

OIL & FAT INDUSTRIES

The Editor's Page

Government Activities

DURING the past month or two, inspectors of the Food Division of The Department of Agriculture have been visiting the plants of various manufacturers of mayonnaise and other fatty food products, requesting data at first hand about the manufacture and composition of the products being produced. It is stated that in some instances original formulas were requested. At the time these visits from the inspectors began, they caused considerable resentment and uncertainty among some of the manufacturers whose establishments were inspected. The object of the inspections is evidently to discover at the source which products violate the law when shipped in interstate commerce and which do not.

Although under the law, it seems, manufacturers are not compelled to permit inspection of their plants by representatives of the Food Administration, the idea behind the inspections is better considered before judgment is passed. The object of the inspections must be to get a line on those who violate the law. Taking samples shipped in interstate commerce and prosecution is a later detail. Those manufacturers who do not violate the law, should have nothing to fear from this angle. At the same time, to reveal equipment, operating methods, and above all, formulas, to an inspector who might perchance, at some later date, leave the Government employ and engage in a similar business, is not reassuring. Manufacturers do not give out information of this kind to anybody willingly, even to a Government department. Fear of future pressure, direct or indirect, is probably the chief reason for revealing trade secrets where they are revealed.

The activity of the Food Administration is unquestionably aimed at products which do not conform to the law. Manufacturers who are incensed at this form of governmental snooping should bear in mind that it is aimed primarily to uncover those who are likely to break the law, or are breaking the law, and hence to protect the honest manufacturer as well as the public.

To the Government officials, it can well be said that, although the aims of their plan to get

the real facts at the source may be of the highest, activity of this type tends to antagonize business which does not break the law and has no intention of breaking it. The plan theoretically may have some value, but from the angle of law enforcement, we believe that it will not work out well in the long run.

The Tariff Compromise

LOOKING at the tariff rates on oils and fats as they have been reported out by the Senate Finance Committee, gives the impression that the Senate Committee has attempted to placate both sides. The rates on various oils suitable for edible purposes have been increased in a number of cases and oils which were on the free list have been placed on the dutiable list. Where these same oils are destined for the soap kettle or for other non-edible purposes, the plan of denaturation to render them unfit for food uses has been written into the bill. These denatured oils remain free of duty.

The chief demand for a higher duty on imported oils and fats has come from those quarters primarily interested in the production of food oils and from dairy and farm interests. The object has been first to permit the domestic producer of cotton oil, peanut oil, corn oil, and soya bean oil to sell his oil at a higher price, and second, to eliminate some of the competition for dairy products now present in margarins made from low cost imported oils. If the great proportion of American produced oils go into food products, which we believe they do, then a higher duty on the *edible* grades only of imported oils should give the American dairy and oil interests the protection they ask.

The largest consumer of non-edible imported oils is, of course, the soap industry. That it should wage a bitter fight against having its oils taxed is only natural. It has maintained that its raw materials play no part in the production of fatty food products and that it would not be a larger consumer of American produced oils even if the high tariff rates be-

came law. It suggested and fought for the denaturation plan for this reason.

If those who really represent farm interests in the tariff fight have been sincere, the tariff bill as reported out by the Senate should give them what they have desired. We are inclined to believe, however, that there have been many who have masqueraded as farmers, but who in reality are something different. To them, the bill is unsatisfactory, even though the Senate Committee has apparently attempted to please both sides.

Chemists' Committee Named

PRESIDENT W. R. Stryker has appointed a Committee of New York members of The American Oil Chemists' Society, to assist Mr. A. K. Church, Vice-president for the Soap Section, in the conduct of the Fall Meeting of the Society, which will be held at New York some time after October 1. The definite date and the program of the Meeting will be announced at a later date. Mr. Stryker and Mr. Church urge all members of the Society to attend the Meeting, particularly members of the Soap Section, to whom the program will be of especial interest. The Meeting Committee, as appointed by President Stryker, consists of the following members: H. P. Trevithick, David Wesson, A. P. Lee, W. A. Peterson, R. W. Bailey. Mr. Trevithick has consented to act as Chairman of the Committee, and all communications concerning the meeting and about papers to be presented thereat should be addressed to Mr. H. P. Trevithick, 2 Broadway, New York City. All chemists having an interest in the chemistry of soaps or soap materials are invited to become members of The Soap Chemists' Section of The American Oil Chemists' Society. Address the Secretary, Mr. W. A. Peterson, Kirkman & Son, 215 Water Street, Brooklyn, New York.

Tung Oil Fourth Chemical Import

CHINESE tung oil is the fourth largest chemical import of the United States, according to E. C. Wood, chemical division of the Department of Commerce.

Tung oil, also called China wood oil, is obtained from nuts of two varieties of trees, known as the *Aleurites montana* and the *Aleurites fordii*. These trees are indigenous to China, which at present is the world's source of supply. The former type is confined largely to the southern province of Kwangsi and Yunnan, and the latter to the provinces of Szechwan, Hunan, Kweichow and Hupeh. The

Aleurites fordii is the tropical and hardier tree and supplies over 90 per cent of the total production of tung oil.

The Chinese for many years have had numerous uses for the oil, such as a dressing for leather, the manufacture of soap and varnish, and for waterproofing paper cloth, umbrellas, shoes and silk, pongee and other materials. Chinese ink is prepared by burning the oil cake. The most important use is for finishing and waterproofing Chinese junks and other boats. In the form of paste made by burning the nut to a soot and, mixed with oil, it finds extensive employment in the calking of boats.

Since the importation of the oil into the United States the uses of the commodity have multiplied. On account of its rapid drying and waterproofing properties it was discovered that an excellent spar varnish could be produced to replace copal varnish. Other large consumers are the linoleum and oilcloth industries, and manufacturers of enamel and floor, deck and wall paints. Considerable quantities also are used in the preparation of insulating compounds and for brake bands for automobiles.

Shipments of oil from China to America are made from the ports of Hankow, Shanghai and Hong Kong. The greater portion of the supply originates in Hankow. Transportation of tung oil to the United States is principally in tank steamers, and on arrival at destination it is pumped into barrels, drums or tank cars. Last year the United States imported 107,356,971 barrels, valued at \$13,419,029, compared with 89,650,411 barrels at \$11,809,583, in 1927.

Although domestic production of tung oil is as yet comparatively nil, scientific care in the cultivation and fertilization of tung oil trees in Florida has resulted in an oil reported superior in quality to the imported product.

Foreign Trade Opportunities

The Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce of the Department of Commerce announces that its representatives in all parts of the world have forwarded the following trade inquiries of interest to our readers. In writing the Bureau in reference to any of these inquiries please mention that you saw it in *Oil & Fat Industries*.

No.	Location	Material	Purchase or Agency
39466	Germany	Lard	Purchase
39480	Germany	Lard	"
39591	Germany	Lard	Both
39813	Ecuador	Lard	Purchase