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LONDON DRINKER

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Look a gift horse in the teeth

THE NEW RANGE of Ind Coope beers - Taylor Walker, Benskins, and Friary Meux, plus the keg John Bull - has been promised for months and is now available. But how can the giant Romford Brewery, geared to 600-barrel batches (172,800 pints), brew a selection of beers?

Our mole has been at work to find out the truth, and this turns out to be what the cynics had guessed - there are not as many beers as there are names. The range of tastes is being achieved by ingredients which are incorporated after brewing rather than by the use of individual recipes.

The Romford system is of 'paired' beers:

- Benskin's bitter and Friary Meux bitter
- Taylor Walker bitter and John Bull keg
- Light ale and KK mild.

Each pair is produced from a basic recipe and the resultant brew adapted in the appropriate quantities.

It is sad to see a modern brewery having to resort to such a dodge to provide customer choice. In extenuation, one can sympathise with Ind Coope having to cope with the archaic scale of their equipment, des-

igned for ubiquitous standard products as symbolised by that dead Red Hand which still lies on the new range.

What's yours - consomme Benskin or Friary Meux Bouillon?

Note: Because of the scurrilous nature of the above item and the deep and lasting friendship which our publisher enjoys with the Ind Coope oligarchy, this edition of the 'Drinker' will not be distributed in Essex.



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