

# OIL & FAT INDUSTRIES

## The Editor's Page

### The Chemical Age

AS TIME, the inexorable, continues on his endless round, those who attempt to visualize the progress of mankind must constantly change their conceptions of the world, its governments, its social motivations, the ideas, ethics and morals of peoples, and above all, the trend of civilization as exemplified particularly by the major type of man's constructions and manufactures.

Thus the geologist, the archeologist and the antiquarian have been able to portray for us the strivings upward of mankind through countless ages, out of the nomadic darkness of fireless existence into and successively through the epochs when stone, wood, copper, bronze and iron were each ascendant in man's economy.

Mediaeval civilization, as distinguished from that of the ancients, was characterized by the development of particular skill in the arts, especially as applied to painting, weaving of fine fabrics and the working of delicate designs in the precious metals. The progress of civilization has been halted from time to time and on occasions has seemed even to retrogress, but in the main, progress has been quite steady.

Our modern civilization, which of course had its ultimate foundations in the revival of learning in Europe during the early part of the present millennium, appears to owe its life and nature to four major factors, namely; steam, steel, electricity and blasting powder. Of these factors, three are essentially forces, the fourth a material of construction, useful for buildings and machinery.

Close observers of manufacturing development in the current era note that the production of synthetic materials by chemical methods is forging into such prominence as to already stand equal with the production of steel, not in volume but as an indication of the type of mankind's mental progress. The past twenty years have given us synthetic plastic materials, cellulose fabrics, composition wall boards, syn-

thetic solvents beyond number, foodstuffs, lacquers, and many other examples of the versatility of the chemist and the engineer. The development of new products and processes has made great advances, but may be said to have only scratched the surface of the possibilities. We confidently expect the next ten years to show even more adaptation of chemical synthesis to the useful arts than was achieved in the past.

### Fools and Fortunes

WE VERY occasionally get a chance to do a little reading on subjects somewhat apart from oils, fats and soap. In a recent issue of our esteemed contemporary, "Collier's Weekly" there appeared an article entitled "Figgerin' Fools" which we respectfully recommend to the attention of the oil producing and refining industries of this country.

The author shows how the boys who, when in school, exhibited especial aptitude for mathematics, have developed into the modern statisticians who chart the course of business in all successful lines. The subject is developed by the example method, the examples including that of the telephone company which is forced to install the automatic switching system because the statistician has proven from facts and figures that in 1950 there will not be available a sufficient number of suitable young women to operate the manual switchboards. Another example cited was that of a coal merchant in one of our largest cities who changed an annual loss into a profit through acting on the advice of a "figure hound" as to proper seasonal distribution of sales and purchases.

In summary, it is today clearly apparent that proper and intensive study of figures will invariably reveal the trend of buying habits, of demand and of supply as well. The effect upon an industry of import or export tariffs can be clearly charted by the persistent statistician who has available records of foreign and domestic trade before and after the imposition of the duties. The same records over a period of years will inevitably disclose the changing hab-

its of the nation. We feel sure that the proper set of figures will tell the trained statistician what percentage of American housewives have entirely abandoned baking, and what percentage still prepare their own cakes and pies, even while relying on the baker for the daily bread supply. Figures too, will reveal how many mix their own mayonnaise and other salad dressings and how many bring home these essentials of epicurean living from the corner grocery or delicatessen shop.

If the oil producers and refiners, either individually or through their trade associations, will avail themselves of the controlling facts and figures of their trade, which figures are surely available through the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture and through many published buying-habit surveys, they will be able so to plan and develop their businesses, individually, collectively, or both, that they can be bravely independent of tariffs and other legislative acts, secure in the knowledge that they command their commercial fates and fortunes.

### Manila Copra Cable

According to a cable from Trade Commissioner Howard at Manila, on March 20, copra prices declined throughout February and well into March. Production of copra was about fifty percent of the same period of last year and arrivals continued to be very low. Receipts at Manila to March 18th were 96,083 bags, at Cebu to March 14th 93,654 bags. The leaf miner pest situation is still critical in the districts affected, as the pest has been carried by the winds into new territory despite efforts to establish a deadline.

### Weihman Heads Oil Trades

Clifford T. Weihman, of the Smith-Weihman Co., Inc., was elected president of the Oil Trades Association of New York at the annual election on March 27. A. A. Hoffman was elected vice-president and Philip C. Meon, treasurer, while J. C. Smith was re-elected secretary. The new directors, in addition to the officers, ex-officio, are Albert J. Squier, R. E. E. Hood, Wm. L. Koburger, George Suraud, William Stewart Williams, Edwin Stern and C. Rogers Brown. Thirty-five new members were elected to the association during the year. Following the reports of officers and other general business, Philip C. Meon, the retiring president, thanked the officers and com-

mittees for their untiring support, and after inducting Mr. Weihman into office, pledged his best efforts to make the new administration an unqualified success.

The production of palm oil in Java during November amounted to 2,180,548 kilos, and the production from January to November was 24,364,052 kilos. The production of palm kernels for November amounted to 425,053 kilos, making a total of 4,793,291 kilos produced from January to November. *U. S. Dept. of Commerce.*

A report from Consul General Osborne at Stockholm, Sweden, states that increased imports of vegetable oils indicated a continued expansion in Swedish margarine industry. Except for soya beans which registered a slight increase there was a marked decline in the volume of oilseeds imports.

Wesson Oil and Snowdrift Company reports a consolidated net income for the quarter ended November 30 of \$758,177, equal after cumulative convertible dividends to 60c a share on 600,000 common shares.

### Foreign Trade Opportunities

The Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce of the Department of Commerce announces that its representatives in all parts of the world have forwarded the following trade inquiries of interest to our readers. In writing the Bureau in reference to any of these inquiries please mention that you saw it in *Oil & Fat Industries.*

No.	Location	Material	Purchase or Agency
43876	Egypt	Oils	Both
43788	Germany	Nut Oils	Purchase
44111	Colombia	Lard	Agency
43916	Canada	Coconut Oil	Both
44009	Canada	Edible Oils	Purchase
43989	Chile	Edible Oils	Agency
44222	England	Greases	Purchase
44157	England	Tallow	Purchase
44339	Ecuador	Lard & Shorten'g	Agency
44334	Germany	Soap Oils	Purchase
44330	Italy	Wool Grease	Agency
44340	Austria	Cooking Fats	Either