

Progress in the West

ON February 16, of this year, a second child was born to the A.O.C.S. As predicted by E. B. Kester,¹ the infant appears to be a lively and healthy offspring. Indeed it should be, with its unusual three-year period of gestation. Christening, by Procter Thomson, took place on the beautiful spring morning of April 12, in San Antonio, Texas. This affair was attended by the most enthusiastic group of members and wives that it has ever been my pleasure to see.



Lee Avera

The Northern California section of the Society has been defined as that part of the Golden State of California which lies north of and includes the city of Fresno. As Dr. Kester has so ably described in this Journal, the enthusiasm and effectiveness of this local section is difficult to transmit by simple description. From the first meeting it became apparent that far more local interest exists among those active in the fields of fats, oils, and soaps than has been adequately expressed by national society memberships. Alert interest has been found among allied interest groups, including petroleum, and notably paint.

Our meetings begin with a half-hour general social gathering accompanied by apéritifs. These are dispensed from a portable stand attended by several volunteer members of the group, and the one dinner charge covers the entire evening. Congenial discussion groups form, but the friendships which have grown cause a shifting and reformation of these groups which provide a great satisfaction to all.

Our March meeting was quite representative of our activities. About 112 cards were mailed to announce the meeting, and 75 cards were received in answer. Dinner was completed, and the brief business meeting was called to order.

Quite deliberately a delightful informality always prevails, and we are scrupulously careful to avoid any pretext of red-tape type of activity. The speaker is always one of renown, such as Dr. Englert of the Stanford Research Institute. We are fortunate to draw speakers of importance from across the continent, such as C. E. McMichael of Girdler Corporation from Kentucky. Although our meetings are never staid and practical questions receive their just attention, we also achieve an excellent presentation of the more formidable fundamentals of our profession.

ONE of our declared objectives is the avoidance of formal papers such as appear in the Journal and are given at the national A.O.C.S. meetings. It is rather an extension of the informal meetings at the coffee table with friends that we seek as a keynote for our local sectional meetings. Round-table discussions, led by members of our group upon a chosen subject, have been successful. In this type of meeting no outside speaker is present. When we invite a speaker from without our organization, he is encouraged to deliver his talk rather than to read a prepared statement. The period of questions and general discussion of the subject covered by our speaker is always refreshing. We are told by all of our speakers that our local group is indeed unique with respect to its keen and enthusiastic response to the stimulus of a presentation.

This matter of national membership has received an amazing stimulus through the decision of the A.O.C.S. to grant us official sectional status. Membership application blanks were all used up at our last meeting, a most encouraging prognosis for national society growth in this section.

One of the most active committees of our section is comprised of all members who attend the national society meeting. A report on the papers given and the highlights of the business session of the parent society are always expected and received by the local section. As many programs and papers as can be obtained at the national meeting are distributed and discussed at the local section meeting.

No report of the progress of this section would be complete without mention of the truly remarkable support given by each member of the steering committee formed each year. Personal time and effort are freely given without stint or complaint. While the present chairman was away at the San Antonio meeting, our entire meeting for June 4 was arranged down to the last detail.

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¹Journal of the American Oil Chemical Society, Vol. XXX, No. 8, August 1953.