



*N. C. Hamner*

## **New Society President Elected at New Orleans Meeting**

**N**ICHOLAS C. HAMNER, President of the American Oil Chemists' Society for 1932-33, was born near Howardsville, Virginia, on November 4, 1879. He was educated in private schools and at the University of Virginia. After spending two years as a chemist in the iron industry, he was on the staff of the Pennsylvania Agricultural Experiment Station and later with that of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.

After five years and a half as City Chemist for the city of Dallas, Texas, Mr. Hamner joined in the organization of Southwestern Laboratories, of that city, becoming its first president, and is still associated with that business. His varied experience prior to the establishment of Southwestern Laboratories has fitted him for the upbuilding of one of the leading analytical and consulting laboratories of the South and Southwestern Laboratories is recognized as such.

His analytical and consulting work has covered, in addition to cottonseed oil chemistry, much work on water, coal, petroleum, and in other fields.

Mr. Hamner joined the American Oil Chemists' Society shortly after its organization and has been an active worker for the Society's good for many years.

He is a capable chemist and executive, with a forceful and genial personality which has earned him the respect and admiration of all his associates in the Society.

## Current Developments on Whaling Industry

**A**N interesting tariff question has arisen in a case in which the Procter & Gamble Co. is appealing before the U. S. Court of Customs and Patent Appeals. The matter is concerned on duty on whale oil which was made on the high seas, this oil having been taxed at the rate of six cents per gallon. The company objected on the ground that the oil had not been made in a foreign country. It happened that the oil was produced on a Norwegian vessel which is in reality a floating factory. In arguing the case Frederick R. Coudert of New York, attorney for the aforementioned company, pointed out that

tariffs have been applied only to articles imported from foreign countries into the United States.

He said that as this whale oil did not come from any foreign country the tariff act does not apply. By no possible interpretation of international law could the court hold that the Ross Sea or any part of the high seas is a foreign country, he said, so the only way in which this whale oil could be considered as coming from a foreign country is to construe the ship as being a part of a foreign country, as had been done by the lower court.

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## League of Nations in Defense of Whales

An international convention to preserve whales, which according to League of Nations reports received by the Department of State are rapidly disappearing, was signed by the United States March 31.

The treaty was signed in Geneva by the American Minister to Switzerland, Hugh R. Wilson, and announcement was made simultaneously by the Department of State. The treaty has been signed by other important whaling countries including Great Britain and Norway.

Only about 100,000 whales now remain in the entire world, according to a League of Nations report which states that international protection must be established if the mammoth of the sea is not to become as extinct as the dinosaur. Practically all the surviving whales now are concentrated in the Antarctic, where the whaling industry has become intensified due to the new method of whale-catching employing vessels known as "floating factories."

The following additional information was made available in the League report:

Fleets of small vessels or airplanes operate from these mother ships, the planes being used for spotting whales. When a whale is sighted, there is fired into it a harpoon attached to an electric wire, through which an electric charge usually capable of electrocution is given. This modern method of whaling has so revolutionized the industry that tremendous profits are

being made despite the rapidly dwindling number of whales.

Although production of whale oil was only 130,000 tons in 1913, it had jumped to 200,000 tons by 1926 and in 1928 had exceeded 230,000 tons. So profitable has been the industry that the Tronsberg Whaling Company of Norway has been paying 50 per cent dividends, and in 1925 ordered the construction of four additional whalers.

The result of this intensive whale hunting is described as "veritable butchery," according to Luciano H. Valette, chief of the Argentine Fisheries. "It is all the more deplorable when one considers the uniparous character of whales and the length of their period of gestation," Senor Valette reported.

An announcement by the Department of State regarding the whaling convention signed March 31 follows in full text:

The American Minister to Switzerland, Hugh R. Wilson, signed this morning at Geneva, on behalf of the United States, the Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, which was opened for signature on September 24, 1931. This convention, which has been signed by most of the countries having important whaling industries, including Great Britain and Norway, was drawn up with the object of securing effective international action for the preservation of whales from indiscriminate and wasteful slaughter.