
Editorial

Is He Trustworthy?

Nothing that the public buys must be taken on faith so much as a chemical analysis. A chemist's report usually consists of figures, typewritten upon a printed form, representing percentages of constituents in a given material.

The recipient has no way of determining its correctness except by having another analysis made by another chemist at an additional cost. He cannot judge of its worth by sight or feel as he might a piece of textile goods. He is unable to determine its quality by the senses of taste and smell as he would an article of food. He is not able to measure it with a yardstick nor even to apply the usual standards of value that he would use in buying a bond or a share of stock, precarious though these standards may be.

No, he must rely wholly upon the ability, the carefulness and the integrity of the chemist. He must accept its correctness through faith in the chemist much as the devout believer accepts his religion on faith. Once the latter begins to doubt he becomes an agnostic. Once the possessor of a chemist's report doubts any one of the before mentioned requisites of his chemist, the report ceases to have value in his eyes.

A certificate of analysis lies on his desk. One certificate looks much like another except for details. It is carefully typed on a high grade of paper which is a model of the printer's art. To the eye there is no flaw in it. Its appearance is unimpeachable. But, is it dependable? Can he rely upon its accuracy? Can he buy the commodity it purports to represent and feel confident that its quality will be as indicated? Can he sell this material and rest assured that his customer's confidence in him will not be destroyed? Can he safely invest his capital in a plant or process? Is the chemist, whose report he holds, competent, painstaking, honest?

Fortunately for the public, he is. He may make mistakes sometimes for he is only human after all, but for the most part he takes the greatest pride in his work and strives unceasingly for accuracy even at the cost of infinite and sometimes seemingly unnecessary labor. And above all, he is honest. He realizes that his only asset of real value, his stock in trade, so to speak, is his reputation for an unbending integrity, a singleness of purpose that permits of no deviation from the presentation of facts as he finds them.

And what of the luckless chemist who in moments of weakness or perhaps cupidity falls short of this high standard of personal integrity? He becomes a pariah among his professional brothers, for they are the first to find him out; and sooner or later even those whom he stooped to mendaciously serve cast him overboard, for there is no truer maxim than that "he who will steal for, will steal from." But to the honor of the profession, such a one is as rare as the dodo, for among chemists there is no such recognized class as that one in another profession which openly sells its services to the lawless and still maintains in name at least its professional standing.

Yes, Mr. Manufacturer, Mr. Merchant, that certificate of analysis can be depended upon. Your chemist is a man of scrupulous honesty, of painstaking carefulness, of real ability in that particular field of chemistry in which he is working. He may be an obscure assistant whose name does not appear upon the report or he may be a Ph. D. at the head of a great chemical department, but in either event he has the same high ideals of his profession. For there seems to be something in this science of chemistry, this taking apart of molecules and the jumbling and making of their atoms into other molecules, that makes its devotee realize that after all there is really nothing permanently worth while but the truth; that the job to be worth doing, must be done right.

Building the Journal

The extent of progress of our Society, and indeed, in no little measure of the industries and profession back of our Society, is tied up with the public presentation of the accomplishments of our Society and industries which it serves, in the pages of our journal OIL AND SOAP so that every member of our Society and every one connected with those industries should be deeply concerned with the development of that journal.

Our journal should and can become the clearing house for all technical and trade information covering the industries. It should be and is the purpose of the Journal Committee to combine within these pages all of the news and information directly related to the industry necessary for the oil and soap chemist, operator and executive to secure from month to month.

In looking over recent issues of the journal, it appears that we are building well. The character of the contributions rank well up with the best articles appearing in any technical publications in the world, and the addition of the pages covering abstracts are a definite notable step forward for the journal. Certainly everyone appreciates them.

Your journal is developing, and it can go far, if it receives the support and co-operation of those it serves. Your Journal Committee and the publishers will appreciate your constructive suggestion. Write in now, while you think about it, and tell us what you think the journal lacks—and how it may be strengthened.

And don't forget that no journal can succeed without advertising. Mention your journal as a publicity medium to everyone from whom you purchase! And patronize advertisers in OIL AND SOAP!

Attention!

Are you interested in seeing a column of questions and answers on oil, soap and fat subjects started in OIL AND SOAP? Mr. Lauro, one of our very active members, has suggested such a column, but we do not want to start it unless you are going to support it by contributions. When we say interested, we mean sufficiently interested to do your part in making the column worth while.

The idea is that the questions asked will be referred to experts in that particular line for answer. Your response to this inquiry we will take to indicate your interest in the matter. If sufficient replies are received the column will be started—if not we will drop the idea.