

Sichel & Cie

19, Quai de Bacalan, 19
BORDEAUX

1964 VINTAGE REPORT

After a hot and fairly dry summer the vintage in the red and dry white producing areas began generally during the week of 21st. September. At this stage the grapes were extremely healthy and hopes correspondingly high. Until the 25th. the weather remained perfect and after heavy rain on the 26th. it was again dry though cloudy from the 27th. to 29th. The first three days of October were extremely wet - more rain fell from the 1st. to 3rd. than normally falls in the whole month of October. Then followed three days of fine sunny weather to be followed by more very heavy rain that continued daily from the 8th. to the 18th.

Most vineyards require at least 10 days to pick their crop. Those therefore that started on the 21st., made the most of the first days of fine weather and were able to finish vintaging during the second spell of fine weather from the 5th. to 7th., did so under good conditions. Their wines will certainly be good. Many however did not start until late in the week and some, including some of the well known vineyards in the Medoc, did not begin until the week beginning the 5th. of October. The quality of these wines has certainly suffered from the fact that they were largely gathered in the rain and that by the time the last were being picked many of the grapes were rotting.

In the sweet white wine producing areas hopes were also high but here, where the vintage is always later, they have been more seriously affected by the bad weather. The sunny weather that we have had since the 18th. October has renewed the possibility of useful wines being made but at the time of writing (21st. October) the vintage has only just begun and a great deal will depend on the weather during the next two weeks.

The quality of wines produced this year will

con't...

certainly vary enormously. Apart from the mixed weather during the vintage growers have also had to cope with the two habitual difficulties of wines produced in a hot summer - lack of acidity and dangerously high temperatures during the vinification. Before the vintage it was hoped that wines would be produced of similar quality, and perhaps similar in style, to those of 1959. Some will reach this high level but others, who had been less fortunate with the weather and less skillful in their vinification will not do so. It is likely that they will therefore vary from "very good" to "fair" and perhaps even to "poor".

If the overall quality is not as outstanding as had been hoped the quantity has beaten all the most optimistic forecasts. Exact figures will not be known until the "Déclaration de récolte" in November but it is already clear that some areas have produced as much this year as in such record years as 1955 and 1950.