

An Englishman's View of the American Oil Chemists' Society

IT seems that for 40 years you have had the advantage of a Society which brings together all the varied interests which center around the wide field of fatty oils, their diverse uses, their substitutes in one form or another, the technological sides of their applications, and their fundamental chemical study. We have been less fortunate in Britain, in spite of the existence for almost as long of a very live body, the Oil and Colour Chemists' Association. This caters admirably to one section of our common field of interest, the drying oils; but O.C.C.A. of course also has to cover other subjects, pigments, synthetic plastics, etc., which are beyond the range of fatty oils *per se*. We have no one body which so comprehensively includes all aspects of fat technology and science as the A.O.C.S., and that is in many ways a pity.



T. P. Hilditch

I share the view held currently over here that further creation of specialist societies is not a desirable thing, but concurrently I often look at your Society with some envy and wish that we possessed a British body with the same broad coverage of all aspects of the now very large and diverse interests connected with fats and fatty oils. It would be ungrateful not to add that we manage very well with the facilities given by our Society of Chemical Industry, Society of Public Analysts, and some other bodies who, in addition to the Oil and Colour Chemists' Association, are also interested in one or other of the applications of fats and oils; but you realized in time that the subject is large and complex enough to warrant a Society which links together all the divergent interests.

Naturally our chief interest is in your Journal. The number of British members of your Society is perhaps not very large, but there must be few technical institutions or industrial firms in Great Britain or the British Commonwealth who do not include the Journal in their libraries. Apart from its admirable format and arrangement, it seems to me to have two chief virtues. Its contents range from those of an essentially fundamental character, on the one hand, to matters of severely practical and technical import on the other; it covers the whole field, including papers on detergents in their present-day variety, edible fat technology, antioxidants, lecithins, glycerol, drying oils, and their many technical permutations, and so on. The Journal attracts contributions from some of your distinguished academic biochemists and physical chemists as well as from a wide circle of your technical research personnel, many of whose names thus become as familiar to British readers as in their own country.

Scientific courtesy includes frankness, and if a note of criticism may add piquancy to what is otherwise a song of praise, then occasionally one finds a paper in which a mass of experimental detail might have been pruned and presented in a form easier for the reader to comprehend what it is all about. But unfortunately this is a defect to be found at times in most scientific journals, and so, at all events, you are in good company.

The cooperative work on analytical methods so thoroughly undertaken by committees of the A.O.C.S. is most valuable and excites careful attention in this country. The selection of abstracts of papers from other journals, again, appeal to us by their informative quality. As one much interested in additions to knowledge of the composition of natural fats, I welcome especially the accounts of newly investigated fats and fatty oils which frequently appear in your Journal. Finally, in America, more than in Britain, your industrial organizations encourage the publication of the results of their research groups, insofar as such results are of general value and do not involve undue disclosure of the private interests of the firms, an example which could with advantage be more generally followed over here.

I know that all my British colleagues would wish to join me in complimenting your Society on its splendid record of work for scientists and industrialists in the field of fats, fatty oils, and detergents, and on the value and excellence of your Journal.

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