ -pint tankards), will have to bear the official stamped markings, in full or by means of one or the other of the following abbreviations:

One-sixth gill	$\frac{1}{6}$ gill
One-fifth gill	$\frac{1}{5}$ gill (or 1 fl. oz.).
Quarter-gill	$\frac{1}{4}$ gill.
One-third gill	$\frac{1}{3}$ gill.
Two-fifths gill	$\frac{2}{5}$ gill (or 2 fl. oz.).
Half-gill	$\frac{1}{2}$ gill.
Gill	$\frac{1}{4}$ pint.
One-third pint	$\frac{1}{3}$ pint.
Half-pint	$\frac{1}{2}$ pint.
Pint	pint.
Quart	quart
Half-gallon	$\frac{1}{2}$ -gallon.
Gallon	gallon.

Provided that any indication of quantity on a measuring chamber or on any sales indicator may be shown by figures only if the unit of measurement is boldly marked on the face of the chamber or indicator, and no confusion can arise.

The regulations also provide that a notice must be placed on the bar or dispense (where the public can see it) stating the size of the spirit measure used, i.e. $\frac{1}{6}$ — $\frac{1}{5}$ — $\frac{1}{4}$ —or $\frac{1}{3}$ of a gill.

* * * * *

These extracts from the Licensing Act are meant to inform and explain some legal points which the sommelier must be conversant with, to carry out his duties within the law.

Should there arise at any time a point on which he is not quite clear, he should ask the manager for guidance. As a warning may I point out that a person breaking the licensing law by serving drinks after time is equally guilty in law as the management or licensee.

From the above it will also be noted that a carafe is not a measure of capacity, therefore the quantity of wine in a carafe or half is left to the management.

When the fashion for the sale of carafes first came to England from France, the quantity was half a litre. That was because in France the recognized size of a bottle of wine was 1 litre. The wines sold were local wines; in some cases, it was inclusive of the meals ($\frac{1}{2}$ litre, just over 1 pint, a pint being 0.568 of a litre).

The wine was meant to be on tap, direct from cask to demijohn. As the unsold wine left in the cask would deteriorate today, most establishments that serve carafe wines decant them from bottles.

The size, like the quantity and price vary from place to place and the same can be said for a glass of wine.

Today many establishments serve a full Bordeaux-size bottle as a carafe, which is 75 centilitres or three-quarters of a litre; correspondingly, half a carafe is half the amount.

In France, the law lays down that the various wine bottles in use contain the following amount of liquids:

Champagne 80 centilitres	0.176 of a gal.
Burgundy 80 centilitres	0.176 of a gal.
Bordeaux 75 centilitres	0.165 of a gal.
Anjou 75 centilitres	0.165 of a gal.
Alsace 72 centilitres	0.158 of a gal.

When it comes to wine-bottles in Britain, there is no legal definition of its contents. Only quart and pint bottles are defined by law in Great Britain, and these must contain a quarter and an eighth of a gallon respectively.

For the benefit of those who have to explain to continental and other overseas visitors the sizes and strengths of drinks served in the average British restaurant, Tables 1, 2 and 3 have been prepared (see next page). The standard spirit bottle contains 26.66 fluid ounces.

Although the quantity of spirit in a bottle might vary slightly, from one maker to another, the stated measure served must not. The figures given are as near as can be done do for practical purposes.

When using the new stamped regulation measures, the number of drinks per standard bottle is as in Table 2.

When it comes to explain the strength of wines and spirits, it is no easy matter, for alcoholic beverages are not measured by percentage of alcohol, but by degrees of over or under proof.

In Britain and the Commonwealth the strength of alcoholic beverages is measured by the Sikes method, whereas in most other countries by the Gay Lussac method. (100° Gay Lussac equals 175° proof spirit or 75 per cent. Sikes.)

I am not going to tabulate the various British and American spirit strength tables here, instead I shall endeavour to put down simple tables of the approximate strength of various drinks. This I feel will give the sommelier a much clearer overall picture, and assist him when explaining to overseas visitors, why there is a difference in strength of a similar drink bought in different countries.

The differences between the two systems are mainly responsible for our visitors, mostly American, to say that our spirits are much weaker (and in most cases they are), than the equivalent in their own country. As an example, whiskies and gins are exported at 25°

Table 1

Measure	Equals	Weight	Metric
1 gill	$\frac{1}{4}$ pint	5 ozs. fluid	1.42 decilitre
4 gills	1 ,,	20 ,, ,,	0.568 litre
2 pints	1 quart	40 ,, ,,	1.136 ,,
8 ,,	1 gallon	160 ,, ,,	4.5459631 litre

Table 2

Measure	per Bottle	Weight	Metric
$\frac{1}{6}$ gill	32 measures	0.835 ozs. fluid	0.23 decilitre
$\frac{1}{3}$,,	16 ,,	1.67 ,, ,,	0.46 ,,
$\frac{1}{5}$,,	$26\frac{2}{3}$,,	1.00 ,, ,,	0.28 ,,
$\frac{2}{5}$,,	$13\frac{1}{3}$,,	2.00 ,, ,,	0.56 ,,
$\frac{1}{4}$,,	$21\frac{1}{3}$,,	1.25 ,, ,,	0.35 ,,
$\frac{1}{2}$,,	$10\frac{2}{3}$,,	2.50 ,, ,,	0.71 ,,
1 ,,	$5\frac{1}{3}$,,	5.00 ,, ,,	1.42 ,,

Table 3

Beverage	Percentage of Alcohol content by Volume	Degree of Proof Spirit (Sikes)
Brandy	40%	70°
Gin	40%	70°
Rum	40%	70°
Whisky	40%	70°
Bordeaux wine ..	14%	24.5°
Burgundy wine	14%	24.5°
Champagne ..	13.1%	23°
Claret	13.1%	23°
Madeira	20%	35°
Port	20%	35°
Sherry	20%	35°
Pale Ale ..	3.13%	5.48°

u.p. Sikes, whereas they are sold for home consumption at 30° u.p. Sikes. 25° u.p. Sikes would read 86° American proof.

Another example is that 30 u.p. Sikes (strength of whisky, gin, rum and brandy sold in Britain) equal to 20 u.p. American proof. The 5° difference in the strength of our spirits is not noticeable when partaking of a straight drink, but it does show in a mixed drink, such as a cocktail. This is also mainly the reason why the American visitors claim

that they cannot get a really dry Martini cocktail.

Brandies are also imported into Britain at 30° u.p. or 70° proof. Age plays a great part when dealing with whiskies and brandies. In maturing, some of the alcohol evaporates and they lose strength, but make up for it with mellowness and bouquet.

Table 3, with the approximate strengths and comparisons, will, I trust, answer most questions.

Knowing Your Guests

ENTERTAINING is often undertaken in order to promote something or somebody or to sell something. Whether its motive be these reasons or pleasure, the same amount of research and forethought must be given the prospective function by the restaurant or hotel.

To assist the head-waiter, sommelier or host in this task I have done some research into the eating and drinking habits of some foreign countries, the result of which I trust will be of some use when dealing with guests from these countries.

France—As with everything else, one has to start somewhere, and what country better to begin with than France? Backed by generations of ingenious and inspired cooks, France has presented to the world a gastronomic order and way of life. Although all countries have their own special dishes, France has not concentrated on her national dishes as such, but rather on the preparation and presentation of all dishes in a French way. In so doing, she has given to the world the classic dishes of the *haute cuisine* in full range. These classic dishes are recognised the world over, prepared and presented in the same way in Paris, London or Timbuctoo.

The gastronomic order evolved by the French still holds good today. Dishes are served in this sequence: appetisers, soup, fish, egg or pasta, poultry, white meat, red meat, game, cheese, sweets, fruit, coffee. Accompanying wines follow the rule of: light before fuller wines, white before red, dry before sweet, young before old wines.

A Frenchman is a fastidious and discriminating eater; he does not eat just for the sake of doing so but to enjoy a meal, to make a dinner into a feast. When dining out, he likes to have his vegetables on a separate plate and the salad as a separate course. He takes cheese before fruit; this, he declares, enables him to finish and enjoy the rest of his red wine with the cheese. The fruit, coming last, refreshes the palate before he comes to the coffee and maybe a liqueur or brandy.

When dining alone, he will usually prefer a glass of white wine with his first course and one of red with his main dish, in preference to half a bottle of one kind of wine throughout the meal.

When ordering a meal in a restaurant, whether for himself or for guests, he will give each item on the menu a considerable amount of attention, ask

questions, and be very definite in his order and particular about its execution.

He will be as particular in ordering his wine. At table he often talks about the meal, and the host does not mind being complimented on an excellent dinner.

Belgium—Gastronomically speaking, the Belgian cuisine is modelled on the French. The Belgians' main contribution to the culinary art is in pastry making.

Being so near to France but not being herself a wine-producing country, Belgium is a wine and beer importing nation—on a large scale. Her own beers are light, and the Belgians, unlike their neighbours, the Dutch, do not have any taste for spirits. Belgium is a very sober nation.

Italy—France's largest, but much poorer and less endowed rival in the culinary field, has adopted, by necessity, a much more nationalistic attitude than her rich neighbour.

Her cuisine is best known for its pastas, spaghetti, macaroni, ravioli and so on, which can serve as first, second or main dishes or can be used as garnishes. Tomatoes and cheese are ingredients used in most dishes.

Italy's main contribution to the well-being of man is in the cultivation of vines which she has planted all over her hilly countryside. In the production of wines, many of them of world-wide renown, she is almost equal to France. The variety is very great, with the reds predominating.

The Italian is a peasant at heart, but I do not mean this to be derogatory. He is a great lover of wine; even the poorest buy and drink wine with their meals. When entertaining Italians it can be taken for granted that they will appreciate a pasta dish in some form or another, and will consider it a compliment to be offered Italian wines. They are not great liqueur or brandy drinkers

but they do enjoy an *apéritif*, especially in the vermouth or aromatic wine class (in the making of which they are expert).

Greece—One cannot leave the Mediterranean without mentioning Greece, the cradle of civilisation and of viticulture—an honour that she shares with Cyprus.

Although vast quantities of wine are made in various islands, not all is exportable, but is of sufficiently high standard to satisfy the inhabitants who consume about fifty bottles per head per year. The country's best known wines in Great Britain are the fortified Mavrodaphne and resin-flavoured *retsina*. The *retsina* wine is rather heady, needs getting used to and is not recommended for serving with the main dish.

Greece has been a great maritime and mercantile nation and this fact has left its mark on the people in that they have become the most cosmopolitan in the world. But when it comes to assessing a nation's cuisine one must go to the countryside to find out what it produces, for that is the basis of a nation's cuisine. In the case of Greece (and Cyprus) it is sheep, goats, fish, olives, cheese, fruit, nuts and vines.

As with all eastern Mediterranean countries, the Greeks make and are very fond of very rich sweetmeats with which they like to drink Turkish coffee. And where there is wine, there is brandy. Coffee and brandy were made for each other and that is how this cosmopolitan nation likes it.

Portugal—The Portuguese cuisine has very much in common with the Italian way of cooking in that both extensively use tomatoes, olive oil, garlic and lemons. In place of pasta garnishes, rice is used in Portugal, where it is home-produced.

Staple of a maritime, fishing nation, fish, especially cod and fresh sardines

form the base of many Portuguese national dishes.

Table wines of all kinds are produced on a large scale and are included in meals taken in public restaurants. Most workers are provided with free wine daily.

Portugal, of course, is the home of port. It is one of the most genuine wines produced anywhere. The demarcation boundaries, grape and wine production are strictly controlled and, in Britain, the name of port is protected by the Methuen Treaty of 1703. This means that unless the wine comes from Portugal it cannot be called port. (For the service of port, see page 9 *et seq.*)

When catering for or being entertained by Portuguese hosts, it is better to remember their habits and customs rather than their gastronomic requirements. Like the South Americans, they like to eat late and in leisurely fashion. Strangely enough, they are not port drinkers but invariably prefer brandy to a glass of port with coffee.

Spain—What I have said about the gastronomic habits of Portugal can be applied to her bigger, wealthier neighbour, Spain. Spain is known for its rich cuisine in which olives, olive oil and wines all play an important part. Pimientos are used extensively either as vegetables, or in hors d'oeuvre, salads or as a garnish.

Being a wine-producing country it is only natural that Spain is a wine-drinking nation. Spain has some very reliable table wines which are marketed under their own or regional names, and only acquire the styling of that of another country after leaving the country of origin.

Sherry, which comes from Jerez, is, like port, under strict control in respect of demarcation boundaries, vines.

The Spaniards themselves usually prefer the very dry finos and manzanillas

to the sweeter *amontillados*, *olorosos* and *amorosos*.

South America—As I have already mentioned, the habits and gastronomic tastes of the South Americans are very much like those of the Spaniards, whose overseas cousins they are. The cuisine has undergone some slight changes to suit the climate and to make the best use of the local produce.

South Americans, especially Mexicans and to a degree the Brazilians, have acquired a taste from the Red Indians for hot spiced dishes, green peppers and a very hot sauce made from red peppers called *tabasco*.

Mexico is also famed for *tequila*, a spirit made from the cactus plant. It is drunk mainly in bars, or as an *apéritif*. While on the subject of bars, I would like to mention that South Americans are very prone to meeting in bars, and that whiskies of all kinds are fashionable and popular items there.

All South American countries are wine-drinking, with Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela producing their own.

Germany—Germany is an important industrial and commercial country. The habits and customs are worth considering when either entertaining, or being entertained by a German host, for he will judge people or a firm according to the correctness of their manners and behaviour. Germans tend to be meticulous in their turn out, correct in their behaviour and rather unbending. Except for the last, they expect the same from their guests. From an Englishman (which to them means a native of the British Isles), they expect correct and sporting behaviour. Also they expect him to be a man of his word.

From the gastronome's point of view the German cuisine is rather heavy. Germans are rather large eaters, favouring veal and pork.

Being big producers of both beer and wine, they enjoy both.

Besides the light lagers, there are some quite heavy beers which, in specific gravity are second only to British and Irish ales and stouts. All these beers are always served chilled.

German wines are produced mainly on the banks of the Rhine, Moselle and their tributaries. German vineyards are the most northerly in the world. The variety of these wines is very great and they have a character of their own. Those from the Moselle are very light and delicate but so well produced and balanced that they maintain their fruitiness which is the hall-mark of all well-made wines.

Generally speaking, German wines are of the riesling type. The climate and soil being unsuitable, no red wines of distinction are made. This encourages the German traveller when abroad to plump for the red wines of other countries, not because he necessarily prefers them but for a change and just to try them. He is an adaptable gourmet and will partake of foreign dishes and specialities providing that, to his mind, they are as good or better than his own. But, as I have said, be it at home or abroad, he is a stickler for etiquette.

Scandinavia—By the Scandinavian countries I mean Sweden, Norway, Denmark and, to a lesser degree, Finland, all beer and spirit-consuming and non-wine-producing countries.

Their cuisine and gastronomic expertise are influenced by their climate and geographical location. The cuisines of Sweden and Norway have much in common because once these two nations were united in one kingdom, and both are influenced by what the sea and the vast forests can provide.

Being a more southerly country, Denmark is famed for its dairy products especially bacon, butter and cheeses.

Denmark is also the home of two very famous lagers, of which large quantities are consumed at home and exported.

Sweden is famed for its Smorrebrod, which is a cross between an hors d'oeuvre and an open sandwich.

In itself Scandinavian cuisine is not important but the presentation of its appetisers or first courses is. The people of all three countries like to start a meal with hors d'oeuvre as a similar dish. With this they like to drink a very well-chilled aquavit or akvavit (spelling according to the country of origin), which is a spirit (schnapps) made from potatoes and flavoured with caraway or aniseed, coriander and fennel. This is washed down with a cold lager, and then the Scandinavian gourmet will follow the same pattern as in other countries in the presentation of courses and accompanying wines.

Scotland—Of all the people in the British Isles the Scots, more than anyone, would appreciate the Scandinavian way of drinking, for the Scot is also fond of a dram of whisky followed by a quaff of ale. Perhaps this way of drinking spirits has prevailed from the time when the Danes invaded our northern shores. I hasten to mention, however, that this custom has never reached the dining-room but is still prevalent in the saloon bar.

Having said this much about the drinking habits of our northern kinfolk, I might as well add that as much as they enjoy their world-famous whisky, as a nation they are not heavy spirit drinkers. Perhaps this is because there are not any illicit stills, and whisky is rather expensive.

As I have said before, all countries are influenced by soil and climatic conditions. In the case of the Scots this makes their cuisine dependent upon the fish which the sea and rivers so richly provide, and cattle from the highlands

which produce some of the very best beef in the world; this is their favourite meat.

If one had to describe a people by their way of life in order to assist the host or sommelier, one would have to say of the Scots that, because of their frugal and religious upbringing, they are very solid citizens, a trait which is manifest wherever they go.

Slavonic Countries—Before leaving the continent of Europe, I must say something about Slavonic cuisine and customs. Regrettably, most of the nations in this group are behind what we call the Iron Curtain, and have an ideology we do not share. This rather impedes the exchange of gastronomic views and prohibits the import and export of luxuries; many foods, fruits, wines and spirits come into that category and without them a gourmet's table would be incomplete.

Russian cuisine on the whole is rather heavy with many world-famous national dishes which are presented on a lavish scale. Old customs, especially of eating and drinking, are not killed by revolutions but are just adapted to suit a new way of life. In days gone by, the Russian nobility and bourgeois entertained lavishly. Today Soviet commissars and trade missions do the same.

It is not surprising that Russia, being such a vast country, is a producer of both wine and beer, but it is best known for caviar and vodka. Vodka is a tasteless spirit of which the best is distilled from grain. It should be served well chilled.

With these two commodities, the Russians are most generous at their parties. They are able to consume large quantities of them, especially vodka, having been virtually brought up on it. It pleases their vanity to see the eyes of their guests becoming glassy after over-indulgence in this spirit.

As a people, Russians are full of life, good company, generous eaters and, in spite of their taste for hard liquor, they like their wines on the sweet side.

Poland, a Slavonic buffer state between Russia and Germany, has derived its etiquette from the Germans and its drinking (especially of spirits) and lavish hospitality from the Russians.

Czechoslovakia, although also a Slavonic country, is not a spirit—but a beer-drinking nation. Perhaps that is only to be expected of a country where lager, in the town of Pilsen, was born.

It is also a wine-producing country mainly of the riesling type, but no wine is exported beyond the Iron Curtain.

The Czech cuisine is famed for its delightful plum and cherry dumplings and is blessed, as in Belgium and Austria, with good pastry cooks.

Like the Austrians, the Czechs are easy to please, and can adapt themselves to any company.

The history of Hungary is so rich and varied that one could write a score of books about it and still miss a great deal. In the past, Hungary was the granary and food producing area of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The vast estates were owned by the nobility and big landlords who entertained lavishly and looked to the court in Vienna for favours. Their dash and zest for life came from their Tartar origin, and their etiquette and learning came from Austria.

Not being Slavs but hemmed in by other Slavonic nations, the Hungarian cuisine was influenced by these nations. This cuisine is rich and heavy, favouring pork and veal, specially pork, which is presented in all forms. Most of the cooking is done with pork dripping.

From their Tartar ancestors, the Hungarians have acquired a taste for paprika (ground seeds of red pepper), which is used in the preparation of most

of their national dishes and for which their cuisine is known in the main.

Hungary produces a large quantity of wines of which only a small proportion is exported to Britain. Of all the wines, which are otherwise mainly white, it is the red Bulls Blood which is best known here as well as the famous dessert white wine, Tokay (which is sweet) and Szamorodni (which can be both dry and sweet). Some other countries have used the name Tokay to describe a wine of their own, but Tokay comes from Hungary; its production is strictly government-controlled. As with most other Slavonic countries, Hungary produces plum brandy (Slivonice) and apricot brandy of which the Hungarians are very fond.

When abroad, the Hungarian enjoys wine and beer as much as the next man.

America—We call the Americans our cousins from across the ocean, but all nations, irrespective of colour, creed or religion, could, to some extent, do the same. All the different immigrants to the United States have taken with them their own national cuisines, etiquette and customs. These have been put into the 'melting pot,' out of which has come the American way of life.

The industrialisation and modernisation of North America has brought about such things as tall buildings, and central heating. I must mention central heating because it has a great influence on the American way of life. It means dry air which, in turn, makes the body dry. Add to this the fact that American children are taught at school that the body needs about two gallons of water per day, one has the answer to why all Americans demand iced water with every meal (often at breakfast). As America is also one of the biggest farming countries in the world it is not difficult to put two and two together and see why they are big milk and fruit juice consumers. It is not only that

these things are good for their health but also good business that they should be so. However, it still beats me why Americans at lunch-time, which is always a light meal in contrast to the evening meal, should partake of so many liquids at one time, for example, cream soup, salad, water, milk and coffee—all served at the same time. Perhaps the answer is because they are extremely vitamin and calorie conscious.

It is difficult to pin Americans down to being either wine or beer drinkers, but as they produce in California about 150 million gallons of wine a year, one can say they have made a good start in this direction. Added to this another 9 to 9½ million gallons of imported wines are consumed—the result is a consumption of about four bottles of wine per head per year (compared with three gallons per head in this country).

Wine consumption in the United States is uneven. Beers, of the light lager type, have a much more even distribution. I would not like to guess the annual consumption, for beer is a 'must' in most refrigerators.

Although the creation of cocktails has been recognised as an American achievement, it is a fact that mixed drinks of a kind were being offered by hosts long before Columbus sailed into the unknown.

Besides liking their martinis dry and well iced, but not watered down, Americans prefer to have them decorated with a small green olive on a cocktail stick in place of the customary twist of lemon peel. Another prevalent fad is to have them 'on the rocks' (i.e. poured over ice cubes in the glass).

Originally, dry martini was half gin and half dry vermouth but as time went on, a taste for drier and drier martinis developed. Today, they are nearly all gin with just a dash of dry vermouth. Even this dry martini does not please

all because gin sold in America is of higher alcoholic gravity than gin sold in most European countries; it gives the mixture more strength. This is a point worth remembering when a complaint is made.

Not to mention Bourbon whisky would amount to sacrilege. Bourbon whisky is distilled mainly from a fermented maize mash and derives its name from Bourbon County, in Kentucky, where it has been made since the days of the early settlers, and is as American as the United States flag.

Speaking generally, when dining out, Americans like fruit, grilled fish and steaks (they use the word 'broiled' for grilled), salads, ice cream, iced drinks and water. They are not fastidious eaters and they prefer light lunches, with the main meal at night.

They like cocktails and spirits before a meal but not with it; they will drink wine or chilled beer, but seldom at lunch time. They insist on iced water with every meal, and coffee, either black or with cream, either with or after a meal. They are not liqueur drinkers to any great extent.

As they come to Europe for either business or pleasure, Americans want to do and see as much as possible in the time available to them. They do not want to spend too much time over meals nor do they all want to stay in American hotels all the time, for they can do these things back home. But they do expect the same amenities (for which they are prepared to pay) as they would get in such a hotel, that is porter and lift service day and night, clean room with bath and WC, central heating, telephone, room service, menus in English, quick service, politeness and at least the skeleton of a twenty-four hour service. Above all they want iced water at all times.

As Americans are very 'ancestor conscious' they like to go or be taken

to places where their forebears lived. As our shores are their second home, they are honoured to be accepted as kin, to be taken to our bosom and invited into our homes. Many a friendship has been established in this way.

China—Under the present circumstances it is difficult to write about China, its gastronomic expertise and way of life. What one must realise is that revolutions do not halt civilisation but give it another tempo, and add diversion to an established way of life. China, at present undergoing such a 'diversion,' is one of the oldest civilisations in the world, whose cuisine and gracious presentation of food constitute a gourmet's paradise.

Chinese cuisine is not confined to China only but is part and parcel of many of her neighbouring countries. When one thinks of China, three things come to mind, viz. tea, rice and chopsticks, and it is these three things that have had the most influence in forming the Chinese epicurean way of life.

Tea serves not only as a beverage but as an offering of welcome to a traveller or guest. The tea of welcome is green tea, served in small-handled porcelain cups, unsweetened and milkless.

Rice is the basic mainstay of the whole population and the backbone of its cuisine, and it has, like noodles (a pasta dish), a hundred and one ways of preparation.

Chopsticks by and large have had the biggest single influence of any on the Chinese cuisine. As they are useless for cutting, all joints or fish are presented in such a way that individual morsels can be picked up.

Here I hasten to explain that all the Chinese and kindred nationals we are likely to meet in this country, are well versed in the use of the knife and fork but their cuisine has kept its characteristics. On the whole they prefer dishes that are easy to eat.

China being such a vast country producing all the food one could wish for (including wine), it is difficult to describe it as either a wine or beer-drinking country.

Of course one hears about saké, a spirit brewed from rice (the staple produce of the soil). This is similar in strength to sherry and is served hot, in small cups, very ceremoniously. It is more part of gracious hospitality than for hard drinking.

It is good to remember that Britain and China have in the past exchanged much hospitality, especially in the old colonial days. It is from these days that the Chinese have learnt to appreciate good Scotch whisky. From experience, I can say that not only do they enjoy whisky but also they can take their liqueurs.

For the westerner who is entertaining Chinese, it is good to remember that they are gracious and courteous hosts, who appreciate the finer points of hospitality. What kind of fare do they appreciate? All kinds of delicacies, be they from land, sea or air—soups, fried fish, pork, easy meat dishes, rice in various ways, fresh vegetables, raw fruit and sweetmeats.

The Chinese prefer spirits to cocktails and they are partial to a liqueur after a meal.

Japan—What I have said about China can, in the main, be applied to Japan. But Japan, densely populated, crowded into the four major islands, cannot be compared in either size or in the variety of its foods to China. It is dependent on the sea as much as on its rice crops for sustenance. This has had an influence on its cuisine, which is good, but not as good as that of China. One must remember, also, that Japan was isolated from the outside world for centuries and this denied her a natural development (of cuisine, too). But what has remained from her early days, even

more so than in China, is her etiquette, gracious hospitality, courteous manners and way of life.

As it is only about 120 years since she opened her islands to the world, she is still a nation young at heart and in mind but with a very old and long history. Her people are still seeking, and ready to learn the ways of other lands in commerce and history, as well as in the hotel trade and the culinary arts.

Wine production in Japan is small; only an insignificant proportion of it being exported, none of it to Britain. On the whole, wine has made little progress in Japan's epicurean way of life. But this does not mean that the Japanese do not indulge in wine when being entertained. As in China, saké is the national beverage and is served in small, handleless porcelain cups as an accompaniment to a meal. Here again a Japanese guest will not expect or ask for saké when in Europe. His maxim, as far as dining is concerned, is when in the west, do as the west does.

One inroad that has been made into the Japanese way of life is in the brewing and consumption of beer. This is of the light lager type, which, I am informed, is very good. The influence of and taste for beer was greatly enhanced by the American occupation forces who, in fact, made Japan into a beer-drinking nation.

As I have said, not all the Chinese come from China, and the same could be said of the Japanese. Traditional upbringing will, however, bind them to a traditional etiquette as well as giving them a preference for certain dishes and a specific manner of presentation.

The Japanese are partial to small delicacies of any kind, hot or cold, hors d'oeuvre, melons and fruits as appetisers. Cream soups, fish and shellfish in all forms are great favourites. As with main dishes there is a preference for

those that are easy to eat. Stews, fried poultry, meat balls, etc., are all appreciated. The Japanese are not partial to game. They eat fresh vegetables (raw or cooked), noodles, spaghetti and, of course, rice. They like fresh fruits, specially peaches and oranges, sweetmeats and ices of all kinds.

I would like to point out that most Asiatic nations, especially the Japanese, do not like to have their plates heaped up but would rather be offered a second helping. Delicacy and graciousness in the presentation of dishes, eastern or western, is the order of the day.

I now come to the end of my gastronomic run around the world. In such a short space it has been impossible to explain more fully the history, background, way of life or cuisine of any one country or group of countries. Neither have I been able to include all European countries in this short survey. But I hope that, by giving an overall picture of the leading epicurean nations, their cuisines, and, more important, their way of life and etiquette, I have rendered some service to those who entertain foreign guests, and to restaurant staffs on whose shoulders the success of a dinner so often depends.

APPENDIX

Wedding Banquet Seating

Following the publication in *The Wine-Butler* of the table setting printed on page 50, controversy arose on this question of correct seating at a wedding banquet.

On the opposite page, Fig 1 gives the version advocated by some of the Catering Technical Colleges. Fig. 2 is the version preferred today by one of

the biggest London catering establishments who have had experience of staging weddings over two generations.

Commonsense enters into all such arrangements. Family cross-currents must be taken into account—for instance the children of divorced parents may wish to marry and have both parents present, and this often necessitates a departure from the rule.

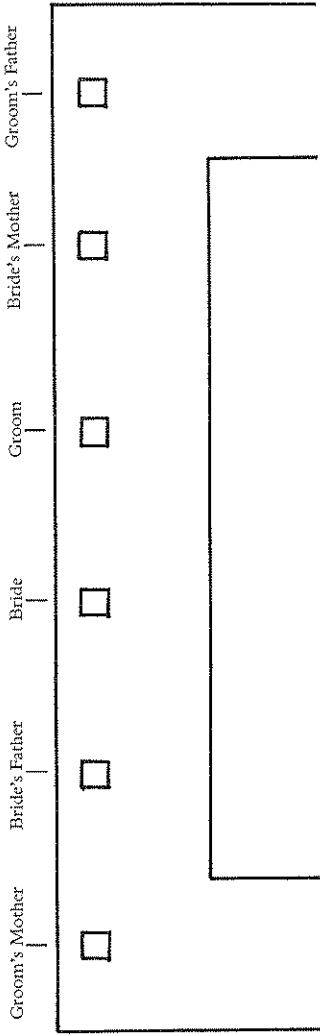


Fig. 1

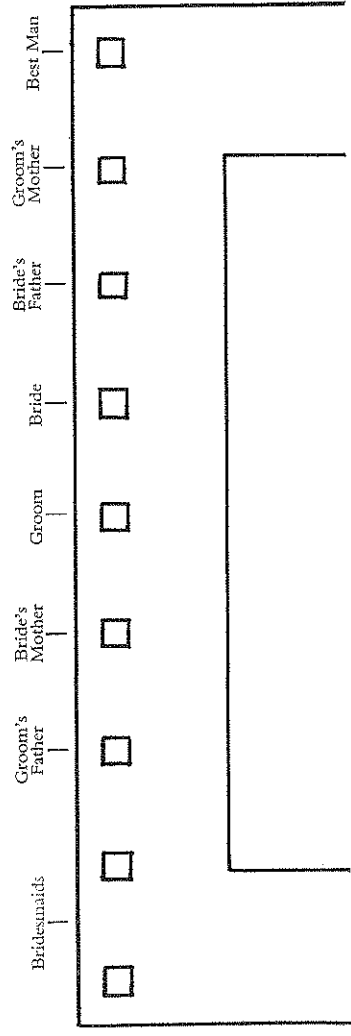


Fig. 2

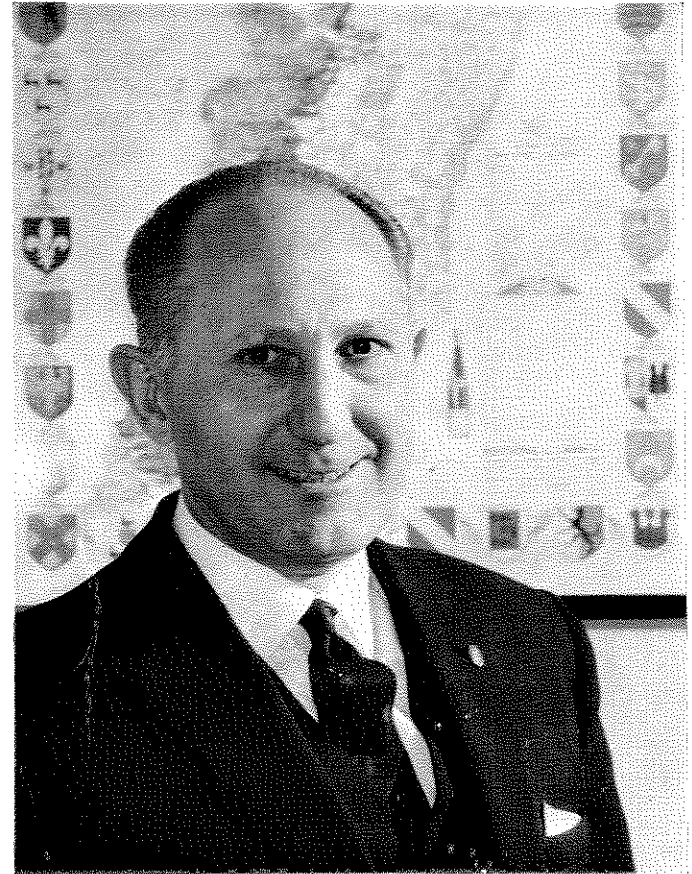


Photo by courtesy "London & Scotland Today"

Mr. Geoffrey Hasler is a founder member of the Guild of Sommeliers—he was one of the first chairmen, and has for many years been a Council member. He is acknowledged as one of the pillars of the Guild, unremitting in his work for it, and in his enthusiasm. He has had thorough training both abroad and in this country, in every aspect of hotel and restaurant work, but his special interest has always been wine. He is a member of the Panel of Consultants of The Academy of Wine.

It is from his practical work as head sommelier in a premier hotel that he can write in so informed and detailed a way about the wine-butler's role, and from his experience also as assistant restaurant manager that he understands the vital importance in a restaurant of a good wine service.

As far as can be ascertained no specialized manual for the instruction of sommeliers exists. We do not doubt that every serious student and trainee in the restaurant and hotel world will find Mr. Hasler's book an inimitable reference volume. In particular, it will prove invaluable to every wine-butler.