

# Editorial

## Food Laws:

**L**AWS are made for the protection of society. In the beginning there were no laws because man lived by himself and obtained what he desired on the principle that might makes right. When mankind began to congregate into groups or tribes it was soon found that rule of conduct were necessary because there were certain individuals who tried to obtain advantages at the expense of others and thus laws came into being, not to regulate the majority in society, but to keep in line those who tried to profit to the disadvantage of their fellowmen.

This also applies to food laws. All reputable manufacturers, and in this category we would place almost all of those engaged in manufacturing foods, place quality above all other considerations in the preparation of their products. It is their desire to give the consumer the best possible material at the least cost. In order to curb the few who are not so inclined food laws are necessary.

The Pure Food Law of 1906 has served a very useful purpose. It has corrected many evils and we will venture to say that no food manufacturer would care to go back to the days prior to its enactment. However, many changes have occurred since it became a law and those in charge of its enforcement feel that abuses have grown up which cannot be corrected under the law as it stands now, and there is no doubt that there is something to be said in favor of their attitude.

At the last Congress Senate Bill 1944 was introduced by Senator Copeland as a substitute for the Pure Food Law of 1906. This bill contained many features which were objectionable from the standpoint of the food manufacturer. For instance, it gave the Secretary of Agriculture dictatorial powers and there was no appeal to the courts from his decision. It required the labels to show all the ingredients of food specialties, in order of their percentage by weight, and also compelled the approximate publication of the formulae of food specialties. It forced the manufacturer to permit the inspection of his plant and records, and to divulge the methods and the material used in the preparation of their food products. These are a few of the objectionable features from the standpoint of the honest food manufacturer. So great an objection was raised to this bill that it was withdrawn and has been replaced by Senate Bill 2000, which is a great improvement over Senate Bill 1944, but still contains several questionable clauses.

We would reiterate that no food manufacturer objects to any laws designed to prevent defrauding the public, provided that such protection can be obtained without delving into the innermost secrets of the manufacturing processes. We should all, therefore, study Senate Bill 2000 very carefully and discuss with our organization any section which seems inimical to the best interests of our industry with the view of putting the matter before our representatives both in the Senate and House at Washington.

### The Pittsburgh Award to Dr. Ralph E. Hall

The Pittsburgh Section of the American Chemical Society has selected Dr. Ralph E. Hall, Director, Hall Laboratories, Inc., Pittsburgh, Pa., as the recipient of the 1933 (the first) Pittsburgh Award.

This honor, which will be conferred on Dr. Hall at the sectional meeting on February 15, 1934, has come to him in recognition of his distinguished service to chemistry and humanity, particularly his contributions to the fundamental knowledge of boiler-water reactions and their applications to the practical solution of boiler-water problems, his discoveries and technical accomplishments in the beneficiation and conditioning of water for industrial and domestic use, and his developments in the production of chemicals for these purposes.

The Pittsburgh Award is represented by an especially designed plaque of gold, on which the relation of chemistry to industry is symbolized artistically.

## Meeting of Society of Chemical Industry

**A** MEETING of the American Section of the Society of Chemical Industry will be held on Friday, February 16th, at 7:30 p. m., at The Chemists' Club, 52 East 41st street, New York City. The meeting will be devoted to an address by Prof. Donald B. Keyes of the University of Illinois on Cooperative Studies on Sulfur Dioxide Removal from Flue Gases. These studies are illustrative of the investigation carried out by the Chemical Engineering Division of that university in cooperation with industry. Anyone interested in the subject is invited to attend. A dinner will be held prior to the meeting at 6 o'clock at the Chemists' Club.

In his work Dr. Keyes used the particular problem of sulfur dioxide recovery as an illustration of the investigations which have been carried out at the University of Illinois in cooperation with various industries. The first method tried in the investigation described was to scrub the flue gases with a solution containing a catalyst. Taking advantage of the oxygen present in the flue gases, the sulfur dioxide obtained in the solution was oxidized to form sulfuric acid. It was found, however, that this process had certain economic disadvantages. The method worked out, which is now in use, is to scrub the gases with a salt solution having a high solubility for the sulfur dioxide at low temperatures and a low solubility at higher temperatures. The sulfur dioxide is recovered as a liquid product.

Donald B. Keyes took his degree of B. S. in chemical engineering at the University of New Hampshire in 1913. He received his M. A. at Colgate University the next year and in 1917 received his Doctorate in chemistry and engineering from the University of California. He worked as chemical engineer with the Beckman-Linden Engineering Company of San Francisco for two years and then with the U. S. Industrial Alcohol-Chemical Company for five years. In 1923 he was made Director of Research for the latter organization. In 1926 he went to the University of Illinois as Professor of Chemical Engineering and head of the Chemical Engineering Division, where he has remained since then. The fields of research in which Dr. Keyes has made outstanding contributions are catalytic oxidation, free energy determination for certain organic reactions, fractional distillation, and chemical studies involved in power production.