

OIL & FAT INDUSTRIES

The Editor's Page

The Times — and Business

WHENEVER there appears upon the business horizon the slightest cloud of a temporary recession from "Boom Times," the Harpies of the business world are ever ready to spread gloomy tidings and to predict calamity and disaster for the future. To a certain extent American business has been passing through such a period since the stock market debacle of last October.

In the course of some recent travel about the country, however, it has seemed to us that the United States is still in existence. In conversation with many manufacturers, we have been most impressed by the fact that those who are attending to the business of producing and selling, without lost motion or calamity howling, are still doing business at the same addresses. It is true that periods such as the present are most difficult for the "marginal producers." Those who have soared on the crest of the wave and overextended their facilities on a rising market find themselves confronted by the necessity of stern retrenchment. Those who have overlooked the paramount importance of keeping their manufacturing processes abreast of the times, in order that they may meet the keenest competition in the markets without sacrifice of their fair manufacturing profits, are in the unfortunate situation of selling their products at a loss, or of not selling at all.

How different is the position of the well-intrenched manufacturer who has foreseen such situations: who knows his costs and who by the application of scientific study to his processes has kept those costs within the bounds of his industry's best: who has maintained the quality of his products uniformly at such a high level that his customers insist upon his products and are willing to pay a fair price for them: who, by consistent well-planned advertising has created and fostered a steady demand for his goods in every market that he can reach with his deliveries, without attempting to "blanket the earth" or to get *all* the business, whether profitable business for him or the reverse: who, by fair treatment of his employees in good times and bad, has so

strengthened their morale that they, because of their confidence in him and their affection for him, work just a little harder to increase business and to reduce costs and improve quality: who has so ordered his financial affairs that his liquid capital is working for him instead of being "frozen" in top-heavy inventories of slow-moving materials and products: who, in short, has just been "paying attention to his business" at all times. Surely such a one is "blessed of the gods" and will keep right on doing business on an upward-sloping line that plows steadily through the peaks and valleys of all statistical condition charts.

Scientific Seed Grading

AT THE recent conventions of the American Oil Chemists' Society and the National Cottonseed Products Association held in New Orleans last month the outstanding achievement was the adoption by both bodies of new rules for the grading of cottonseed for purchase by the oil millers.

Throughout the past history of the cotton oil milling industry the miller has purchased seed at the market price or at whatever premium a scarcity of seed in his particular territory might impose upon him, with little or no regard to the quality of the product which he received in exchange for his money.

When, on the other hand, he came to market *his* products, the oil, the cake and the linters produced from the seed, he found himself subject to a well-developed and established series of rules governing quality, weights, terms and all other considerations affecting the sale contract. In addition, in the course of his operations it became apparent that the actual yield of oil varied in amount from different lots of seed, as well as the quality of the oil and the other products. Since the oil is by far the most valuable product produced from the seed, a slight reduction in the normal yield of oil from any particular lot of seed may well mean the difference between profit and loss for the miller on the handling of that lot.

While this condition has long been a source of extreme dissatisfaction to the oil millers, it has heretofore appeared insurmountable, because of the extreme difficulty of establishing standard grades for seed which would take into account all of the factors which affect its qualities, including the amount of oil which it would yield and the quality of that oil.

Now that useful branch of Government, the United States Department of Agriculture, has come to the rescue and through the efforts of several of its devoted scientists has established a standard method for grading cottonseed which, by properly evaluating the contained percentages of moisture, ammonia, tare, oil and free fatty acid in the oil, gives the miller a true picture of the values which he may expect to recover from each lot of seed purchased. From this he can quickly figure the highest price he can profitably pay for the seed. Thus is recorded yet another important contribution of science to industry.

Whale Oil and History

LATE last month, the famous whaler, C. A. Larsen, sailed into New York Harbor with some 75,000 barrels of oil in her tanks and proceeded to her destination at the pier of a Staten Island soap plant. Aboard her when she arrived were a group of men returning to civilization after a year or so spent in the Antarctic, members of the famous Byrd Expedition. While the whaler went about the business of discharging her cargo, the explorers went ashore to receive the honors due them after their great scientific adventure among the frozen wastes near the South Pole.

In writing the history of explorations in the Antarctic, the whaling fleet during the season just closed has played a prominent part. Incidental to the business of whaling, its knowledge of the treacherous ice pack, and its familiarity with the Antarctic seas, were of inestimable value to the explorers. What would be unbearable hardships to the average layman, are but part of the day's work among the whalers. The hardships are borne in order that their enterprises may pay dividends. Aiding in scientific explorations, writing history, are merely sidelights of a picture of cash profits for investors back home.

How little the consumer of the bar of soap in America or margarin in Europe appreciates that the products in the making have rubbed elbows with history, particularly more recent history of explorations in the Antarctic.

Helsingfors Margarine Factory

A report from the Commercial Attache at Helsingfors states that a new factory for the production of oleomargarine has been opened by the Finnish co-operative O. T. K. The new factory is located at Sornas, a district of Helsingfors, in a building of seven stories. The walls of this building are lined with glass and tile and there is a laboratory for the control of manufacture.

Dr. D. Tourtelotte, of Baltimore, has been appointed to the Research Fellowship of the Mayonnaise Products Manufacturers of America, Inc., and will enter upon his new duties about June 15th. The work of the Fellowship will be conducted in the laboratories of the Department of Agriculture at Washington on a cooperative basis with the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils. The Mayonnaise Fellowship has been made possible through the generosity of the American Can Company to the Association.

Aluminum cooking utensils have no selective destructive action on the antiscorbutic vitamin of milk, according to the results of the experiments carried out at Mellon Institute of Industrial Research, Pittsburgh, Pa. There has been a growing tendency to boil milk whenever it is to be used in supplemental feedings, or whenever a supply is of doubtful origin. In the Mellon Institute experiments milk was boiled lightly for five minutes in aluminum or glass containers. Some destruction of vitamin C occurred in each case as a result of the boiling, but the metallic utensils exerted no greater action than did those of glass. Another interesting observation was that winter milk from ensilage-fed cows is practically as potent in vitamin C as the best summer milk from cows on pasturage.

The use of saffron or turmeric in mayonnaise for the purpose of heightening the natural egg-yellow color has been prohibited by the Food Standards Committee of the Department of Agriculture.

Directors of the Van Camp Packing Company have voted to pass the quarterly dividend now due on the company's 7 percent preferred stock.

The absorption of hydrogen by oils in hydrogenation with a nickel catalyst is diminished by as little as two percent of nitrogenous matter in the oil. *Seifensieder-Ztg.* 56,248 (1929)