

Responsibility to Authors

AUTHORS of technical papers provide the backbone of scientific journals while at the same time they depend upon the journals for publication of the results of their research efforts. In providing scientists with this means of communication, the sponsors of these journals assume certain responsibilities. Our Society meets these challenges in many different ways.

More than 400 authors submitted 175 technical manuscripts to the *Journal of the American Oil Chemists' Society* in 1959. In general, the quality of these papers was very good. Others however needed careful reviewing. Hence one of our major responsibilities is to do everything that is practical to aid the authors in the presentation of a good piece of work.

A "Guide to Authors" was published in the August 1958 issue. Each manuscript is reviewed by one to three competent scientists working in the field about which the authors are writing. An associate editor and the editor also look over the manuscript to help relay the reviewer's comments and/or to provide additional suggestions. This prodigious effort by scores of reviewers and the editorial staff has but one purpose, to offer help to the authors in the presentation of their information.

Authors deserve to have their manuscripts handled expeditiously with no unnecessary delay. We maintain no deliberate backlog of prepared papers and do everything possible to "get to press" rapidly. Delays do sometimes occur when reviewers are unexpectedly called away or are overloaded by their other obligations. Also there have been times when an author inadvertently laid aside a manuscript after it had been returned from the reviewing routine. In cases where speed of publication is particularly desirable, either a "letter to the editor" is submitted or a special reviewing routine is used.

AJOURNAL owes its authors a broad and interested readership. Total circulation of this *Journal* is more than 5,000. A recent survey indicated that the total readership is about 15,000, or three times the circulation. It is sent

quite completely to all segments of the American fat and oil industry, which includes edible products, detergents, fatty acids, fatty chemicals, and drying oils, and to most institutions interested in basic research. The *Journal* also is distributed to members and subscribers in the industries, universities, and research institutes of about 60 other countries around the world.



A. R. Baldwin

Responses from many readers in the United States and abroad attest to their direct interest in the fine technical papers contributed by our authors. In fact, a readership survey made in February 1959 disclosed that this *Journal*, of all those taken by the readers, was on the average the most helpful to its readers in their scientific endeavors. Furthermore our respondents said that they spent an average of 66 minutes of reading time on each issue. The next highest scientific journal listed accounted for only 46 minutes per issue.

Many of the readers, being directly responsible for research and development and/or business management, are in a good position to take action on ideas or suggestions presented in the pages of the *Journal*. More than one-half of the respondents in the above survey were in some scientific or industrial management position. Authors deserve this quality of readership.

AJOURNAL also must assume responsibility for good sound financial management in order to

provide permanence of record and long-range publication planning. No one wishes to publish reports of their efforts in a journal that is about ready to cease publication or lose stature because of curtailment. The *Journal of the American Oil Chemists' Society* is an attractive medium for advertising to company personnel who can make decisions in this great and important segment of industrial technology. The growing advertising revenue, combined with the expanding subscription income and Society reserves, are certainly expected to provide sufficient funds for publication far into the future. Wise and careful management by the Governing Board and other officers of the Society is the best insurance for continued growth and improvement of the *Journal*.

An author should expect high quality in the reproduction of his scientific report. Fine craftsmanship on the part of our printer, typesetters, and engravers, combined with efficient editorial handling, in the office, makes for clear and easy reading. Printing errors have been at a minimum. Reprints, with or without covers, are well-done and attractive on the same heavy, coated paper stock used for the *Journal*.

We have a further responsibility to our authors to maintain an attractive book filled with additional items of reader interest. The *Annual Review of Literature* and the *Monthly Abstract Section* covering the entire field of fats and oils stimulate much added technical interest. Editorials, economic reports, technical correspondence, and book reviews, also Society, industry, and personal news items contribute to readership appeal. Many of the advertisements are educational and interesting in themselves.

Yes, there are many responsibilities to authors. Our *Journal* is always trying to meet them by giving more and better service not only to the authors but also to readers and advertisers. This combination of Authors, Readers, Advertisers, and Publisher provides a satisfying medium for scientific and technological communication. I'm glad you and I are parts of it.

A. R. BALDWIN, editor