

California, Here I Come!

THIS REFRAIN is our singing commercial to bid you welcome to the 33rd Fall Meeting of the American Oil Chemist's Society. It is to be held September 28-30, 1959, at the Statler-Hilton in El Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de Los Angeles de Porciuncula. If you do not recognize the official name of our fair city, it is more commonly called Los Angeles, for short.

The Southwest Section of our Society has given me the pleasant assignment of extending this welcome to you. Our committees are hard at work on convention arrangements that point toward a successful fall meeting. The program committee, under the chairmanship of Roslyn Alfin-Slater (she is also our Section chairman), is shaping up an excellent technical program. Lack of space prevents mention of other committees which are planning entertainment of high order and other detailed arrangements so necessary to make a good convention.

We hope that you are planning to combine vacation plans with convention attendance. As Californians, we are proud of our state and want you, our expected guests, to know the reasons why. Perhaps we are also inclined to be boastful, and I am no exception, but I shall try to temper my statements as best I can. In fact, I shall begin with the negative approach.

What could be more negative than a dissertation on smog? No tourist folders mention smog, and I shouldn't either. But you have doubtless read about it, and so why shouldn't it be talked about? Every day we have official smog predictions along with our weather forecast. At first they were coded to read "red alert," "green alert," or what have you? When non-Los Angelenos (nonresidents of El Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de Los Angeles de Porciuncula) began to think that our smog came in assorted colors, the code was

abandoned in favor of plain English, such as "no smog today" or "light smog," etc. But we are making progress in studying the causes of smog and taking measures to hold it in check at least. I might mention that the Statler-Hilton is completely air-conditioned. Most of the time Los Angeles is also.



Harvey C. Bennett

Then a few words about our freeway system would be appropriate. No less an authority than our former president, Jim Konen, told me recently that he thought Los Angeles drivers were the most courteous he had seen anywhere except when they were on freeways. There they drive like demons, according to Jim. A recent news dispatch however credits us with being very expert drivers (in order to stay alive), and the obvious conclusion is that we are expert demons. We have a wonderful toll-free highway system of which we are rightfully very proud.

OUR Chamber of Commerce says that Los Angeles County has everything under the sun. Actually this isn't quite true. We don't have Yosemite or Sequoia national parks or the redwoods or even Dis-

neyland, which is nearby in Orange County. But we are somewhat surrounded by them as well as by such other tourist attractions as the Grand Canyon, Bryce and Zion national parks, San Francisco and Las Vegas, and our new state, Hawaii. (A post-convention group tour to Hawaii by air may be arranged by the convention chairman if sufficient interest is indicated.)

The Los Angeles Metropolitan Area is outranked only by those of New York and Chicago as an industrial area, based on value added by manufacture. Aircraft and electronics are our principal industries, but chemical manufacturing ranked fourth last year in new capital investment.

California is almost completely self-sufficient in the production of raw materials used in the manufacture of soap and detergents. Presently there is only one producer of alkyl benzene, but there are no less than eight companies engaged in large-scale sulfation and sulfonation. The sulfuric acid produced is entirely derived from by-product hydrogen sulfide separated by oil refineries in their normal refinery operations. Caustic soda and potash, soda ash, salt, salt cake, phosphates, and borax are all produced within the state, and they all originate from our natural saline deposits with the exception of phosphates. Methyl esters are produced as well as amides and related products derived from them. Toluene and xylene may be had from several local sources. Fats and oils are produced in this area in adequate quantities with some left over for export.

We hope that you will ignore alleged "hazards" of our area and come and see for yourselves the charm and beauty of our lovely southwest area. Adios Amigos!

HARVEY C. BENNETT, chairman, Fall Meeting, 1959