

OIL & FAT INDUSTRIES

The Editor's Page

The Outlook for 1929

THE oil and fat producers and refiners of this country have passed through many trying periods since the times of plenty which marked the world war period. If there is any known form of business ailment through which the industry has failed to pass, it is only because the many ills have left no room for another. Over-expansion, over-purchasing, too low a tariff, too high a tariff or no tariff at all, over-production or under-production by growers of our raw material, high seed prices, low seed prices and so on, have been the cry on every hand, until it apparently became impossible for anyone to determine what it was all about.

But out of all this confusion, it has finally become apparent in the industry that what the producers and refiners of oils and fats need most is a *definite policy*. That policy should be: "To produce only products of the highest quality at the lowest possible production costs and to market those products at prices which are fair, not only to the public, but to the seller, and to *competitors*, in order that the industry as a whole need not suffer the evil effects of price-wars, or of low quality merchandise foisted on the public by any single production unit."

During the year just ended, this industry has made considerable progress toward the attainment of this ideal, and as a consequence, most of the businesses concerned have been able to report a successful year. The most important event of the year was the adoption of a Code of Ethics and Trade Practice by the Interstate Cottonseed Crushers Association and by its newly rejuvenated Shortening and Oil Division. In summary, this code may be viewed as an exposition of the simple truth that the best business doctrine is "*Live and let Live*." The cottonseed mills have determined to try the experiment of paying only such prices for seed as will enable them to make a manufacturing profit out of their production of oil and cake, and the refiners are likewise determined to sell finished oil, shortening and other products, only at such prices and on such terms as will enable them to live. On this basis, the

coming year should be more successful than last.

This new year brings to the Cottonseed Crushers their biggest opportunity. If they really desire to make their Association a national, rather than a sectional body, now is the time to act. The problems and interests of the linseed miller, the copra miller in this country, the corn oil miller, and the American soya bean miller are identical with those of the cottonseed miller. All of these manufacturers will gladly join with the Cottonseed Crushers' Association if shown that the latter truly desires to make its body a strong national force for the advancement of American oil industries as a whole.

The outlook for 1929 is good. Do your share in making it good. As the industry as a whole improves, so will your business.

Government and Definitions

ELSEWHERE in this issue will be found news of the establishment of a standard for mayonnaise by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Before the issue of this standard and definition, the Department was called upon to consider seriously proposed claims that the right to use the word "mayonnaise" should be denied to all manufacturers who used any oil in their product other than olive oil. This brings to our mind the question, "To what lengths will our Government go in parcelling out the dictionary among its citizens?" and perhaps an even more relevant question, "In what article of our much-abused Constitution is the title and power of dictionary-interpreter conferred upon the Government, and upon what branch, the Executive, the Legislative, or the Judiciary?"

The word "mayonnaise" is a typical French word, adopted bodily into the English language for the purpose of defining a firm mixture of edible oil and egg or egg-yolk, used as an appetizer or relish with salads or sandwiches. No American has ever attempted to make the word imply or infer that one particular kind of edible oil must be used in the preparation of the product. We venture to say that even in France, the home of the word,

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