

Your Vote -- and Its Importance

IN any organization run along democratic lines it is a truism that failure of the membership to exercise its franchise in the nomination and election of the officers who head that organization can result in a weakening of the democratic structure.



E. M. James

In former years the officers of the American Oil Chemists' Society were chosen by a Nominating Committee, which received suggestions from the membership for likely candidates and, after careful deliberation, set up a slate which was formally adopted at the annual meeting and elected by the vote of the secretary. In framing the new constitution, the Constitutional Committee changed this procedure by providing that, with the exception of the automatic succession of the vice president to the presidency, wherever possible two candidates should be presented to the Society for each office. The membership now have an opportunity to indicate their preference among the candidates by written ballot.

For the guidance of the Nominating Committee in preparing the slate, the headquarters of the Society sends out nomination suggestion blanks to the entire membership, and the count of these ballots is used by the Nominating and Election Committee as guidance for the slate of candidates whose names appear on the election ballot.

Prior to the election a short biography of each candidate is published in the Journal in which his length of membership in the A.O.C.S., as well as his individual contributions to the work of the Society as a whole, are set forth in detail.

UNFORTUNATELY there are many members of the Society who exercise neither their right to suggest candidates for nomination nor their right to vote on the slate presented by the Nominating and Election Committee. The Committee for 1953-54 has just completed a tabulation of the nominating suggestion blanks. Out of a total of approximately 2,100 members entitled to vote, less than 300 nominating suggestions were received. This is a distressingly small number, and it is our hope that by calling the attention of the membership to the condition a better showing may be made next year.

While the response received to the election ballots is much higher than the nominating suggestions, still somewhat less than 50% of those entitled to vote in last year's election sent in their ballots.

In order to improve this condition, if possible, the Nominating and Election Committee this year shortened the period allotted for sending in nominating suggestions to four weeks, at the same time lengthening the time between the mailing of election ballots and the deadline for their receipt in the office of the Society to seven weeks. This year the deadline is March 12, 1954.

WE cannot too strongly urge the entire membership to exercise their constitutional rights to vote for the men who are to head the Society next year and thus not only carry out the spirit of our constitution but preserve and strengthen the democratic basis of our Society.

E. M. JAMES, Chairman
Nominating and Election Committee