

Early History of the American Oil Chemists' Society

Address Delivered by David Wesson Before the
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IN 1884 there were very few chemists in this country familiar with the chemistry of fats and oils.

William B. Allbright who had been with N. K. Fairbank Company of Chicago, for several years, was probably the best posted man of the industry at that time. Armour and Company made the boast that they had no chemists and that Fairbank, by means of a chemist, took all the good quality out of his products.

With the formation of the American Cotton Oil Trust in 1888, chemists and their work became more appreciated. At that time, however, there were very few really trained chemists in the business which as time went on called for more and more chemists till every large company employed either a chemist or somebody who called himself such. As the chemists became more and more appreciated by the trade, their advice was relied upon in forming rules for transactions in cottonseed products.

Chemists of different companies used to attend the Conventions of the Interstate Cottonseed Crushers Association and about 1904 an advisory Committee of three chemists was appointed to aid the rules committee in their work. A larger committee was formed in 1909 and their first printed deliberations were published in that year.

At the annual Convention of the Interstate Cottonseed Crushers As-

sociation a number of chemists were present, and talking among themselves, decided it would be a good plan to form an Oil Chemists' Society. It was a very interesting occasion and some fine political work was done by the chemists representing the different conflicting interests to see that particular companies should receive as much influence as possible in the makeup of the new Society. There were so few trained chemists among the probable membership that it was decided to adopt the name of Cotton Products Analysts. As the industry grew it came to depend on chemistry more and more. Many of the leading chemists of the country joined the Society and its name was changed in 1921 to The American Oil Chemists' Society.

There is a big field for such a Society. It should not be limited to the cotton oil industry, but should have among its members those working in animal oils, paints, soaps, all kinds of vegetable oils and in fact everything of a fatty nature except petroleum and its products which obviously occupy a quite different field.

The Society now has a great many such chemists as members and will undoubtedly soon number in its ranks all the capable oil and soap chemists of the country.

Application Blanks for membership in the American Oil Chemists' Society may be obtained from OIL AND FAT INDUSTRIES.