The A.O.C.S. and the Protective Coating Industry

THE CHEMISTS in the protective coating industry have broad interests in fatty oils, their derivatives, and related products, and these interests are met by the present scope of the American Oil Chemists' Society. This happy union has taken place in recent years from two well-separated beginnings. The Society was organized in 1910 as the Society of Cotton Products Analysts. Although it expanded its scope and changed its name in 1920 to the American Oil Chemists' Society, its members were interested mainly in the non-drying oils. On the other hand, the protective coating chemists, at the time the Society was being founded, were concerned only with the drying oils. About 1930 the interests of the chemists in the "drying" and the "non-drying" fields began to overlap. Soybean oil found wide use as an edible oil and at the same time entered into resins, varnishes, and paints. Analytical methods, the chemistry of oxidation, fatty oil composition, methods of refining, production of oil, etc., are subjects of interest to the fatty oil chemists whether they specialize in soap-making, edible oil refining, or paint manufacture. In recent years many protective coating chemists have joined the Society to meet with their fellow chemists having similar interests. Besides arranging technical meetings, the A.O.C.S. renders numerous services to those in the protective coating industry.

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A glance through recent issues of this Journal will indicate many diverse subjects directly related to protective coating technology. For example, in this year's April issue several papers were published from the 1954 Minneapolis convention panel on drying oils. Among others that have appeared this year are papers on the evaluation of paints, tung oil, oxidation studies, new varnish preparation, and analytical studies on drying oils. The abstracts that appear each month are particularly useful in keeping up with the literature. There is a separate section for the drying oils. The annual review of the literature on fats, oils, and detergents is both useful as a check list to catch missed articles of possible interest as well as a convenient yearly summary by class of subjects.

Like many other industries the formulation and manufacture of protective coatings is not only becoming more complicated but is also becoming more of a science and less of an art. On both counts a larger number and more accurate analysis of the ingredients, intermediate compositions, and final products are necessary. From the start one of the major functions of the Society has been the improvement of existing and the derivation of new analytical methods for the fatty oils and related materials. The methods are studied through the efforts of various committees. Of particular interest to protective coatings chemists is the work of the Fat Analysis Committee, which is composed of more than 60 members and has about 20 subcommittees. As an indication of increasing interest in the drying oils, a special subcommittee was formed several years ago to study their analysis. Other subcommittees of interest are those on color, unsaponifiable matter, moisture, fatty acids, and iodine value. The Uniform Method Committee makes sure the methods are written up in a logical and understandable manner. The combined effort has resulted in the publication of the "Official and Tentative Methods of the American Oil Chemists' Society," a large collection which has received world-wide acceptance.

Even though methods are carefully worked out and published, analysts in different laboratories often obtain different results on the same material. The variation sometimes increases by a drifting process to a point where confusion and misunderstanding might occur. To help reduce these variations the Smalley Committee was founded 37 years ago. Check samples of various kinds are distributed to the interested laboratories for analysis. The results are tabulated, and each collaborator readily learns how his analytical tools are functioning. The drying oils group joined this scheme by the formation of a special subcommittee about eight years ago. Recently several years elapsed while the subcommittee was in a dormant state for lack of a chairman, but now it has been reactivated.

Seven yearly Short Courses have been sponsored by the A.O.C.S. These are held for a one-week period in the summer and consist of a series of lectures on one topic by highly experienced men. Of particular interest are the lectures of the 1950 Short Course on Drying Oils sponsored jointly by the A.O.C.S. and the Federation of Paint and Varnish Production Clubs. These appeared in this Journal for November 1950 and also were reprinted. A wealth of information is given on the chemistry of drying oils, their refining, processing, and utilization. Last year inedible fats and fatty acids were treated, and this year the subject was analytical techniques. Actually all of the short courses have direct or indirect application to protective coatings.

An attempt has been made to show the many ways in which the A.O.C.S. renders service to the protective coating industry. That this service is appreciated is indicated by the many members who are connected with this field.

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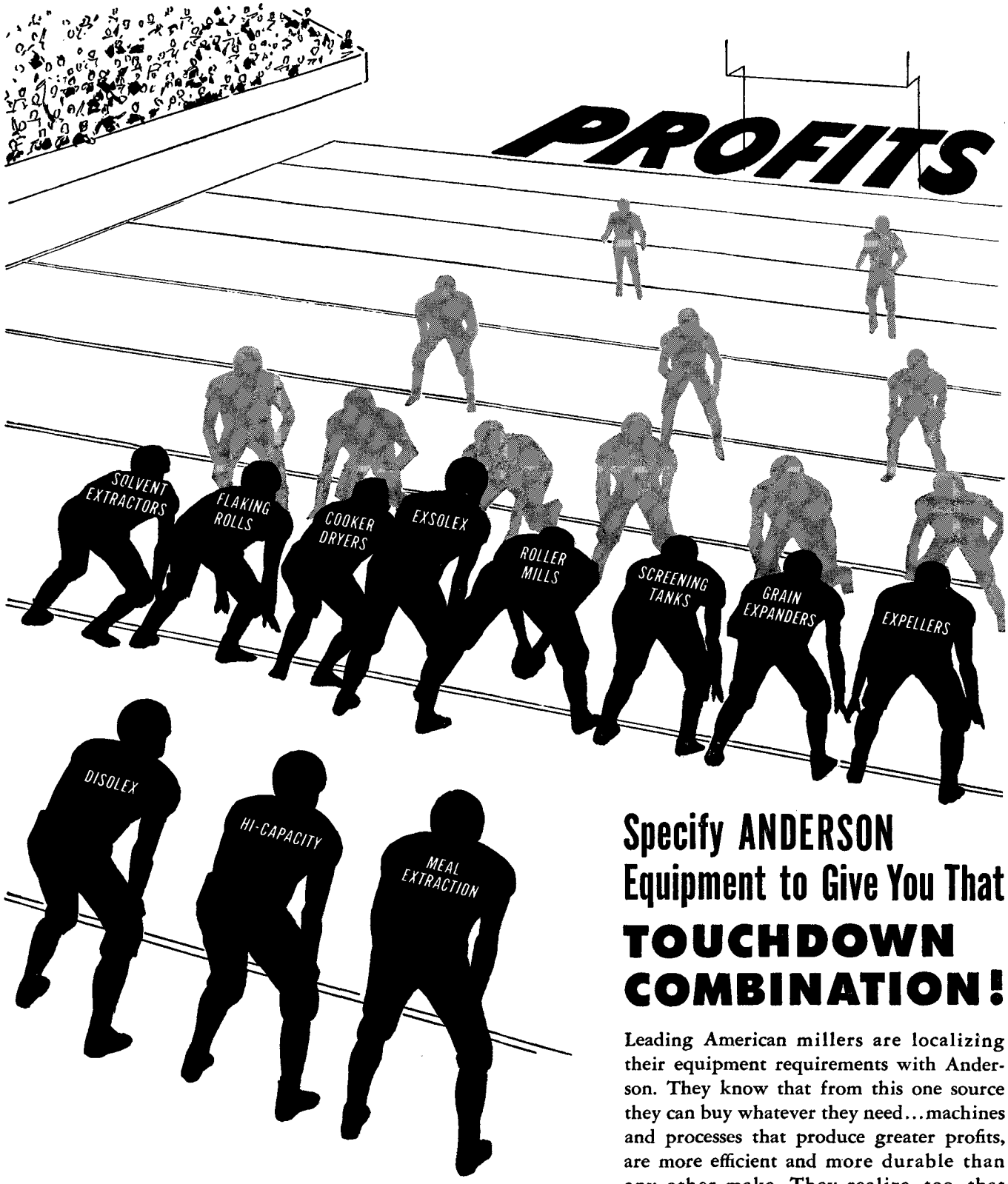

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